



UTM
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

Faculty of Social Sciences
and Humanities



E-PROCEEDING OF
13th **LANGUAGE FOR
SPECIFIC PURPOSES**
LSP²⁰₂₄
**INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE**

**Advancing LSP and Communication
in a Globalized World**

24-25 SEPTEMBER 2024

AMARI HOTEL JOHOR BAHRU

ORGANISED BY:
LANGUAGE ACADEMY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA

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E-PROCEEDING OF THE LANGUAGE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES 2024 (LSP 2024)

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eISSN: 3083-8738

Editors:

Kew Si Na, Nurhidayah binti Mohd Sharif, Noor Aireen binti Ibrahim, Noor Mala binti Ibrahim, Yasmin binti Hanafi Zaid, Ghazali bin Bunari, Nur Salwa binti Abd. Wahid, Rohayah binti Kahar, Hadina binti Habil, Nur'ain Balqis binti Haladin, etc.

Cover Design:

Nurhidayah binti Reman

Published in Malaysia by

Language Academy
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities,
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia
81310 Johor Bahru,
Johor Darul Tazkim, Malaysia

Cetakan Pertama/First Printing 2024

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FOREWORD FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE LANGUAGE FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES 2024 (LSP 2024)

On behalf of the organizers, I extend a warm welcome to all of you at the 13th LSP International conference. It is a pleasure to have such a distinguished gathering of experts and enthusiasts in Language for Specific Purposes. Your participation in this two-day event underscores your dedication to advancing the field of LSP and your commitment to professional growth.

We truly appreciate your support and contributions. This year, we have selected the theme “Advancing LSP and Communication in a Globalized World” as a focal point for our discussions. We believe this theme offers a rich platform for exploring the challenges and opportunities presented by our interconnected world. I encourage you to actively engage in the sessions, share your insights, and network with your peers.

We hope that this conference will be a catalyst for new ideas, collaborations, and advancements in the field of LSP. Once again, welcome! I wish you a productive and enjoyable conference experience.

Mr. Ghazali bin Bunari

Director of LSP Conference,
Language Academy,
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PREFACE

The 13th Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) Conference, organized by the Language Academy, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, will take place on 24–25 September 2024 under the theme “Advancing LSP and Communication in a Globalized World.” This international conference serves as a platform for discussing research findings and trends, as well as sharing practical and innovative approaches to teaching and learning language for specific purposes and communication.

It emphasizes the evolving role of language and communication in achieving specific goals within the context of globalization, addressing challenges posed by the 21st century and Industrial Revolution 4.0, with a particular focus on digital culture and the need for advanced communication skills among young graduates and the workforce. Bringing together experts and practitioners from academia, industry, and government, the event aims to foster the exchange of ideas, knowledge, experiences, and expertise to align with the growing competitiveness of the global landscape.

IMPROVING ENGLISH READING SKILLS AND MOTIVATION THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING ANALYTICS DASHBOARD: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of the “Dasar Pendidikan Digital” has further uplifted the status of educational technology and stressed revising the educational settings, promoting deep involvement, and unleashing the novel aspects of interactive learning. With this initiative, online learning will be the main focus, where it is necessary to investigate the profound potential of the metaverse in the field of education. Nevertheless, despite the emergence of educational technologies in online learning, the problem of English reading skills is still an obstacle for the learners in online learning, and English reading skills are closely related to reading comprehension and performance. The learners also struggle in getting motivation in reading due to the lack of online digital learning tools. The literature review has further explained the implementation of learning analytics dashboards, and the application of learning analytics would effectively tackle the English reading problems and encourage reading motivation in online learning. However, learning analytics is still a growing field in Malaysia, and there is still an insufficient focus in language education, particularly English reading. Hence, a conceptual framework needs to be developed and presented to show how the implementation of a learning analytics dashboard could improve English reading skills and motivation. This could function as a guide for future investigations on this subject.

Keywords: Education Technology Learning; English Reading; Online Learning; Learning Analytics; Reading Behaviour; Reading Skill; Reading Motivation; Learning Analytics Dashboard

INTRODUCTION

A new technology wave has emerged in the education field, particularly in the online learning field, where it is highly inculcated in the Malaysian educational system (Chung et al., 2020). According to John Bostock (2021), English reading skills are a crucial component of language acquisition as they facilitate the development of other interconnected abilities such as grammar proficiency, vocabulary expansion, and writing proficiency. Thus, English reading skills should be the main focus of language in the online learning settings; nevertheless, there are still issues that arise regarding the English reading skills acquisition and positive learning behaviour to keep reading in English (Coiro, 2014).

Furthermore, Ermawati et al. (2021) also prove that reading skills are the most challenging skills to master, due to the inadequate reading abilities and the low participation in online classrooms. With low reading abilities in online learning, the learners suffer from passive learning and perform low learning behaviour in online learning situations (Kanniainen et al., 2019). In fact, low motivation and reading skills will lead to a poor reading competency (Perfetti, 1985). Hence, there is an urge to tackle the English reading issues, particularly in online situations, but there is no useful digital learning tool nor active engagement, which hampers the learning online progress (Firmansyah et al., 2021; Bergdahl, 2022). Hence, learning analytics (LA) would be introduced to tackle the online reading obstacles. According to Ferguson and Clow (2017), LA is defined as “the measurement, gathering, analysis, and reporting of data regarding learners and their surroundings, aimed at comprehending and enhancing learning and the environment.”

As a branch of LA, the learning analytics dashboard (LADS) aims to impact learners' behaviour, achievements, and skills and provide useful information to inform future educational steps (Virkus et al., 2023). According to Schwendimann et al. (2016), the definition of LADS is defined as “a singular presentation that consolidates several indications regarding learners, processes of learning, and/or learning contexts into one or multiple visualisations.” Moreover, LADS could be used as a feedback tool to support learning strategies and skills acquisition (Banihashem et al., 2018). With the feedback received, the learners would be interested in presenting more reading, which results in an increment in reading behaviour. To add, learning analytics (LA) also holds a status as an effective big data tool to support E-learning; however, it is only shed light on in North America, Europe, and Australia (Williamson & Kizilcec, 2022; West et al., 2018 also mentioned that learning analytics research in Malaysia is scarce and in a pioneer stage).

As a result, learning analytics (LA) would be the key element to tackle online barriers learners face in online learning situations, particularly in English reading development. As mentioned above, the implementation of LADS could be applied as a feedback tool for the students to monitor, reflect, and plan for improvement. Indeed, LA also serves as a self-regulated learning support, allowing learners to make useful decisions to achieve learning goals (Molenaar et al., 2019). LA is effective in supporting learning outside the classroom and promoting independent learning. Thus, this study aimed to explore the implementation of a learning analytics dashboard to enhance students' English reading skills, behaviour, and motivation in online learning classrooms. In view of this, a conceptual framework of SLAD would be developed to fill in the gap of scarcity in the language education field, typically in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Skills Challenges in Online Learning

Although higher institutions and government policy have stressed the importance of the English language, university learners still possess a great English language deficiency (Ministry of Education Malaysia, 2013). To strengthen English language skills, reading would be fundamental, as it is one of the four essential language abilities; it requires the use of carefully chosen activities, methods, and procedures in its instruction (Mulatuu & Regassa, 2022). According to Birckbichler and Grellet (1983), an excellent reader would actively combine reading skills, including guessing, predicting, and questioning, to comprehend the text. Nevertheless, the higher education learners still struggle with reading; it worsens when the students are forced to adapt to online learning, which is totally different from face-to-face classrooms (Romli et al., 2023). It is proven by Scott and Saaiman (2016) that English reading skills can be cultivated with a positive learning behaviour, and it will bring the students toward academic success. Liu and Ko (2016) further stated that e-learning does not affect the acquisition of reading skills, but it continues to rely primarily on traditional paper-based reading skills. Thus, teaching and implementing reading skills, particularly online reading skills, would increase students' readiness in facing online learning while increasing student motivation (Hahnel et al., 2016). In this study, reading

skills will be an important component to assist learners in performing online reading through the use of a learning analytics dashboard as a feedback tool to encourage the learners to be aware and employ reading skills.

Reading Behaviour Issues in Online Learning

In the Malaysian context, students are transforming reading from paper-based to online reading, resulting in a change of behaviour (Dayang, 2021). To begin with, online reading behaviour can be classified into three categories: site visits, reading time, and the use of special digital features (Lawless & Kulikowich, 1996). As mentioned by Hahnel et al. (2026), the passive readers show low reading skills, with disengaged reading patterns compared to skilful readers. For instance, reading behaviour problems would affect reading engagement and focus, which will further result in reading deficiency (Pointon et al. 2023). Nevertheless, literature about learning analytics dashboards informing learners reading behaviour is still scarce; thus, this study is aimed at filling in the gap by implementing a student-facing learning dashboard, informing the reading behaviour of the students in an online learning setting.

Motivation Challenges in Online Learning

Motivation has always been an ongoing issue in online learning, as the learners are stranded in homes under four walls; learners are passive, without control in learning, which leads to low motivation in learning. Becker et al. (2010) also emphasise that reading motivation affects reading skills in terms of reading amount and improves reading literacy. As a result, the learners with high reading motivation will have the desire to read more and improve rapidly. Nevertheless, in an online reading environment, e-learning aids and instructions are proven to support reading motivation (Patra et al. (2022). Thus, there is a necessity to develop e-learning aids to enhance reading experiences and motivation in an online environment. While from the teacher's perspective, they found the learner's motivation is low as they are difficult to examine with their hindrance in communicating and reacting in an online environment (Bergdahl, 2022). Therefore, it is clear that reading motivation is a vital element in supporting online English language learning., and it is necessary to develop a student learning dashboard to reflect the learner's result and to support reading motivation online.

Learning Analytics in Online Learning

The shift to online learning is still in the adaptation stage compared to traditional face-to-face learning. It is well organised with multiple teaching aids to support teaching and learning. Thus, to implement a teaching and learning aid, the learning analytics (LA) could act as a useful digital tool to monitor and report the learning progress. LA, in this case, would be the best option and support in online learning, as, according to Celik et al. (2022), it is effective to tackle online learning challenges by tracking and organising the online learning process, motivating and engaging learners, enhancing retention, and being user-friendly. Nevertheless, the LA field is still beaming and in the development stage; especially in Malaysia, it is hardly discussed compared to the European countries (Ferguson & Clow, 2017). The situation deteriorates when multiple studies point out that learning analytics has less evidence to prove the effectiveness and positive impact in teaching and learning online (Ferguson & Clow, 2017; Ifenthaler & Yau, 2020). Thus, this study could serve as evidence to support the benefit of learning analytics in optimising teaching and learning online.

Learning Analytics Dashboard in Online Learning

The learning analytics dashboard (LAD) fulfils learning analytics as a feedback tool for the student; it is widely adapted in the education field to improve the effectiveness of online learning. The dashboard is proven to make data understandable and manageable, while the digital log data would recommend the learners' to plan insightful decisions, resulting in effective self-regulated learning (Sedrakyan et al.,

2020). Moreover, the reading dashboard could also trigger the reader’s active behaviour with their learning artefacts; it also tops up with personalised feedback, resulting in planning for insightful decisions (Toyokawa et al., 2023). Nevertheless, Sedrakyan et al. (2020) remind us that LAD feedback should serve two purposes: enabling learners to observe and enhance their learning progress in relation to their regulation needs, as it could prepare the learners to face online barbies, consequently elevating reading motivation. Thus, through literature and presented findings, it recommended that learning dashboard incorporation with learning analytics would positively improve reading behaviour, skills, and motivation in online classrooms. Nonetheless, there is a deficit of studies that specifically focus on this issue in language teaching. Hence, to encourage reading behaviour, skills, and motivation in online learning, it is vital to present a conceptual framework to implement a learning analytics dashboard and learning analytics in the context of language teaching.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In Figure 1, it illustrated the conceptual framework to enhance English reading behaviour, skills, and motivation in online learning through the utilisation of learning analytics to implement the learning analytics dashboard.

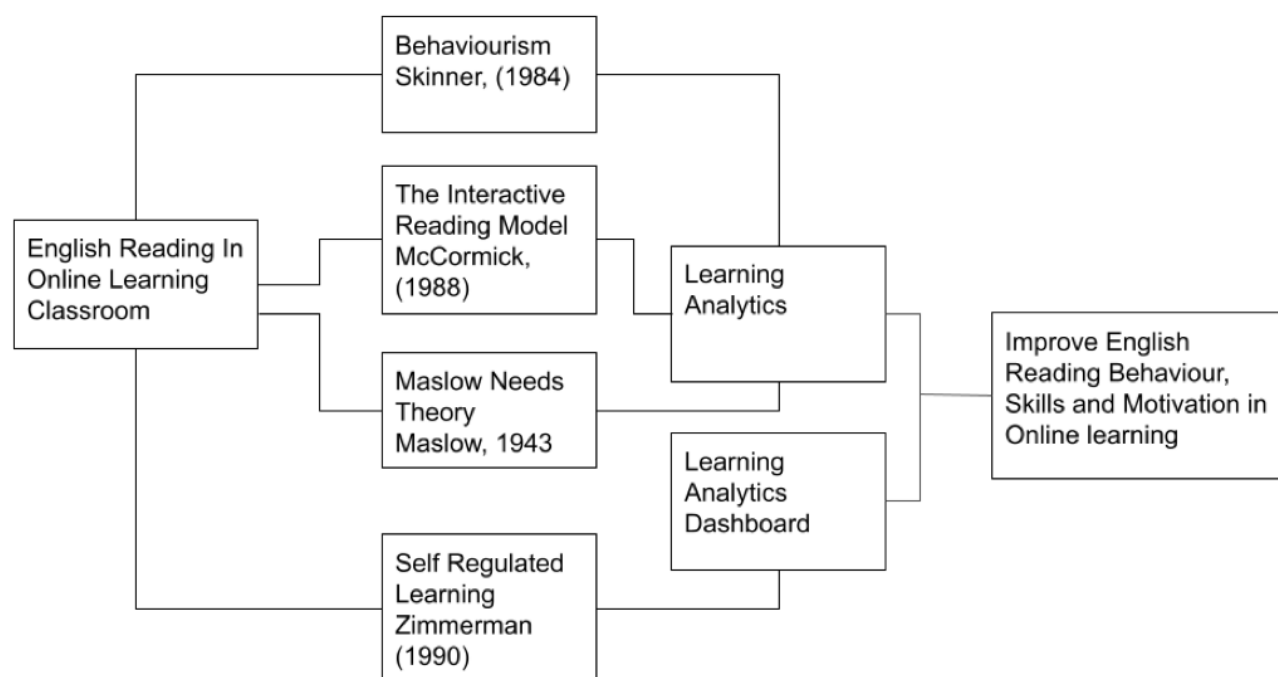


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Learning Analytics Dashboard

To begin with, the learning environment is based in online settings, making the theories suitable for such situations. Based on Figure 1, the theories stated are behaviourism, the interactive reading model, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory, and Self-Regulated learning theory to form a solid foundation to support the implementation of a learning analytics dashboard. Reading behaviour is the first component examined; thus, the first theory is behaviourism by Skinner (1984). This theory highlights the shaping of consistent learning behaviour by consistently providing positive consequences, leading the students to success (Ziafar & Namaziandost, 2019). The next theory is the Interactive Reading Model (IRM) by McCormick (1988), which suggests that readers not only read but also make assumptions. This theory includes bottom-up processing, where readers use letter and word arrangement to decipher the text, and top-down processing, where readers use past experiences and contextual signals to understand new information. This approach emphasises feedback, recounting, summing, and evaluation (Fu, 2015); therefore, reading skills should be represented by post-reading processes like assessment tests. The

third theory would be motivation in online learning, which is the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Maslow, 1943), suggesting that personal drive is a key factor in comprehending-to-comprehending human behaviour and motivation. Hence, online learners aiming for self-actualisation by seeking improvement to achieve their best selves could exhibit high motivation. The fourth theory is the self-regulated learning theory by Zimmerman (1990), claiming that successful self-regulated learners, having self-awareness, can identify and apply skills and strategies to achieve learning goals and successful learning. Furthermore, self-regulated learning allows the learners to monitor their learning progress and opt for suitable learning strategies to boost motivation and to achieve success by accomplishing learning goals (Shuy, 2010). Every theory offered in this study is coherent and relevant and therefore serves as an outline for research.

Implementation of Conceptual Framework in Online Language Education

This study employs a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods. The population sampling would be the English language as a second language (ESL) learners with a basic reading ability in online learning. In this case, the sample participants are the first-year university undergraduates taking the English Reading Skills course, which will include 25 to 30 students. There are two groups in terms of experimental methods, the experimental and control groups. The only difference between the control and experimental groups is the implementation of LAD; in this case, the experimental group would experience the LAD as a reading feedback tool. Similarly, both groups would undertake dependent variables, such as reading skills tests and reading motivation questionnaires. To add, the experimental group will have an interview session to share their views on the learning analytics dashboard in supporting reading behaviour, skills, and motivation. Apart from that, short stories from renowned literature authors, such as Charles Dickens, were chosen to inculcate their interest in reading literature, as Akarsu and Dariyemez (2014) reported that the university learners expressed the least interest in online books and novels, although literature can cultivate a specific degree of reading habits.

To add, the e-book reading system adapted is the BookRoll system, collaborating with the Moodle learning management system (LMS), allowing the researcher to trace and retrieve reading logs effortlessly. Moreover, the LAD would include a positive comment to reinforce learners' behaviour (Bashir et al., 020). After all the reading sessions, a reading test would be conducted to examine the reading skills. The reading comprehension test would be adapted from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), as it highly incorporates diverse English reading skills and offers varied text types (Homayounfar et al. (n.d.), suitable in this research context). A pilot study was done to assess the validity and reliability of the instruments used, including pre- and post-tests and motivation questionnaires. The questionnaire is also adapted from the Motivation for Reading Questionnaire (MRQ) by Wigfield (1996), which is related to measuring reading motivation, which can be used separately or grouped.

At the end of the survey, the researcher would conduct an interview to retrieve qualitative data about reading behaviour, skills, and motivation level after the implementation of the learning analytics dashboard. Moreover, in order to measure the mean between the treatment and non-treatment groups, the data would be analysed using SPSS software. It is highly recommended to apply descriptive and inferential analysis to explain the data by depicting graphs, tables, and probability scores. In terms of quantitative variables, based on the initial investigation, the students had a favourable perception that the implementation of a learning analytic dashboard could positively help them improve in reading behaviour, reading skills, and motivation in online learning. This is because it motivates students to actively engage in the learning process by offering observable reading tasks in online reading sessions and providing essential feedback through a dashboard to clarify learning behaviour.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion, the learning data collected aimed to benefit the students by monitoring, reporting, and informing using a student-facing learning dashboard and providing important feedback after online reading. To add, the result of the post-reading comprehension test would prove and help the students in examining not only the skills but also evaluate the students reading performance after the implementation of the learning analytics dashboard, seeking room for improvement. Thus, this study aims to prove that there is a positive relation between reading behaviour and reading skills and performance; as mentioned by Owusu (2014), shaping reading habits would guarantee a high reading performance. As such, the educators and the learners could utilise the learning analytics dashboard by planning for educational insights and evaluating education content to build a better online learning environment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work was initiated by Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) and supported by the Research University Grant (RUG) [Q.J130000.3853.21H81].

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ASSESSING SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG NAUTICAL STUDIES AND MARINE ENGINEERING CADETS AT AKADEMI LAUT MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Speaking anxiety is a common problem among maritime cadets, presenting a significant challenge in academic and professional settings where efficient communication is essential. This study investigates the prevalence and severity of speaking anxiety among cadets in the Diploma in Nautical Studies (DNS) and Diploma in Marine Engineering (DME) programmes at Akademi Laut Malaysia (ALAM), emphasising the factors that contribute to speaking anxiety—communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation—while comparing anxiety levels between the two cohorts. The findings of the study reveal that cadets experience moderate to high levels of speaking anxiety, with DME cadets reporting slightly higher levels of speaking anxiety due to the less structured and more technical nature of their communication tasks. Some key factors contributing to speaking anxiety among these cadets include self-consciousness, fear of failure, and concerns about peer evaluation, all of which undermine cadets' confidence in using English, the official maritime language mandated by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). This study highlights the necessity for targeted interventions, including enhanced language support and practical communication training, to mitigate speaking anxiety and equip cadets for the communicative demands of their future seafaring careers.

Keywords: Speaking Anxiety; Maritime English; Official Working Language; Cadets; Effective Communication

INTRODUCTION

Speaking anxiety refers to the fear or nervousness associated with speaking in front of others, often accompanied by physical symptoms like sweating or trembling and psychological effects such as self-doubt (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). It can significantly impair communication, even among individuals with good language proficiency. This anxiety manifests in various forms, such as fear of negative judgement, test anxiety, or general discomfort with speaking (Horwitz et al., 1986). Contributing factors include personality traits, past negative experiences, and fear of criticism (Dewi et al., 2021). Meanwhile, a study by Rajitha and Alamelu (2020) identifies several factors contributing to speaking anxiety, including language proficiency, grammar and pronunciation challenges, peer influence, stage fright, low confidence, and shyness. The impact of speaking anxiety can be profound, leading to avoidance of speaking, reduced participation, and a perceived lack of language competence.

In Maritime Education and Training (MET), where English is the primary language of instruction and professional communication, cadets face significant challenges in mastering the language. These include meeting high communication standards, understanding maritime-specific terms, and overcoming difficulties with technical vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Most cadets often struggle to meet language requirements and comprehend classroom instructions. Speaking anxiety further intensifies these challenges, as it can undermine a cadet's ability to communicate effectively, even when they possess strong linguistic skills. For cadets in programmes such as the Diploma in Nautical Studies (DNS) and Diploma in Marine Engineering (DME) at Akademi Laut Malaysia (ALAM), this anxiety can hinder both academic success and their readiness for a seafaring career. Addressing this issue is critical to ensure cadets are prepared for the demands of life at sea, where clear and confident communication is essential.

This emphasis on English proficiency aligns with the mandatory requirements set by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), which stipulate that seafarers must be competent users of English to ensure clear and effective communication in maritime operations (IMO, 2011), including ship-to-shore, ship-to-ship, and crew communication. Proficiency in English is essential for maintaining safety, efficiency, and coordination in the maritime industry, as highlighted by Puteri Zarina et al. (2019) and Heslop (2023). These regulations underscore the critical role of English in facilitating precise communication on board ships, particularly during navigation, overhauling the main engine, interacting with port authorities, or handling emergencies, making it a foundation of professional competency for seafarers. Moreover, English is used extensively in interactions involving non-native speakers (Pritchard, 2003) from diverse linguistic backgrounds and nationalities on board ships; therefore, the emphasis on the use of a common language is seen as essential.

Effective communication is crucial in the maritime industry, where the high-pressure nature of seafaring careers demands immediate, clear, and precise exchanges, especially in life-threatening situations where miscommunication can have severe consequences (Fathiah et al., 2020). For cadets at ALAM, the challenge is compounded by their diverse linguistic backgrounds, which make language learning more complex. These cadets are not only learning English as a language but also as a critical instrument for responding to emergencies, coordinating with international crews, and managing intricate maritime operations. The pressure to master English goes beyond academic performance; it is integral to their roles as competent officers or engineers. However, the fear of making mistakes in English heightens their speaking anxiety, threatening not only their academic success but also the safety of their crew in professional settings. Addressing and overcoming this anxiety is therefore essential for cadets' development and their ability to perform effectively in their future maritime roles.

Foreign language anxiety among DNS and DME cadets at ALAM includes three key components: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension, often stemming from a genetic disposition, is the fear of speaking with others. Test anxiety arises from the fear of failure and evaluative situations. Fear of negative evaluation involves the anxiety of being judged or ridiculed by peers and teachers (Asif, 2017; Kelsen, 2019; Toubot et al., 2017). Despite its importance, the high level of speaking anxiety that many cadets experience inhibits their academic performance and communication abilities. For example, a cadet who experiences speaking anxiety may fail to effectively convey critical information during emergency drills, which could potentially lead to misunderstandings that may compromise the safety of the crew and the vessel. Moreover, inefficiencies and errors might occur if a cadet is hesitant or unable to communicate confidently during regular shipboard operations, such as providing navigational information or reporting the state of machinery. Considering the critical role of effective communication on board ships, it is necessary to emphasise that speaking anxiety not only compromises the safety of the crew members on board but also affects the overall efficiency and safety of maritime operations.

This study underlines the significance of addressing speaking anxiety among cadets at ALAM, as their Maritime English proficiency influences their ability to perform their duties safely and communicate effectively on-board ships (Fathiah et al., 2020). By identifying key factors contributing to speaking

anxiety and comparing the anxiety levels between the DNS and DME cadets, this study will offer valuable insights into how MET institutions effectively support their cadets. The findings are expected to mitigate and address the issue of speaking anxiety, as well as to inform the development of targeted interventions that can help improve cadets' communication skills. These efforts are not only critical for individual success but also for ensuring the overall safety and efficiency of maritime operations, where clear, confident communication is indispensable.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a quantitative approach using survey-based questionnaires to examine the extent and degree of speaking anxiety among cadets enrolled in DNS and DME programmes at ALAM. The primary objective of this study is to identify the factors that lead to speaking anxiety and to conduct a comparative analysis of anxiety levels between two distinct groups. The study utilised total sampling for the selection of participants. This is mainly to ensure comprehensive participation of the target population from all second-semester cadets from DNS and DME programmes. The samples consisted of 85 cadets from DNS and 43 cadets from DME, amounting to a total of 128 respondents.

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) was used as the instrument for data collection. The FLCAS questionnaire, comprising 33 questions, was distributed to the cadets via an online link to assess different dimensions of language learning anxiety. The cadets rated their responses on a five-point Likert scale that ranged from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5) to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations, were utilised to summarise the responses and provide insights into the central tendencies and variability of the data.

Data analysis involved comparing the levels of speaking anxiety between DNS and DME cadets. This comparative analysis aimed to identify any significant differences in anxiety levels and to explore potential factors contributing to these differences. The findings are intended to inform the development of targeted interventions to reduce speaking anxiety and enhance the overall communication skills and proficiency in Maritime English among cadets.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Reliability Statistics

Reliability tests for all questions were conducted using the Cronbach coefficient alpha in SPSS software. The Cronbach coefficient alpha value of 0.903 was obtained for the data collected from the respondents from the DME programme, while 0.832 was obtained for the DNS programme for all the items in the survey. Hence, it can be concluded that the survey used in this research exhibits a high level of reliability.

Overview of Speaking Anxiety among Cadets

The findings from the survey reveal a substantial level of speaking anxiety among cadets in both the DNS and DME programmes at ALAM. The data highlight that both groups experience varying degrees of anxiety related to communication, testing, and fear of evaluation, with DME cadets generally reporting slightly higher levels of anxiety compared to their DNS counterparts. The mean anxiety scores reflect that DME cadets have an overall higher level of anxiety, with an average mean score of 3.041, compared to 2.974 for DNS cadets. This difference, although not significant, indicates that DME cadets might be experiencing more pressure or challenges related to speaking in English, which could be related to the specific demands of their programme.

The nature of jobs associated with nautical studies and marine engineering is one possible explanation for this disparity in anxiety levels. DNS cadets undergo comprehensive training to become deck officers, whose responsibilities include navigation, ship handling, cargo operations, and ensuring the safety of the vessel and its crew. Effective communication is crucial for DNS cadets, particularly in the context of navigation, safety drills, and coordinating with other vessels as well as port authorities. Nevertheless, their communication is frequently more structured, utilising standardised communication phrases and more established protocols, such as those outlined in the Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP). This structured communication may provide DNS cadets with a clearer framework within which to operate, potentially reducing their anxiety when speaking English.

In contrast, DME cadets are trained to manage the technical operations of a ship, which encompasses the maintenance and repair of engines, electrical systems, and other critical machinery in the engine room. The role of a marine engineer often involves troubleshooting complex technical issues. This necessitates not only technical expertise but also the ability to communicate effectively in English with other engineers, crew members, and sometimes even external technicians. Since communication scenarios for DME cadets are less structured and often unpredictable in nature, this could contribute to the higher levels of speaking anxiety observed among them. Furthermore, the technical vocabulary and concepts that DME cadets need to understand and communicate in English add another level of complexity, potentially increasing their overall anxiety.

The differences in the nature of communication required by these two professions might explain why DME cadets experience slightly higher levels of anxiety. The need to articulate complex technical information accurately, often in high-pressure situations, may lead to greater apprehension among DME cadets compared to DNS cadets, who may feel more secure using the standardised communication protocols of their training. This distinction underscores the importance of tailored support strategies that address the unique communication challenges faced by cadets in each programme, ensuring that both groups are equally prepared for the linguistic demands of their future maritime careers.

Factors Contributing to Speaking Anxiety

This study investigates the levels of speaking anxiety among DNS and DME cadets at ALAM, focusing on three dimensions of anxiety: Communication Apprehension (CA), Test Anxiety (TA), and Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE). The results provide a comprehensive understanding of how these anxieties appear in cadets, particularly in high-stakes situations such as training and completing communication tasks onboard ships, when clear and confident communication is essential.

Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension is one of the primary dimensions of speaking anxiety among cadets, particularly in the context of English language use, which is essential in maritime education and training. The results presented in Table 1 demonstrate that cadets experience moderate levels of communication apprehension, with an average score of 2.987 among DNS cadets and 2.994 among DME cadets. This marginal difference suggests that both groups of cadets face similar challenges in feeling confident and self-assured when speaking English. The scores suggest that while cadets are not extremely anxious, they are not entirely comfortable either. The standard deviations for most items were relatively high, indicating variability in responses among cadets, which could be attributed to differences in language proficiency and personal language learning experiences.

Table 1: Average Mean Score for Communication Apprehension Dimension

Programme	Average Mean Score
Diploma in Nautical Studies (DNS)	2.987
Diploma in Marine Engineering (DME)	2.994

Notably, specific items highlight significant self-consciousness, with mean scores of 3.24 and 2.95 for DNS and DME cadets, respectively, regarding uncertainty when speaking in English classes. Additionally, cadets feel particularly self-conscious about speaking English, with scores of 3.18 and 3.16 for the two groups, indicating a fear of embarrassment. This anxiety can hinder their ability to communicate assertively in critical situations, such as emergency drills or when interacting with a diverse crew. The findings underscore the need for enhanced language support and confidence-building measures in maritime education to prepare cadets for the communication demands of their future careers. The ability to communicate confidently and effectively is crucial for maintaining order and safety on board, further emphasising the importance of addressing communication apprehension among cadets. Figure 1 below outlines the mean scores for communication apprehension items, underlining the need for enhanced language support and confidence-building in maritime education to prepare cadets for communicative demands.

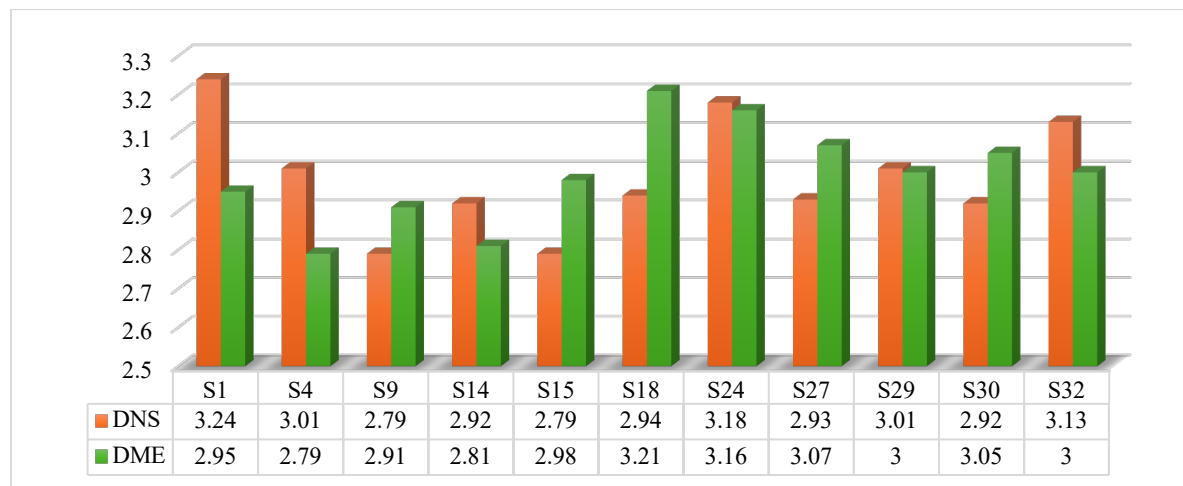


Figure 1: Communication Apprehension Scores Among Cadets

Test Anxiety

Test anxiety emerged as another critical factor contributing to speaking anxiety among the cadets. The results revealed average scores of 2.939 for DNS cadets and 3.071 for DME cadets, demonstrating only a marginal difference between the two groups, which suggests that many cadets experience moderate to high levels of test anxiety. These findings suggest that both DNS and DME cadets face persistent speaking anxiety, which could impact their ability to communicate effectively in English, a crucial skill for their future careers in the maritime industry. A specific area of concern is the nervousness felt when cadets anticipate being called on in class (M = 2.85 for DNS, 3.21 for DME), as well as their tendency to forget what they know due to anxiety (M = 2.98 for DNS, 3.26 for DME). This anxiety, even when

well-prepared (M = 2.80 for DNS, 3.21 for DME), suggests that a lack of confidence negatively impacts their class performance. Figure 2 below outlines the mean scores for test anxiety items.

Cadets also reported feeling particularly anxious during exams (M = 2.96 for DNS, 2.98 for DME), further emphasising the relationship between anxiety and performance, which can hinder success in the rigorous certification exams essential for their maritime careers and ultimately impair both academic and practical performance. Reducing anxiety, especially in speaking situations, could enhance not only the cadets' exam performance but also their readiness to handle real-world communication tasks, such as safety drills and cross-cultural exchanges on ships. Interventions, such as mock examinations and continuous assessments targeting both speaking and test anxiety could improve not only academic outcomes but also the long-term professional competence of cadets.

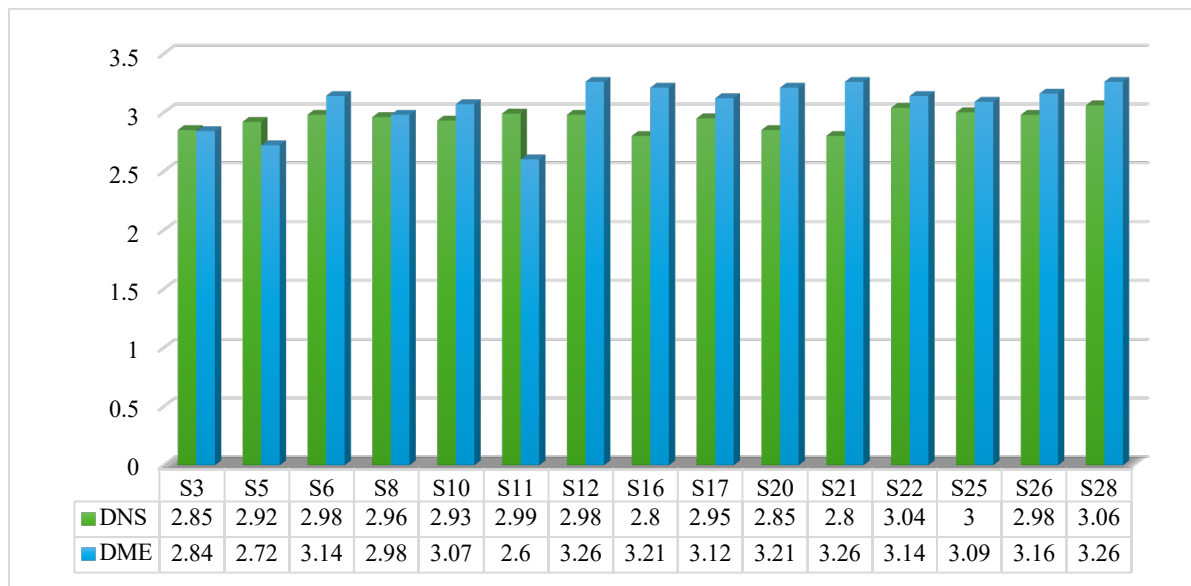


Figure 2: Test Anxiety Scores Among Cadets

Fear of Negative Evaluation

The results show that both DNS and DME cadets experience moderate fear of negative evaluation in their English language classes, with average scores of 3.027 for DNS and 3.053 for DME. This anxiety is most evident in situations where cadets feel they are being compared to their peers, such as fearing that other students are better at English (M = 3.12 for DNS, 2.93 for DME) or worrying that classmates will laugh at them when they speak (M = 3.09 for DNS, 3.00 for DME). Such fears can significantly undermine cadets' confidence, making them hesitant to participate, which can hinder their language acquisition and classroom performance.

This anxiety is particularly concerning given the high-stakes environment of maritime careers, where clear communication is essential. For both deck officers and marine engineers, passing rigorous certification exams is critical for their professional success. Cadets who experience heightened anxiety due to fear of judgement may struggle to retain and apply key information during exams and practical assessments. Therefore, addressing this anxiety through targeted interventions could not only improve cadets' language skills but also enhance their overall academic and professional performance, particularly in high-pressure, real-world situations.

Furthermore, the cadets' fear of making mistakes ($M = 3.09$ for DNS, 3.02 for DME) suggests that they may be overly focused on avoiding errors rather than actively engaging in learning. Alleviating this anxiety could create a more supportive learning atmosphere, enabling cadets to engage more confidently in class and better equip themselves for the communication challenges of their maritime roles and responsibilities, from navigation to machinery operations. Figure 3 presents an overview of the mean scores for the fear of negative evaluation items.

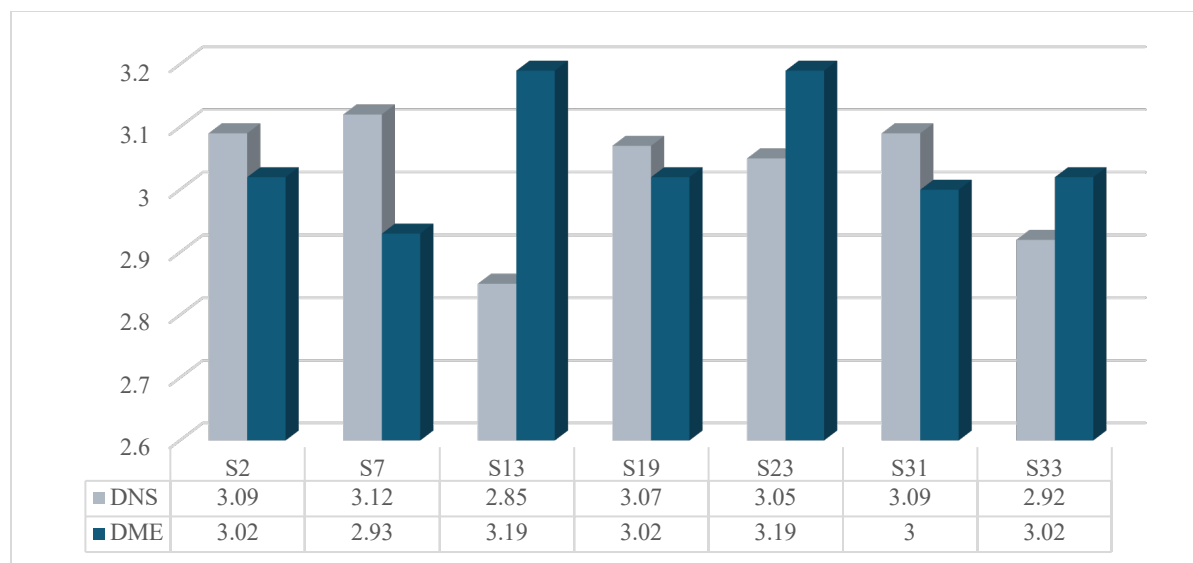


Figure 3: Fear of Negative Evaluation Scores Among Cadets

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In conclusion, this study highlights the substantial speaking anxiety experienced by nautical studies and marine engineering cadets at ALAM, particularly in areas such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. This speaking anxiety affects their confidence, communication skills, and classroom performance, which are critical for their future maritime careers. Future research should explore more in-depth strategies for reducing speaking anxiety, including language support, confidence-building activities, and integrating communication training into practical maritime scenarios to better prepare cadets for the dynamic and demanding environment of the maritime industry.

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THE USE OF INSTAGRAM IN TEACHING WRITING AND ITS IMPACT ON PUPILS' WRITING PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

The aims of this study are to investigate the effectiveness of using Instagram in teaching writing on the year 6 pupils' writing performance in a mixed-ability class as well as the year 6 pupils' opinions and suggestions towards the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity. A pre-test and post-test were administered to assess writing skills, followed by a t-test to analyse the significance of the improvement. Additionally, a questionnaire and structured interviews were conducted to gather participants' perspectives on the effectiveness of Instagram. The findings revealed that the participants from the experimental group enhanced their writing performance significantly after the use of Instagram in their English writing learning activities for six weeks. Besides that, most of the participants showed a positive attitude towards the use of Instagram in their English writing learning activity. At the same time, the participants suggested that a quick tutorial on how to use Instagram and a guideline on giving feedback should be provided in future research. In conclusion, Instagram can be used as an effective tool to enhance the teaching and learning process of the English language.

Keywords: Instagram; Writing Performance; Social Media; Mixed Ability; English

INTRODUCTION

According to the Malaysia Education Blueprint (2013), developing individuals that are competent and well prepared to work in a globalised world is one of the main targets of the Ministry of Education. The English language, which acts as the international language of communication, is one of the focused languages mentioned in the Malaysia Education Blueprint. Although the English language had been taught as a second language since primary school level in Malaysia, most of the pupils tended to have difficulty when they were asked to write in English regardless of the education level that they were in. Due to the outbreak of coronavirus in 2019, the traditional face-to-face teaching method was forced to stop temporarily. Simultaneously, online learning was introduced to the teachers and students to ensure the learning process would not be affected by the pandemic. A lot of new applications and social media such as Kahoot, Canva, Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram, and many others had been utilised by both the teachers and students during the teaching and learning process based on their own creativity. Meanwhile, the number of studies on the effect of using social media in teaching English had increased.

The findings of the previous studies showed that most of the participants achieved better performance with the use of social media in teaching English.

Stec (2020) described Instagram as a photo-sharing application that allows the users to take photos and videos, apply filters to their pictures, and share the images or videos immediately on the application itself or other social media such as Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, and Foursquare, which can be connected to Instagram. Due to its interesting features and convenience, some of the researchers started to put in efforts in figuring out the use of Instagram in teaching a language. Sari and Wahyudin (2019) investigated the students' opinions toward the English course and their insights into the execution of blended learning via Instagram. The results of their study showed that most of the participants indicated high positive opinions towards the use of Instagram in their learning, and they found learning became more relaxed and comfortable with the use of Instagram. Overall, most of the studies indicate that the use of social media in teaching writing is practical and applicable in teaching writing among ESL learners. While there has been much research on the impact of different types of social media in teaching writing at different education levels, few researchers have taken Instagram into consideration. Besides, most of the studies focus on either tertiary or secondary education levels. This implies a need to understand the impact of the use of Instagram in teaching writing on the pupils' writing performance in a mixed-ability class at the primary education level.

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. to investigate the effectiveness of the use of Instagram in teaching writing on the Year 6 pupils' writing performance in a mixed-ability class.
2. to find out the Year 6 pupils' opinions on the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity.
3. to identify the Year 6 pupils' suggestions towards the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The mixed-method approach was the research design implemented for this research. The researchers used the sequential explanatory strategy to collect both quantitative and qualitative data to strengthen the reliability of the findings. At the beginning of the research, the quantitative data were collected through the pretest on writing a short story and a post-test on writing after the intervention was carried out. In addition, a questionnaire was used to collect more quantitative data. Later, the qualitative data was collected via the structured interview with the participants from the experimental group.

Research Participants

The participants were a group of Year 6 pupils who were currently learning English as a second language in a primary vernacular school in Kulai, Johor. There were 60 pupils who were selected by using the convenience sampling method. All of them were twelve years old and recently studying at Year 6 level. The participants included 31 boys and 29 girls. This group of participants consisted of pupils of different levels of language proficiency. Six of the participants were at the beginner language proficiency level, whereas 46 of the participants were at the intermediate language proficiency level. Another eight of the participants were at the advanced language proficiency level.

Research Instruments

A few instruments were used to find out the answers for all three research questions. To answer the first research question, which was the effectiveness of the use of Instagram in teaching writing on pupils' writing performance, all the participants completed two different writing tests before and after the intervention, namely a pre-test and a post-test on writing. The results of both tests were analysed and compared by using t-test analysis. Comparison between both tests' results enabled the researchers to collect quantitative data for this research. Besides the writing tests, the researchers also distributed a questionnaire for the participants from the experimental group to fill out. The thirteen-item statements of the questionnaire were divided into three parts. Part one was about participants' writing competence, part two revealed their interest, and part three showed their learning process. All the items were put into a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD). The positive statements were given scores in a sequence of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, while the negative item statements were set to the opposite scores (Oppenheim, 2001). The positive statements, respectively, were scored: Strongly Agree was weighted 5, Agree was weighted 4, Neutral was weighted 3, Disagree was weighted 2, and Strongly Disagree was weighted 1. The purpose of creating the questionnaire was to answer the second research question, which focused on the Year 6 pupils' opinions towards the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity. To collect the qualitative data, the researchers conducted structured interviews with five participants who were chosen randomly to identify the Year 6 pupils' suggestions towards the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity. On the interview day, the researcher recorded the interview by using her phone so that the content of the interviews could be transcribed into transcripts later. After that, the transcripts were analysed by using thematic analysis.

Research Procedures

First, a group of Year 6 pupils was selected by using convenience sampling. Then, they were assigned into two different groups, namely Group A (control group) and Group B (experimental group). All of the participants completed a pre-test on writing a short story. After that, participants of Group A underwent the traditional teaching methods, whereas Group B went through the process of using Instagram in learning writing skills for six weeks. Next, all participants completed a post-test on writing a short story. The researchers recorded and analysed the results of both tests. Furthermore, all the participants from the experimental group answered a questionnaire. The responses were analysed by using a five-point Likert scale. Later, five participants from Group B were chosen to attend a structured interview with the researchers. The content of the interview was analysed by using thematic analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Pupils' Writing Performance in a Mixed-Ability Class with the Use of Instagram

This section addresses the first research question (RQ 1), which was to investigate the effectiveness of the use of Instagram in teaching writing on the Year 6 pupils' writing performance in a mixed-ability classroom. A pre-test and a post-test on writing a short story based on the chosen pictures were conducted to collect the data that could provide the answer for the first research question. The results of both the pre-test and post-test for both groups were analysed by using t-test analysis as shown in the tables below.

Table 1: The Scores of Pre-Test and Post-Test for the Control Group

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	P
Pre-test	30	5.00	5.252	0.959	-1.361	0.184
Post-test	30	5.10	5.182	0.946		

Table 1 displays the scores of both the pre-test and post-test for the control group. The mean score of the pre-test was 5.00, whereas the mean score of the post-test was 5.10. The difference of the means between the pre-test and post-test for the control group was small, which was 0.10. Additionally, it can be seen that the t-value of the control group was -1.361, whereas the p-value was 0.184. As the p-value was larger than 0.05, it can be concluded that there was no significant difference between both the results of the pre-test and post-test for the control group. It demonstrated that the participants from the control group did not show obvious differences in their writing performance after six weeks of learning writing by using the traditional teaching method.

Table 2: The Scores of Pre-Test and Post-Test for the Experimental Group

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T	P
Pre-test	30	5.20	5.968	1.090	-9.690	0.000
Post-test	30	11.70	5.428	.991		

Table 2 shows the scores of the pre-test and post-test for the experimental group. Based on the table above, it can be observed that the mean score of the pre-test for the experimental group was 5.20, whereas the mean score of the post-test for the experimental group was 11.70. It indicated that the participants from the experimental group improved their writing performance during the post-test. Meanwhile, the results of the paired sample T-test showed that the t-value for the experimental group was -9.690, whereas the p-value was 0.000. As the p-value was smaller than 0.05, it was suggested that there was a significant difference between both the results of the pre-test and post-test for the experimental group. These results revealed that the participants from the experimental group enhanced their writing performance after the use of Instagram in their English writing learning activity for six weeks.

Pupils' Opinions on the Use of Instagram in English Writing Learning Activity

This section answered the second research question (RQ 2), which aimed to find out the Year 6 pupils' opinions towards the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity. A questionnaire that consisted of thirteen items in terms of three different main ideas was used in this research to gather pupils' opinions towards the use of Instagram in their English writing learning activity. The responses of the questionnaire were displayed in the bar charts below.

Table 3: Pupils' Opinions on the Use of Instagram in English Writing Learning Activity

Part 1: Writing Competence							
No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	S D	Total n
1.	I can do well in my English writing class.	3	14	12	0	1	30
2.	I am confident about my ability to write a story based on the pictures given.	3	13	13	0	1	30
3.	I can convey ideas based on the given topic properly.	2	11	15	2	0	30
4.	I can use proper vocabulary to the given topics appropriately.	2	13	12	2	1	30
5.	I can apply correct grammar in delivering ideas based on the given topic suitably.	2	14	13	1	0	30
6.	I can use appropriate spelling, punctuation and capitalisation in expressing ideas based on the given topic correctly.	0	14	13	2	1	30

	Total Score	60	316	234	14	4	-
	Percentage	7%	44%	43%	4%	2%	100%

There were 7% of the participants who strongly agreed that the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity had improved their writing performance generally. Additionally, 44% of the participants also agreed that the use of Instagram in their English writing learning activity had enhanced their writing performance. There were 43% of the participants who demonstrated neutrality with the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity in improving their writing performance. At the same time, four percent of the participants did not agree with the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity whereas the other two percent of the participants strongly disagreed with the above statement. In short, the total scores of the pupils' opinions towards the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity were 51%. The findings revealed that more than half of the participants agreed that they can write better, use proper vocabulary as well as appropriate grammar and punctuation in their writing after the use of Instagram in teaching writing. This finding was consistent with that of Nugroho and Rahmawati (2020), who reported that the students reacted positively to all the statements about the writing competence in their research.

Table 4: Pupils' Interest in Using Instagram in English Writing Learning Activity

Part 2: Interest							
No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total n
7.	It is fun to post writing tasks on Instagram.	15	12	2	1	0	30
8.	It is interesting to get feedback through Instagram.	10	14	3	2	1	30
9.	It is interesting to give feedback through Instagram.	10	12	4	3	1	30
10.	Posting writing tasks on Instagram motivates me to write better.	8	13	7	1	1	30
	Total Score	215	204	48	14	3	-

	Percentage	36 %	43 %	13 %	6 %	2%	100%
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There were 36% of the participants who strongly affirmed that they are interested in using Instagram in English writing learning activities. Besides that, 43% of the participants also agreed to use Instagram in the English writing learning activity. 13% of the participants demonstrated neutrality with the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity. On the contrary, six percent of the participants showed their disagreement with the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity, whereas the other two percent of the participants strongly disagreed with the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity. In general terms, the total scores of the participants' interest in the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity were 79%. The findings suggested that most of the participants found it interesting and fun to complete their writing tasks on Instagram as well as getting and giving feedback to their peers. These results reflected those of Kolmykova et al. (2021), who found that most of the participants responded confidently to the use of Instagram in their learning activity because they felt that the learning journey to write became more authentic and easier with the existence of Instagram.

Table 5: Pupils' Opinions on Their Process of Learning When Using Instagram in English Writing Learning Activities

Part 3: Process of learning							
No	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total n
11.	I enjoy giving feedback/corrections to my friends' essay posted on Instagram.	4	11	10	3	2	30
12.	My friends' feedback helps me to write better.	7	13	7	2	1	30
13.	I find it motivating to do writing tasks on Instagram.	8	15	6	1	0	30
	Total Score	95	156	69	12	3	-
	Percentage	21 %	43 %	26 %	7 %	3%	100%

21% of the participants displayed highly positive responses towards the use of Instagram in the process of learning. In addition, there were 43% of the participants who also expressed positive opinions regarding the use of Instagram in the process of learning. 26% of the participants remained neutral with the use of Instagram in their process of learning. Nonetheless, there were 7% of the participants who showed their disagreement with the use of Instagram in the process of learning, whereas another 3% of the participants showed firm disagreement with the use of Instagram in the process of learning. Overall, the total scores of the participants' opinions towards the process of learning by using Instagram were 64%. This number suggested that most of the participants agreed and expressed a positive response towards the use of Instagram in English writing learning activity. These findings revealed that most of the participants enjoyed giving feedback to their friends' essays as well as receiving feedback from their friends on Instagram. They also found it motivating to do writing tasks on Instagram. These results were in agreement with those obtained by Perumal and Ajit (2022), who claimed that the participants in their research were highly motivated in developing their writing skills by using social media.

Pupils' Suggestions Regarding the Use of Instagram in English Writing Learning Activities

This section answers both the second and third research questions (RQ 2 & RQ 3), which focus on collecting opinions and suggestions from Year 6 students on the use of Instagram in English writing learning activities. Structured interviews were conducted to find out the participants' opinions and suggestions on the use of Instagram in English writing learning activities. There were five participants who showed very good improvement in their writing performance who were selected to be interviewed individually. Five questions related to the students' opinions and suggestions on the use of Instagram in English writing learning activities were posed in the interviews.

The first theme found from the interviews was the students' experience of using Instagram. In general, the participants basically had an enjoyable experience using Instagram to learn English writing skills. One of the participants (S1) stated that "I think it is interesting and fun because before I had not tried to learn English writing using Instagram." Most of the participants showed a high interest in learning writing using Instagram through the questionnaire and interview, because they thought that learning writing skills through Instagram was fun and interesting. The second theme identified from the interviews was the students' opinions on the use of Instagram as a learning medium. It can be seen that most participants expressed positive attitudes towards the use of Instagram as a learning tool. Participant S3 said that "I found writing easier after using Instagram. I hope other teachers will use Instagram in their lessons as well." This finding provides some tentative initial evidence that participants enjoy using Instagram in their learning journey, and they expect other teachers to use Instagram in their teaching as well.

The third theme found from the interviews was the challenges faced by students in using Instagram in English writing learning activities. The challenges faced by participants were unfamiliar with the features of Instagram, time constraints and unstable Internet connections. Instagram actually contributed to the improvement of participants' writing performance despite the challenges they faced in the process. The fourth theme generated from the interviews was students' suggestions towards the use of Instagram in English writing learning activities. The findings from this section answered the third research question. The first suggestion was to provide a quick tutorial on how to use Instagram for new users. Furthermore, several participants suggested that the questions could be shared as a post to ensure that all participants had sufficient time and opportunity to access the questions. In addition, several participants suggested that guidelines on how to write feedback on Instagram could be provided.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

To conclude, the findings of this research support the idea that Instagram can be used in the teaching and learning process of the English language, as the participants were able to improve their writing performance and also boost their self-confidence to write in English. Nonetheless, further studies can be done by focusing on different language skills, a bigger sample size, as well as pupils with the same level of language proficiency to investigate the effectiveness of Instagram in the teaching and learning process in different situations.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to Dr. Rohayah binti Kahar for her invaluable guidance and the participants for their participation.

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THE USEFULNESS OF MyLinE IN READING LESSONS: PRE-UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Reading skill is seen as a challenge among students due to the lack of language exposure and use of traditional teaching methods. Technology has been used by teachers to enhance reading as one of the ways to replace traditional teaching methods. Self-access online practices are one of the technologies introduced by MyLinE to enhance the teaching of reading among tertiary students. Hence, the aim of this study is to gain the pre-university students' perspectives on using MyLinE in their reading lessons. Ten pre-university students from an educational institution in Southern Peninsular Malaysia were selected using a convenient sampling method. The students used the reading practices in MyLinE during their reading lessons and shared their perceptions on the benefits of using the technological tool and the most used features. This qualitative research employed a case study design to discover the real experiences and perceptions of the participants while using MyLinE in their reading lessons. Semi-structured interview protocol and reflective journal were the instruments used for data collection. The findings revealed that MyLinE motivates the students, encourages active participation in the class practices, boosts learning interest, and provides immediate feedback. Furthermore, the most used features were flag questions and immediate reviews. Since very limited studies have been conducted on MyLinE, especially among Malaysian pre-university students, this study has filled those gaps in the literature review.

Keywords: MyLinE; Reading Skills; Reading Lessons; Technological Tool

INTRODUCTION

Reading skills are useful not only in the English Language (EL) but also for other fields to comprehend certain content. If the students are unable to achieve a certain level of comprehension, it would be challenging for them to perform in any examinations. In addition, the challenges that students face in reading comprehension are the lack of exposure to the text organisation and concentration, the use of

traditional learning methods, the lack of reading habits, insufficient vocabulary repertoire, and difficulty in comprehending complex texts (Meniado, 2016). These problems lead to boredom, dislike, and failure among students when it comes to reading skills. This means a proper and interesting method is essential for them to have a better understanding in reading texts and to stay focused. Hence, the use of educational technological tools is one of the best methods for assisting students in their reading lessons. Teachers use technology to make the language learning process easier for the students (Ahmadi, 2018). As for this study, Online Resources for Learning in English (MyLinE) is used and adopted as an educational technological tool in reading lessons among pre-university students. This tool offers ample tasks and resources for self-language learning skills.

Table 1: Literature Matrix of Past Research

Authors	Research Focus	Targeted Participants	Gap of the Study
Baytak, Tarman & Ayas (2011)	To explore the experiences of young learners using technologies in their education.	Young learners in the United States	Region Participants' age Reading comprehension focus Using MyLinE
Maduabuchi & Vivian (2016)	To identify both prospects and problems of using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in teaching reading comprehension in English as a Second Language.	Secondary school English teachers (adults) in Nigeria	Region Participants' age Reading comprehension focus Using MyLinE
Milon & Iqbal (2017)	To examine higher secondary level students' attitude and perception towards their technology skills, usage patterns, perceived benefits of, and challenges to using technology in learning English.	Secondary school learners in Bangladesh	Region Participants' age Reading comprehension focus Using MyLinE
Tri & Thi Nguyen (2014)	To examine the use of ICT in terms of frequency of use, purposes, perceptions, and expectations among English as a	University learners in Vietnam	Region Participants' age

	Foreign Language (EFL) students.		Reading comprehension focus Using MyLinE
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Apart from that, as depicted in Table 1, there was a limited number of studies conducted on Malaysian pre-university students focusing on the use of the MyLinE technological tool in reading comprehension lessons (gap of the study). Little and inadequate concern was given to the pre-university students' perspectives. Hence, this study aims to fill this gap by conducting a study among the targeted group of students. Therefore, this research aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. to identify the benefits of using MyLinE in reading lessons
2. to determine the most used features in reading lessons

The advance of ICTs provides a real-world digital medium for communication purposes for the past few decades. Kelly and Safford (2009) discovered that students showed their interests in presenting their ideas and were able to provide feedback on their classmates' ideas. Ahmadi (2018) revealed that technological tools help to enhance students' reading and writing skills. This is because they are user-friendly, and students get to learn faster and more effectively. Apart from that, students were able to learn more efficiently as the Internet gave them a favourable learning environment. It also supports students to form strong content knowledge (Murray, 2015).

Furthermore, ICTs enable students to be involved in active, constructive, purposeful, authentic, and collaborative learning. Meyer (2002) posited that an essential element of constructivist-based online learning and teaching is allowing the group of students to build knowledge through communicating and collaborating with others in the group. Therefore, ICTs prepare a platform for the purpose of having an active and fruitful learning experience, including learning a language. Moreover, the use of ICTs in learning enhances the students' motivation level (Baytak, Tarman & Ayas, 2011) due to the capabilities of multimedia that involve visual aids, audios, videos, and film (Arifah, 2014). This attracts their attention (Maduabuchi & Vivian, 2016) and gets them motivated in learning and mastering the language. It also provides a positive atmosphere and attitude towards language learning among students. They could avoid boredom that they might face in traditional methods of learning and follow the learning of the language using the current method, which integrates educational technological tools. A study conducted by Tri and Thi Nguyen (2014) proved that technology brought fun in learning English, hence, this motivates students. Besides, the research that was conducted by Milon and Iqbal (2017) on higher secondary level students' attitudes and their perspectives about the technology used in learning EFL revealed that technological tools have positive effects and help to enhance students' language skills successfully. The students' perceptions on the effect of technology in learning EL are such that it provides enjoyment while learning, boosts their confidence level, improves four language skills, creates easy learning, encourages active involvement among the students, and helps in better academic performance.

In addition, a well-balanced ICT environment helps students to feel and stay motivated along the learning process (Mullamaa, 2010). The use of technology has obviously changed the way to teach EL. When students get to learn using technology, it helps to develop their higher-order thinking skills. Hence, the combination of multimedia and teaching methodology is essential to attract students' attention in learning EL and leads to meaningful learning (Ahmadi, 2018; Arifah, 2014). Next, this learning technology creates independent work habits among students (Murray, 2015) besides building skills and confidence in literacy and in using technology. The study received feedback from teachers

and students who mentioned they were able to build skills, stay focused, pay attention, and increase confidence. Students' attention has improved when technology literacy was applied in the classroom.

Moreover, using technology in a language classroom helps to create a student-centred learning environment, and teachers make these positive changes in their classrooms (Koh, 2019). The use of ICTs makes the language classroom become an active place that has meaningful tasks that allow the students to be responsible for their learning. Furthermore, a study conducted by Maduabuchi and Vivian (2016) discovered the use of ICTs in teaching reading comprehension brings benefits such as vast improvement in vocabulary building and usage via the use of online dictionaries. The use of an online dictionary is handy for the students to find the meaning of new words, synonyms, and antonyms. Students feel fascinated and show enthusiasm when ICTs are used during reading comprehension lessons. Apart from that, multimedia texts used in the classroom help students to enhance their vocabulary knowledge and sentence structure. Since the use of multimedia also uses print texts, film, and the Internet, it helps to develop students' linguistic knowledge. The use of technology, such as print, film, and the Internet, provides opportunities to collect information, and they get access to various materials for the purposes of analysis and interpretation of both language and contexts (Arifah, 2014). It can be concluded that the use of technology benefits the students by promoting personalisation, higher-order thinking skills, self-direction, and collaboration, plus the features in the technological tools ease the students' comprehension of reading texts.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, qualitative case study research design was employed as the researcher aims to identify the benefits of and the most used features in MyLinE in reading lessons. The samples for this research were the pre-university students from an educational institution in the Southern Peninsula of Malaysia. A convenient sampling was employed since this group of samples was easily accessible. Additionally, the samples used MyLinE during their reading lessons. Hence, they could share ideas and provide feedback, which assisted in answering research questions and achieving the research objectives.

Two instruments were used to collect data for this research: semi-structured interview protocols and reflective journals. The interview session was conducted physically with all the participants individually to provide an opportunity to share their experiences personally. After the interview sessions, the researcher prepared the transcription of each participant that had been interviewed, and a copy of the transcription was given to the participants for content verification purposes. Next, the participants of the study were asked to write a reflective journal at the end of each specific reading lesson. They wrote about their thoughts in their own words concerning the lesson conducted on that day. This instrument helped the researcher to collect data from those participants who were reluctant to express their feelings and thoughts about their learning during the interview sessions.

Thematic analysis was used to analyse data for this study. Thematic analysis refers to the process of identifying the patterns or themes in qualitative data (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). It was the six-phase guide, which was a very helpful framework for doing the data analysis in this research. The researchers familiarised themselves with the data, generated the initial codes, found the themes, reviewed the themes, defined the themes, and lastly did the write-up of the findings.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings from both the interview session and reflective journal revealed the benefits of and the most used features in MyLinE. The findings showed that MyLinE helped the students to improve their motivation level, learning interest, and actively participating in doing practices during the learning sessions. One of the students expressed that (...) **it also making fun learning because it helps us to motivate to do** (...) during the interview session. Another student also shared (...) It can also help me **to increase an active involvement** when using MyLinE so it leads to better academic performance

(...). Besides, in the journal entry, it was recorded that (...) **MyLinE is one of platform that kind interesting to try** because it has various reading and MUET questions. (...) **I just felt very excited and motivated** to attempt the quiz given by the MyLinE (...) **new interesting medium to answer the questions** (...). The findings were aligned with the studies conducted by Baytak et al. (2011) and Mullamaa (2010) that verified the use of ICTs in learning enhances the students' motivation level. Milon and Iqbal (2017) also discovered technology encourages active involvement among the students and assists in developing a better academic performance. Maduabuchi and Vivian (2016) emphasised that students acquire the language more easily as technology provides a positive atmosphere in language learning.

Besides, the findings revealed that the students found it interesting to do the reading practices via MyLinE compared to printed materials, as it is seen as a new, interesting medium to answer questions, including a variety of texts offered on the website. Via MyLinE, the students get to learn new vocabulary, find meaning and phrases, improve comprehension, knowledge, reading, and other English language skills during the lessons. A student during the interview session revealed that (...) I think is MyLinE can help students to increase their knowledge in **finding some new vocabulary** (..) It increase my confidence level in speaking as MylinE help me **to increase my vocabulary**, help me to improve my reading skills and it also **help me to find new vocabulary** (...). These findings were supported by Murray (2015), agreeing that this helps to build strong content knowledge for the students, enhance their vocabulary, sentence structure, and linguistic knowledge, and make their learning meaningful (Ahmadi, 2018; Arifah, 2014).

In addition, MyLinE promotes collaborative learning among students since they get to share information with their peers. One of the students shared in the journal entry that (...) **it is beneficial for me if I were to discuss with my friend as I can quickly grasp on what I did wrong and we can also do some analysis on paragraphs that are hard to understand** (...). Kelly and Safford (2009), Koh (2019), and Meyer (2002) agreed that students expressed their interests in presenting their points and were able to respond to their classmates' ideas, allowing them to enhance knowledge via communication and collaboration. MyLinE also promoted independent learning as they found the meaning of new vocabularies by surfing the Internet and attempting the tasks given on their own. Murray (2015) mentioned that learning using technology creates independent work habits among the learners.

Additionally, the features available in the MyLinE platform provided convenience to the students. The learners emphasised that the text and practice features in the technological tool were user-friendly, readily available, varied, and accessible at anytime and anywhere. One of the students expressed that (...) Traditional way is often very boring (..) **another thing about using traditional way is whenever we want to flip the papers for me. It is actually very boring. For me, MyLinE actually helps to motivate me to do it** (..) **it is very portable, we can do it anywhere**, our phone, our laptop or we can do it anywhere even before going to bed, **it's very user friendly. We can do it anywhere** (..) **it is less money and internet. We always use for everything right still we can cut our own cost** (...) in the journal entry. The findings echoed with the study conducted by Ahmadi (2018) that the user-friendly features in the technological tools help to improve learners' reading and writing skills as they get to learn faster and more efficiently.

Moreover, the students revealed some of the most-used features while using MyLinE platform which include the quizzes, various reading texts, immediate review plus the tool has a good arrangement of navigation and layout. The quizzes provided good opportunities for the students to reattempt the reading questions until they can answer all the questions correctly. They also expressed that the tool has a good arrangement of navigation and layout, high quality reading texts, and reviews appeared right after they have attempted the questions. A student shared in an interview session that (...) the way it analyses our answers is very fast and I think first of all **I really love how the things structure. Firstly, they give us the text and then the question and then they gives us are you sure you are done, you want to submit?** By that we can see I have answered everything so we make sure we don't miss

anything and then after a few minutes and second we can get our preview (..) **And then after answering the question I can see the review, the review is to analyse where am I right and where is wrong.** Analyse where is I was wrong is that is when I go for to read again through my understanding is correct. So, this is how it help me my technique to understand the text (..) and **then with the review we can see our process and it helps us to see where we are standing right now in part of our progress.** So it will helps others to understand the reading part better (...). Another student revealed in the journal entry that (...) **easy to scroll text** (..) easy to read the words (..) **good website arrangement** (..) **easy to access the question** (..) question given (..) **the text given from MyLinE is very interesting** compared to other website (..) **very related with current issue** (...). The findings agreed with the study by Tri and Thi Nguyen (2014) that technology and sources available encourage students to present and practise a language in a fun and different way.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

It can be concluded that technology plays an essential role in English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms. Since students are always attached to ICTs currently, it is a wise idea to integrate technological tools in language classrooms. As for this study, MyLinE was selected as the technological tool that has successfully benefitted the students. This study has successfully answered the RQs and revealed the benefits plus the most used features in MyLinE during reading lessons among pre-university students. The benefits found in the study were that MyLinE helps students to improve their motivation level and learning interest and promotes active participation among them in doing practices during the learning sessions. The most used features in the platform were quizzes, navigation and layout, various reading texts, and immediate review. This research suggests that teachers should consider integrating the technological tool, such as MyLinE, in an ESL classroom while planning and preparing their lessons. Future research can be conducted on the challenges encountered by the students while using MyLinE and teachers' perceptions of the use of MyLinE in their language learning classrooms.

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THE DYNAMICS OF THE FILIPINO LANGUAGE: ITS IMPLICATION FOR MOTHER TONGUE-BASED EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Children often speak a different language at home from the language of instruction in school, according to UNESCO. The same is true in the Philippines, where there is linguistic diversity. In 2012, the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) was launched, shifting the school's language of instruction from bilingual English and Filipino to the students' local language. This study examined the dynamics in two regional languages in the Philippines—*Hiligaynon-Visayan* and *Kinaray-a*, concentrating on lexical variations and their implications for the MTB-MLE program. *Kinaray-a* words were supplied by native speakers from different localities and were compared to their equivalent in *Hiligaynon-Visayan*. Findings revealed lexical morpheme variations between the two languages and within *Kinaray-a*. The lexical variations implied morphological modification for ease of articulation and linguistic interference resulting from the immigration of non-native speakers. While the varied *Kinaray-a* terms suggested the existence of diverse types of *Kinaray-a*. These dynamics reflect the influence of social factors in the development of language, such as the preference for use in business, government, and education transactions. The revealed lexical variations, accompanied by morphological changes, are products of language changes induced by the interplay of factors, such as functionalism, language contact, mobility of people or geographical elements, and social prestige. Creation of materials in the native language specific to the learner's locale and discussion of the variations to avoid learner confusion and conduct of linguistic mapping are recommended to maintain the native languages of the country.

Keywords: Native Language; Diversity; Dynamics; Lexical Variations; Mother Tongue

INTRODUCTION

Language serves a vital role in communication and culture. It facilitates interpersonal communication that fosters relationships and is an essential tool in the transmission of ideas, beliefs, and traditions that helps preserve culture.

Equally important is the role of language in education. Learning takes place when concepts are explained in the language a learner understands. This notion has been supported by various linguistic studies, including that of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Globally, there exists an estimate of 7,000 different spoken languages that vary in diverse ways and for a number of reasons. Linguistic differences, known as language variation, exist socially and geographically, or in terms of sound, meaning, and structure. Several linguistic studies even reveal language variation in the speech of people in the same region or province. Such is called regional variety. According to Culpeper et al. (2009), regional variety reveals the geographical origin of a speaker through words, grammatical constructions, or features of pronunciation that are extant in some regional areas but nonextant in other regions. Whether the regional utterances are recognised or not, they are always there. Everybody comes from somewhere, and everything has a variety of languages.

These facts about language have long since inspired the promotion of multilingual education. Multilingualism in schools not only helps in the preservation of languages and cultures but also promotes respect for diversity. Furthermore, it is believed that multilingual education is a means to improve learning and literacy in general. All these led to the development and implementation of multilingual education based on the mother tongue, and research has shown that education in the mother tongue improves comprehension and academic performance.

In 2013, the Philippines, through its Department of Education, launched the Mother Tongue–Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). In this program, the learner’s mother tongue is used in the classroom. However, with over 100 languages in the country, only a total of 19 languages were recognised under the MTB-MLE (Lloyd & Yang, 2023). In such cases, speakers of other languages are forced to learn in the language selected to be used in their area.

This study focused on the *Hiligaynon* and *Kinaray-a* languages spoken in the province of Iloilo in the Philippines. *Hiligaynon* is the fifth most widely spoken language in the country and is considered the lingua franca not only in Iloilo but also in Western Visayas, an administrative region of the Philippines (Joaquin, 2022). Under the MTB-MLE program, the medium of instruction and language of learning materials in Iloilo is Hiligaynon. However, although *Hiligaynon* is the preferred language in business, government, and the academe, *Kinaray-a* is spoken by more people. In areas where people speak *Kinaray-a*, the MTB-MLE uses Hiligaynon. Given this circumstance, this study aimed to show the dynamics of Filipino language as represented in *Hiligaynon* and *Kinaray-a* and its implication for mother tongue-based education in the Philippines.

METHODOLOGY

This study concentrated on the lexical variations between *Hiligaynon-Visayan* and *Kinaray-a* to present the dynamics that exist in the Filipino language. One hundred sixty lexical morphemes were supplied by 20 key informants who spoke both *Hiligaynon-Visayan* and *Kinaray-a*. All key informants were professional teachers from the different schools and towns in Iloilo. Each informant provided eight content words, two words for each category, namely noun, verb, adjective, and adverb. To analyse and describe the morphemic variations, the *Hiligaynon-Visayan* words were compared to their equivalents in *Kinaray-a* per category.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Results of this linguistic investigation revealed numerous lexical variations between *Hiligaynon-Visayan* and *Kinaray-a*. In terms of nouns, the identified lexical morpheme variations were formal variation, consonant shift, which is dominantly from -R- to -L-, and shift in the last syllable. Formal variation, according to Geeraerts (1994), involves a situation where a particular entity may be referred to by means of different words that may express a conceptual distinction or purely a geographical variation. Consonant shift refers to the change in consonants in the base, root, or stem. Data show that the consonant -R- in *Kinaray-a* becomes -L- in *Hiligaynon-Visayan*. Sample result is shown in the following table, Table 1.

Table 1: Morphemic Variations in Nouns: Lexical Differences Between *Kinaray-a* and *Hiligaynon-Visayan*

ENGLISH TRANSLATION	KINARAY-A VARIANT	HILIGAYNO N- VISAYAN VARIANT	MORPHEMIC VARIATION
DOG	AYAM	IDU	FORMAL VARIATION
CAT	<i>KUTI</i>	<i>KURING</i>	LAST SYLLABLE SHIFT
RAIN	URAN	ULAN	CONSONANT SHIFT: -R- TO -L-

In the case of verbs, lexical morphemes revealed variations in terms of formal variation, consonant shift, metathesis, and shift in the medial and final syllables. Metathesis is the reversal of two segments, typically of liquids (/l/ or /r/) (Parker & Riley, 2010). The following table, Table2, presents instances of these variations.

Table 2: Morphemic Variations in Verbs: *Kinaray-a* and *Hiligaynon-Visayan* Lexical Differences

ENGLISH TRANSLATION	KINARAY-A VARIANT	HILIGAYNO N- VISAYAN VARIANT	MORPHEMIC VARIATION
TO WALK	PANAW	LAKAT	FORMAL VARIATION
TO FOLLOW A PATH	<i>SUBAY</i>	<i>SUNOD</i>	LAST SYLLABLE SHIFT

TO TRUST	SARIG	SALIG	CONSONANT SHIFT: -R- TO -L-
TO STEAL	KAWAT	TAKAW	METATHESIS

As for the adjectives, *Hiligaynon-Visayan* and *Kinaray-a* lexical morphemes exhibit common variations in terms of formal variation: consonant shift from -R- to -L-, initial shift from -L- to -H- and -S- to -T-, and syllable shift in the initial or final position. These are shown in the following table, Table 3.

Table 3: Morphemic Variations in Adjectives: Lexical Differences Between *Kinaray-a* and *Hiligaynon-Visayan*

ENGLISH TRANSLATION	KINARAY-A VARIANT	HILIGAYNO N- VISAYAN VARIANT	MORPHEMIC VARIATION
MANY	DURU or RAKU	DAMU	FORMAL VARIATION
UGLY	MARAW-AY	MALAW-AY	CONSONANT SHIFT: -R- TO -L-
SHORT (LENGTH)	<i>MUGUT</i> or <i>BUGUT</i>	<i>LIP-UT</i>	INITIAL SYLLABLE SHIFT
LONG	<i>LABUG</i>	LABA	LAST SYLLABLE SHIFT
			CONSONANT SHIFT: L- TO H-

SOFT	<i>LUM-OK</i>	<i>HUMOK</i>	
CLEAR	<i>SINAW</i>	<i>TIN-AW</i>	CONSONANT SHIFT: -S- TO -T-

Hiligaynon-Visayan and *Kinaray-a* adverb variants vary in terms of formal variation: consonant shift - R- to -L-, B- to D-, -H- to -G-; last syllable shift; and clipping as presented below. Clipping or truncation is a type of word-formation process that involves the deletion of a part of the base word which is illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4: Morphemic Variations in Adverbs: Lexical Differences Between *Kinaray-a* and *Hiligaynon-Visayan*

ENGLISH TRANSLATION	KINARAY-A VARIANT	HILIGAYNO N- VISAYAN VARIANT	MORPHEMIC VARIATION
LATER	BURUBAY/KAR-UN	DUGAY – DUGAY	FORMAL VARIATION
TOMORROW	RUM-AN	BWAS	FORMAL VARIATION
FAR	(ma) <i>RAYU</i>	(ma) <i>LAYU</i>	CONSONANT SHIFT: -R- TO -L-
LONG DURATION	<i>BUHAY</i>	<i>DUGAY</i>	CONSONANT SHIFT: B- TO D-, -H- TO -G-

YES	HUO- D	HUO	CLIPPING
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The lexical variations between *Hiligaynon-Visayan* and *Kinaray-a* imply that *Hiligaynon-Visayan* results from the morphological modification of *Kinaray-a* words as such changes developed for the purpose of effective communication or ease of articulation on the part of the non-native speakers of *Kinaray-a*. *Kinaray-a* was the language prior to the colonisation of the country. The migrants had difficulty speaking *Kinaray-a*; hence, prominent consonant shifts, as in -R- to -L-, are observed between the two languages (Delos Santos, 2007). The variations further express the influence of social factors in the development of *Hiligaynon-Visayan*, such as the preference for its use in business, in government, and in educational transactions. Moreover, the various *Kinaray-a* terms for the same *Hiligaynon-Visayan* variant also suggest possible diverse types of *Kinaray-a* in Iloilo. This is evident in the *Kinaray-a* terms DURU (in one town) and RAKU (in another town) to mean ‘many.’ The same is observed in the *Kinaray-a* words BURUBAY, in one town, while it is KAR-UN in a neighbouring town, both of which mean ‘later.’

The lexical variations between urban *Hiligaynon-Visayan* and *Kinaray-a*, accompanied by morphological changes, are products of language changes induced by the interplay of internal and external factors. Internal factors include functionalism, or for the purpose of speaking with ease, and language contact, such as borrowing. External factors involve the mobility of people or geographical elements and social prestige.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The MTB-MLE in the Philippines favours 19 out of more than 100 spoken languages in the country, and in *Hiligaynon* and *Kinaray-a* speaking areas, *Hiligaynon* is the medium of instruction and the language of learning materials. However, the result of this study clearly shows concrete differences between the two languages, which also indicate the presence of such lexical variations in the other languages of the country. This goes to show that in the MTB-MLE program of the Philippines, many learners are still unable to learn in the language they understand, and they are forced to abandon their mother tongue to learn in the selected languages used in the schools. Hence, this calls for a thorough re-evaluation of the MTB-MLE program and for the creation of learning materials that are inclusive and tailored to the languages of the learners.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher is grateful to John B. Lacson Foundation Maritime University–Molo, Inc. for the opportunity to share this study in an international forum.

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IMPROVING VESSEL TRAFFIC SERVICE OPERATORS' COMPETENCY IN MEMORIZING AND RECALLING THE STANDARD MARINE COMMUNICATION PHRASES (SMCP)

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the recent findings in improving the Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) competency of Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) operators in 2 VTS centres in Malaysia. The Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) have been used extensively in ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore radio communication since November 2001. As the working language of merchant ships, SMCP has contributed significantly to reducing miscommunication at sea, which results in maritime accidents and disasters. 10 vessel traffic service operators from 2 notable vessel traffic centres in the southern peninsula took part in this experimental study that involved learning interventions that aimed at enhancing their ability to memorise and recall the correct SMCP whenever they engage in shore-to-ship radio communication. Respondents were mandatorily required to memorise, recall, and correctly use 100 SMCP with merchant vessels transiting their areas of operation (port area, traffic separation scheme, etc.). Hence, there was an urgent need to develop effective learning interventions for these operators even though they had not been specially trained to use SMCP, unlike merchant ship navigators. The results of this study saw that all respondents recorded significant improvement in the post-test scores, which supports that the intervention was effective. The finding helps to enrich the knowledge in developing the appropriate learning interventions for SMCP, which may also benefit maritime educators and practitioners who are looking for further enhancement in the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: SMCP, Maritime English, Vessel Traffic Service, Learning Interventions, Ship to Shore Communication.

INTRODUCTION

The Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) are the lingua franca, or working language, in ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore radio communication since 2001 (Trenkner, 2000; Trenkner & Cole, 2010). Moreover, SMCP have been instrumental in ensuring the safety of navigation and operations of merchant ships worldwide. To date, there have been many disasters involving merchant ships, with 55% of marine accidents attributed to communication deficiencies (Kluijven et al., 2009; Trenkner & Cole, 2010). The reported primary cause was

none other than insufficient command of English in ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore communication (Trenkner, 2008).

The SMCP has two structures: Part A focuses on external communication involving ship to ship and ship to shore communication which include coast stations, Vessel Traffic Service, and harbour pilots. Part B, on the one hand, covers on-board safety related phrases of all merchant ship operations (International Maritime Organisation, 2002). Both are mandatorily taught in the training programme of navigation officers in maritime institutions under the authority of the Marine Department of Malaysia (MARDEP) as being warranted by the comprehensive syllabus of the International Conventions on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping of Seafarers @ STCW (International Maritime Organisation, 2011).

The aim of this study is to improve the internalisation of SMCP of the vessel traffic service (VTS) operators in a two-day intensive course that was conducted in 2023. The focus of this paper is entirely new and different from the author's previous related studies on SMCP, as this time, it highlights and evaluates the professional operatives' challenges in mastering 100 safety-related phrases of the Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) in only 2 days. This was the first time for SMCP to be taught to relevant shore personnel, such as the VTS operators in Malaysia, but with the same learning outcomes as merchant ship navigation officers. Due to this challenge, the focus is therefore set on the learning interventions used by the researcher/author to address the shortcomings while achieving the learning objectives of the course.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Instrument

This study takes on a quasi-experimental pre- and post-test design mode that collects quantitative data from participants of a two-day professional course in Vessel Traffic Service. The primary research instruments are pre-test and post-test. They have been developed from standard tests/exams on IMO SMCP as approved by the Marine Department of Malaysia (MARDEP). The 50-question multiple-choice tests (100 marks in total) cover safety-related phrases on VHF Radio, which must be used in ship-to-VTS centre routine (daily) communication, as well as in distress situations. The mode of the tests is online via the Microsoft Forms platform.

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant difference in the score of the pre-test and post-test of respondents, and therefore, the Kahoot treatment (learning intervention) is not effective.

H₁: There is a significant difference in the score of the pre-test and post-test of respondents, and therefore, the Kahoot treatment (learning intervention) is effective.

Learning Interventions

The learning intervention designed for this study comprised three modules of Kahoot quizzes on VTS-related SMCP topics. The topics covered were Message Markers, Collision Regulations and VTS Communication Safety-related phrases. Each quiz had 30 questions, while the last was made up of 40 questions. Respondents had to go through 2 rounds of each quiz in live (during

treatment) and offline mode (drill technique) in order to familiarise themselves with all SMCP under study.

Kahoot was chosen primarily due to its convenience and motivating elements (Buckley & Doyle, 2016; Deterding et al., 2011; Lashari et al., 2024; Licorish & Lotter, 2022; Tou and Zou, 2023; Wang & Tahir, 2020). As the duration of the course was rather short, conventional lecture style was deemed to be unsuitable. In addition, such a professional upgrading course like this should be practical and hands-on and hence, motivating in nature. This is due to the fact that motivated learners shall lead to successful learning (Bandura, 2001; Keller, 2016; Malone, 2023; Ryan & Deci, 2024; Skinner, 2023).

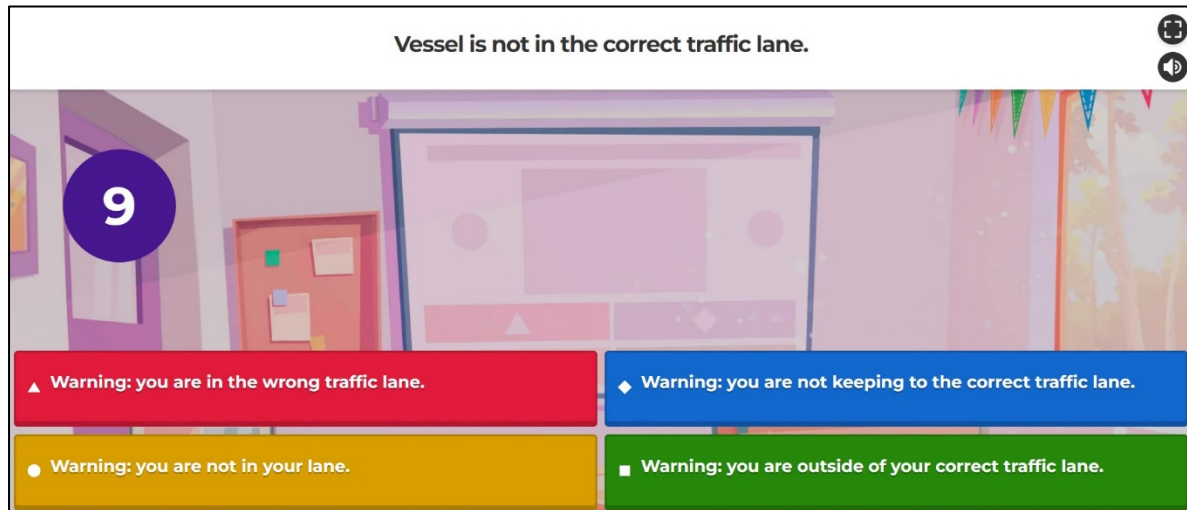


Figure 1: Kahoot quiz on SMCP (VTS Communication)

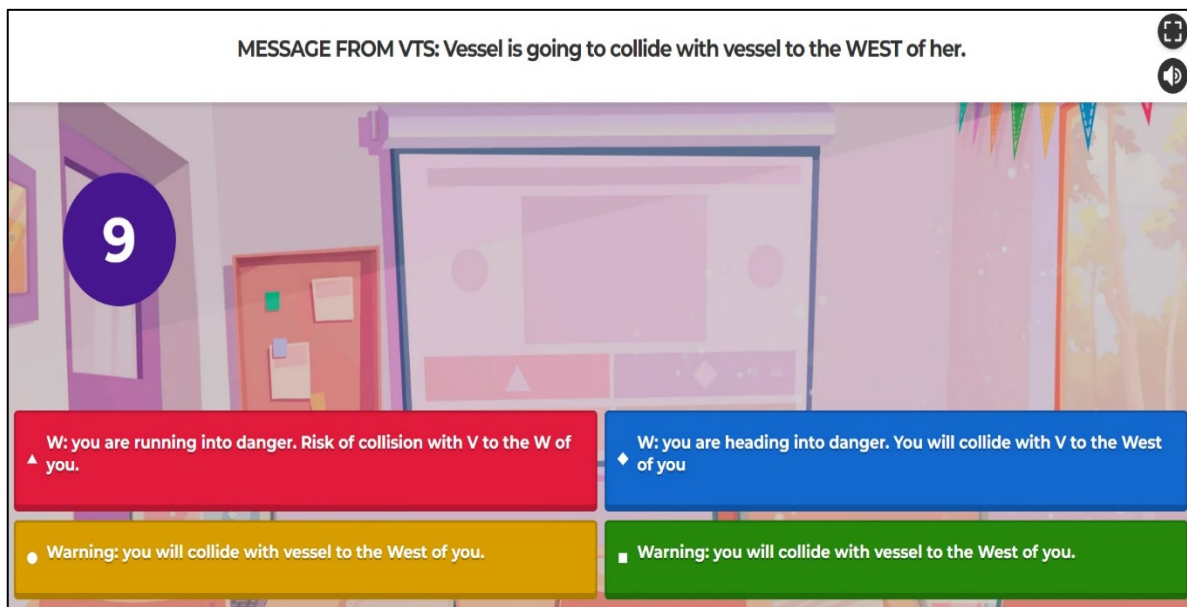


Figure 2: Kahoot quiz on SMCP (Collision Regulations)

Research Participants

There were ten (10) participants in this study, and all of them are Malaysian male citizens who have been serving the company for 3-6 years as VTS operators. Their age range was between 26-40 years' old, and the majority were degree holders from local universities majoring in various maritime-related fields. However, none were formally trained in SMCP, as professional training for VTS operators has been conducted solely under the purview of the company in the form of on-the-job training (OJT). The sampling method used was convenient sampling, as the company solely decided on the selection of personnel to attend the training, who automatically became the respondents in the study.

Data Collection

Data were collected at the beginning of the course and one week after the course ended. After a brief introduction of the course, the researcher conducted a pre-test on participants to evaluate their existing knowledge and competency in SMCP. A link to the MsForms platform was provided to participants via WhatsApp message, and they took the pre-test for approximately 30 minutes. Post-test was conducted much later, which was a week after the course ended. This was meant to investigate respondents' conceptualisation of SMCP, especially their ability in recalling all 100 SMCP. The order of questions and options in the post-test had been randomly arranged to prevent the effect of familiarisation with questions. The sequence of related topics and series of questions was also rearranged. Unlike the pre-test, the post-test was timed to increase the difficulty (20 minutes).

Data Analysis

Data were only processed and analysed after the post-test had been completed. SPSS statistical software was used to process and analyse data for further comparison and understanding. The results of the pre- and post-test were announced to participants, and the report was made available to the management of the company upon their request. However, the complete data analysis was kept for research publication purposes and would be forwarded to the management in the form of a completed and published research paper.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A paired sample T-Test was administered to see whether the differences between the scores of the pre-test and post-test are significant.

Table 1: Paired Sample Statistics for Pre-test and Post-test

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	42.4000	10	3.40588	1.07703
	Post-test	80.0000	10	2.58199	.81650

Table 1 above presents the pre-test and post-test results of all 10 respondents in this study. From Table 1, it is evident that the mean score of the pre-test result was **42.4**, which fell below 50, which was the passing marks from a total of 100 marks. On the one hand, the post-test results had a mean score of **80.0**, which was far more impressive than the pre-test results. This means that the respondents did not only pass the test (mean scores > 50), but they also had achieved an impressive score in the post-test (mean scores > 80) after treatment/learning intervention had been administered.

Table 2: Paired Samples Test

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	pretest - posttest	-37.60000	4.55095	1.43914	-40.85555	-34.34445	-26.127	9	<.001

Table 2 above presents more findings on the difference between pre-test and post-test for hypothesis testing. The negative mean of -37.60 as shown in the table above implies the effectiveness of the treatment/learning intervention that had been administered in the study, as the post-test scores are significantly greater than the pre-test scores. Hence, we can conclude that the mean difference of -37.60 is statistically different from 0 (zero). This brings us to the decision of rejecting the null hypothesis (H_0 : There is no significant difference in the score of pre-test and post-test of respondents, and therefore, the Kahoot treatment @ learning intervention is not effective) and accepting the alternative hypothesis (**H_1 : There is a significant difference in the score of pre-test and post-test of respondents, and therefore, the Kahoot treatment @ learning intervention is effective**).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The conclusion that can be made from the results obtained in the previous section is that there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test scores and the post-test scores of respondents. This supports the notion that the learning intervention administered in the course was effective in improving the memorisation and retention of Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) of VTS operators in the study. The use of Kahoot as a learning intervention, to some extent, has familiarised the learners with the phrases and vocabulary used in SMCP for their professional use via drills and elements of gaming such as competition, scores, leaderboards, and immediate feedback.

This automatically impacts the conduct of this SMCP course on all clients/learners from here onwards and even on other professional courses by the academy in three distinctive ways. Firstly, the intensive and extensive use of Kahoot as the main intervention @ treatment for courses that are less than three days. Teaching methods such as lectures, role-plays, and simulations may not be effective due to a lack of practical applications and opportunities to practice lessons learned. Hence, Kahoot quizzes and feedback may be the most suitable way to make learners achieve the learning outcomes.

Secondly, the results of this study may also inspire more similar studies on SMCP and also other professional courses. Kahoot may be introduced in the conduct of other courses as well due to its potential in making learning more effective. Therefore, there shall be more investigations on its benefits or drawbacks in achieving learning outcomes of those professional courses, which lead to more publications.

Lastly, the instruments used in the study may be included in other professional courses as well. Rather than a summative test to measure learners' competency, it is timely now to introduce a pre- and post-test method for these courses so as to evaluate their effectiveness. The academy, as well as the client companies, shall be more conclusive and concrete in their course assessments, and this may lead to quick, continuous improvement of teaching, learning, and assessment of all courses. All in all, it is the learning objective that matters in maritime education and training, and while the treatment in this study has proven to achieve the learning objective as stipulated, there is no delay any more in utilising it in teaching-learning-assessment activities. So far, if being carefully integrated, Kahoot is the most effective means of learning the Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author would like to express his utmost gratitude to ALAM for the opportunities and support in becoming the SME for Maritime English, Malaysia. Special thanks and appreciation also go to Peter Trenkner, Clive Cole, Boris Pritchard, Naoyuki Takagi, Catherine Logie, Tandy Taylor, Capt. David Bradley, Allison Noble, and Anne Pazaver for this wonderful professional journey.

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INVESTIGATING THE PERFORMANCE AND CAUSES OF ANXIETY AMONG CHINESE INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates speech anxiety among 21 Chinese postgraduate students at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), focusing on public speaking challenges due to language barriers. The primary goal is to identify anxiety sources in academic settings and assess their impact on student performance. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research combined quantitative data from Likert scale questionnaires with qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews. The research indicated that students' excessive pursuit of pronunciation and standardised English not only failed to enhance their linguistic expression but also exacerbated their speech anxiety. The study found that this heightened anxiety primarily arises from a gap between the students' expectations of their language proficiency and their actual performance during presentations. Behaviours indicative of this anxiety included trembling hands, stuttering, excessive use of filler words, inconsistent eye contact, and a heavy reliance on scripts. This issue underscores the necessity for supportive educational environments, recommending educators to implement targeted interventions to bolster students' confidence and alleviate their anxiety. Proposed strategies include creating nurturing classroom atmospheres, offering specialised public speaking training, and integrating metacognitive strategies into language curricula to enable students to self-regulate and adjust their learning approaches.

Keywords: Anxiety Performance; Anxiety Causes; Academic Presentation

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of globalisation, there is a rising trend in the number of Chinese students pursuing education abroad. Despite diverse learning objectives and requirements, these international students commonly encounter shared hurdles, particularly evident in public speaking engagements such as academic presentations. Davidson (2002) noted that public speaking typically ranks among the top 10 things people tend to avoid. Katz (2000) found that individuals who express anxiety about public speaking and struggle to convey confidence through

persuasive gestures are often negatively evaluated and appraised. Tuan and Mai (2015) have identified spoken English proficiency as a prominent challenge among this cohort. Public speaking anxiety emerges as a significant barrier for those grappling with apprehension towards verbal expression, prompting avoidance of performance-based scenarios. As the study executed by Sikandar (2017) found that the public anxiety faced by students is mostly caused by the fear of speaking in front of others, it is seen by 75% of the students who agree with the statement whether or not they experience fear of public speaking. Thus, when compelled to confront such situations, individuals often endure heightened levels of stress and anxiety (Hidayoza et al., 2019).

Chinese international students play a crucial role in the global academic community. As they pursue academic achievements, they often encounter a range of complex challenges, with anxiety due to language barriers being particularly prominent. Since English is usually not their native language, these students may struggle with understanding course content, participating in class discussions, and writing academic assignments. This lack of linguistic confidence can impact not only their learning outcomes but also their social interactions and personal self-esteem. Therefore, it is vital for educational institutions to deeply understand these challenges and adopt effective teaching strategies and support systems to create an environment that fosters the overall development and academic success of these students.

This article examined 21 Chinese postgraduate students from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, who must complete mandatory academic presentations as part of their coursework. These students are often required to deliver various academic speeches and demonstrations, necessitating a high level of fluency and authenticity in their English performance. As a result, they tend to set higher standards for their pronunciation and experience increased pressure. In response, they often dedicate more time and effort to practice, making them more prone to the anxiety and stress associated with academic presentations.

This paper primarily aims to understand the basic information and anxiety performance of Chinese international students at UTM through semi-structured interviews, and through a Likert-scale questionnaire, it seeks to identify the specific sources most likely to cause anxiety among students in public speaking situations.

The research questions are as follows:

1. What is the anxiety performance of Chinese international students in the public speaking scenario?
2. What are the causes of the anxiety of Chinese international students?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Anxiety among International Students

With more and more international students there are in the world, academic challenges faced by international students are more striking. Studying in a non-native language is one of the main difficulties facing international students.

Lewthwaite (1996) noted that international students need to have competence in the language used in academic contexts. International students in Australia frequently face a wide range of social and academic transitional issues while adjusting to new learning and the social

environment as well (Andrade, 2006). Bifuh-Ambe (2009) summarised the main difficulties faced by international students into four domains: receptive and expressive language, written language such as written assignments and note-taking, comprehension such as understanding texts, and difficulties related to the methods of teaching and assessment in the host country.

Park (2016) found that the language challenge persists unchanged; foreign students in Australia studying there encounter language obstacles stemming from a lack of confidence in their language abilities and unfavourable societal views toward non-native accents.

Sulastiani (2017) found that 82.5% of students experienced a medium level of fear and anxiety when speaking English in public speaking classes, which revealed that students' anxiety negatively impacted their performance in public speaking classes, leading to issues such as forgetting their speech, disarranging their speech preparation, feeling confused, frequently interrupting their speech, and experiencing discomfort when speaking English in public settings.

Hidayoza et al. (2019) discovered that foreign debaters in the English department, Unit Kegiatan Bahasa Asing, Universitas Negeri Padang, experienced a medium level of public speaking anxiety. Specifically, 50% of the respondents reported experiencing public speaking anxiety, especially when participating in debates.

Chinese international students also faced similar challenges in that the anxiety is often linked to language barriers. Inadequate language skills not only impede academic learning but also everyday interactions, which are essential for feeling connected and supported. Detailed studies can help in creating targeted language support programs that address specific areas of difficulty, enhancing students' confidence and reducing their anxiety. Wang, Andre, and Greenwood (2015) conducted a literature review that pinpointed various obstacles faced by Chinese international students, including those studying nursing. The primary challenges revolved around English language proficiency, adapting to distinct learning methodologies, and navigating cultural disparities. The researchers emphasised the need for additional research into the actual experiences of Chinese international students pursuing education abroad.

Causes of Anxiety in Academic Settings

Stoynoff (1997) examined the primary factors impacting the academic performance of international students, revealing a correlation between their academic success and proficiency in language skills.

McCroskey (1982) investigated the impact of anxiety on individuals' performance in communication activities, particularly in public speaking. He posited that anxiety is a common emotion, especially when facing challenging communication tasks like public speaking, and that it can significantly influence individual performance. His research revealed that anxiety can lead to manifestations such as stuttering, voice trembling, and nervousness, all of which can impair the quality and effectiveness of speech. McCroskey's theory offers a crucial framework for understanding the relationship between anxiety and speech performance. This aligns with the assertion made by Stephen Krashen (1982) that excessive anxiety regarding errors diminishes learners' self-confidence, thereby impeding their effective acquisition of language skills.

Price (1991) found that learners' self-perception of language ability is the root of classroom-related anxiety. Anxious learners inadvertently compare their pronunciation with that of native speakers, leading to difficulty in accurately expressing English words, which makes learners feel embarrassed and fearful. Stoynoff (1997) delved into the key factors influencing the academic

achievements of international students, highlighting a significant link between their academic performance and competency in language abilities. Szyszka (2011) investigated the relationship between foreign language anxiety and self-perceived language ability among 48 normal college students who studied English as a foreign language, and the results showed a negative correlation between the two variables. Among them, learners with higher anxiety levels rated their pronunciation level as poor, while learners with lower anxiety levels reported a higher pronunciation ability.

Melouah (2013) identified the sources and levels of 54 Algerian EFL university students' oral performance anxiety, and the study indicated that students experience a moderate level of speaking anxiety due to low language proficiency.

Nisreen Alsaifi and Seong-Chul Shin (2017) highlighted that mastery of the language being studied is a crucial element that improves both academic performance and adaptation to the cultural context. Proficiency in the target language is a fundamental factor that enhances their academic achievement and cultural adjustment.

METHODOLOGY

This research comprises two main components. Firstly, through semi-structured interviews, we aim to gather fundamental information from participants to comprehend the anxiety manifestations among Chinese international students during public speaking engagements. Secondly, we employ a Likert scale questionnaire designed to delve into students' goal-oriented necessities for overcoming language barriers and their actual achievements in this endeavour. The questionnaire also seeks to explore the specific sources most likely to evoke anxiety among students within the realm of language barriers. The questionnaire is structured into two primary sections. The first section aims to provide a comprehensive insight into students' expectations regarding attaining a certain level of proficiency in academic presentations. The second section assesses the actual level at which students accomplish their language goals in practical learning scenarios. By juxtaposing the outcomes of these two sections, our objective is to evaluate the variance between students' goal requirements and their current actual levels, thereby gaining a detailed understanding of the root causes of students' anxiety. The questionnaire's content was developed using an adoption and adaptation approach, drawing inspiration from Zheng's (2013) study, which identified potential language barriers in academic speech.

Social Sciences and Humanities at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Their average IELTS score was 6.1, and their average TOEFL score was 67.8. These data indicate that they had a certain foundation in English proficiency but may still face the challenge of language barriers.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Anxiety Performance of Chinese International Students

In the first phase of this study, we utilised semi-structured interviews to delve deeply into the anxiety performance of the students. We collected data samples from 21 graduate students. The data revealed that as many as 19 participants admitted to experiencing varying degrees of self-doubt during public speaking, with 16 respondents explicitly expressing the anxiety they experienced when facing public speaking.

Table 1: The Performance of Students' Anxiety

Behaviour/Issue	Number of Respondents	Implications
Inconsistent eye contact	4	Potential nervous mental state. Impact on effective communication with the audience
Hand tremors and stuttering	5	Increase in physiological tension. Impact on oral expression abilities
Use of filler words	15	Nervousness-induced, self-comfort or unconscious behavior to fill pauses
Difficulty articulating thoughts smoothly	16	Lack of confidence. Fear of forgetting lines or delivering incoherent speeches. Reliance on scripts to avoid embarrassment or mistakes
Dependence on scripts	16	Challenges associated with inadequate preparation or excessive dependence. Difficulty in delivering speeches smoothly without script support

The table summarises key behavioural and psychological challenges among respondents during public speaking engagements. It indicates that a significant number of respondents, 15 out of the total, exhibit a tendency to use filler words (“um,” “uh,” “like,” “you know,” “well,” “I mean,” etc.), suggesting a reliance on nervousness-induced self-comfort or unconscious behaviours to bridge pauses in speech. This behaviour is often associated with anxiety and can impact the fluency and coherence of their presentations. Additionally, 16 respondents struggle with articulating their thoughts smoothly, reflecting issues such as a lack of confidence, fear of forgetting lines, or delivering incoherent speeches. This group also tends to rely heavily on scripts to avoid mistakes or embarrassment, highlighting challenges related to preparation and dependence on written cues. Moreover, the table reveals physical manifestations of anxiety during public speaking, with 5 respondents experiencing hand tremors and stuttering. These physiological reactions indicate an increase in tension, directly affecting their oral expression abilities. Additionally, inconsistent eye contact is noted among 4 respondents, possibly stemming from a nervous mental state and impacting their effectiveness in communicating with the audience. Overall, the table underscores the complex interplay between psychological states, physical reactions, and speech delivery challenges faced by individuals during public speaking engagements.

The research indicated that emotional states significantly impact nonverbal communication. When anxious, speakers may exhibit tense muscles and rapid breathing, which can affect their oral expression abilities. Conversely, when confident, speakers may display relaxed postures and fluid gestures, enhancing the effectiveness of their speeches. Therefore, in preparing for speeches, speakers should focus on and master emotional regulation strategies such as deep breathing and relaxation training to boost confidence and expression capabilities.

The results show that in order to enhance the effectiveness and depth of the speech, the speaker needs to strengthen emotional management, improve non-verbal communication skills, and deeply understand the cultural context of the audience. In response to these needs, the research suggests schools offer emotional management workshops to teach students how to effectively control and express emotions in stressful situations. At the same time, the introduction of non-verbal communication courses, focusing on the teaching of facial expression, body language, and eye contact skills, is designed to help students better use body language to enhance persuasive speech. Additionally, the academy can also conduct cultural sensitivity training, enabling students to understand and respect diverse communication styles and expectations across various cultural backgrounds. Such training is beneficial not only for international contexts but also for navigating the complexities of domestic multicultural settings. A platform for simulated presentations can be complemented by real-time feedback, allowing students to identify their speaking strengths and areas for enhancement through hands-on experience.

By implementing these targeted and practical measures, the academy not only enhances students' presentation skills but also equips them with the communication capabilities necessary for successful professional interactions in their future careers.

The Causes of Students' Anxiety

Table 2: Participants' Target Needs on Language

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Average	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Correctly on Pronunciation	12 (57.14%)	7 (33.33%)	2 (9.52%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Master intonation skilfully	11 (52.38%)	6 (28.57%)	3 (14.29%)	1 (4.76%)	0 (0%)

Avoid “tongue slip”	10 (47.62%)	8 (38.1%)	3 (14.29%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Use long sentence structure.	5 (23.81%)	7 (33.33%)	7 (33.33%)	2 (9.52%)	0 (0%)
Use formal oral expressions	11 (52.38%)	7 (33.33%)	2 (9.52%)	1 (4.76%)	0 (0%)
Balance accuracy & fluency.	10 (47.62%)	9 (42.86%)	1 (4.76%)	1 (4.76%)	0 (0%)
Use complex clauses	7 (33.33%)	9 (42.86%)	4 (19.05%)	1 (4.76%)	0 (0%)

Table 3: Participants’ Actual Achievements

Items	Strongly Agree	Agree	Average	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inaccurate pronunciation	5 (23.81%)	8 (38.1%)	4 (19.05%)	2 (9.52%)	2 (9.52%)

Difficult to master intonation	5 (23.81%)	7 (33.33%)	5 (23.81%)	2 (9.52%)	2 (9.52%)
Suffer from "tongue slip"	6 (28.57%)	3 (14.29%)	7 (33.33%)	4 (19.05%)	1 (4.76%)
Use simple sentence structure.	7 (33.33%)	7 (33.33%)	3 (14.29%)	4 (19.05%)	0 (0%)
Use informal oral expressions	5 (23.81%)	10 (47.62%)	5 (23.81%)	1 (4.76%)	0 (0%)
Cannot balance accuracy & fluency	7 (33.33%)	5 (23.81%)	6 (28.57%)	3 (14.29%)	0 (0%)
Cannot use complex clauses	7 (33.33%)	7 (33.33%)	4 (19.05%)	2 (9.52%)	1 (4.76%)

Table: 4 Gap Analysis

Items	Desire for achieving	Fail to Achieve
Correctly on Pronunciation	90.48%	38.1%
Master intonation skilfully	80.95%	42.86%
Avoid “tongue slip ”	85.72%	57.14%
Use long sentence structure.	57.14%	33.34%
Use formal & accurate oral expressions	80.95%	28.58%
Balance accuracy & fluency.	90.48%	42.86%
Use complex clauses	76.19%	33.34%

In terms of the desire for achievement, 90% of the students were mainly focused on achieving accurate pronunciation and maintaining a balance between accuracy and fluency. More than 80% of the students expressed their desire to avoid tongue mistakes, and the vast majority (80.95%) expressed their desire to master the intonation and to use formal oral expression correctly, indicating that most Chinese students attach great importance to pronunciation standards. In contrast, the desire to properly process long and complex sentences, though less intense, also exceeded 70%. Thus, the above data highlights a significant concern regarding the fervent pursuit of English standardisation among Chinese international students, particularly in the realm of

pronunciation. The intense focus on achieving standardised pronunciation may potentially give rise to language anxiety, and this could be a crucial factor contributing to the subpar academic presentation performance among Chinese international students.

However, the “Fail to Achieve” column reveals some discrepancies between desire and actual achievement. While there is a strong desire to master certain skills, the actual achievement percentages are notably lower. This study suggests that students’ anxiety in academic presentation is closely related to the gap between their desire for oral expression and their actual achievement. As can be seen from the table, students have high expectations for improving their oral performance, such as correct pronunciation, mastering intonation, and avoiding “tongue-tying” (Desire for Achieving column). However, the actual achievement rate was relatively low; for example, only 38.1% of students achieved correct pronunciation, and 42.86% achieved mastery of intonation skills. This gap can cause students to feel anxious during the presentation process because they worry about whether their speaking skills are fluent and accurate enough to effectively convey their message to the audience. In addition, students’ desire to avoid “tongue-tying” and use formal oral expressions was also higher, but actual achievement rates remained low. This can cause students to worry that they may pause, slip up, or use fewer formal expressions during a speech, increasing their nervousness and anxiety.

Furthermore, students also hold high aspirations regarding employing sophisticated forms of expression, such as utilising long sentence structures and employing formal oral expressions. However, the actual attainment rate remains relatively low. For instance, although 80.95% of students aspire to use formal oral expressions, only 28.58% of them succeed in doing so. This disparity may lead students to perceive their speech expression as lacking in standardisation and professionalism, thereby exacerbating their feelings of anxiety and tension.

The research reveals the issues students face in their quest for perfect pronunciation and standardised English, a pursuit that paradoxically exacerbates their speech anxiety rather than enhancing their linguistic capabilities. This anxiety primarily stems from the high standards students set for themselves to achieve native-like proficiency. When they fail to meet these expectations in actual academic presentations, they experience discomfort and embarrassment. The negative impact of this emotional state extends beyond the psychological aspect, affecting their ability to perform in public. They rely excessively on scripts and prepared materials during speeches, which diminishes their opportunities for spontaneous expression and further restricts the natural development of their language skills and their ability to adapt in changing contexts.

Moreover, this continuous internal pressure can lead to excessive self-monitoring in language use, where students worry about every potential error in their speech output. This excessive anxiety and self-monitoring can cause hesitation and unnaturalness in speech, reducing fluency and spontaneity. Therefore, this issue is not just a technical problem in language learning but also a psychological and emotional challenge.

In response to this issue, the research suggests that educators should focus on establishing a supportive learning environment that includes creating an atmosphere where errors are allowed and attempts are encouraged, allowing students to practice and improve their language skills without fear of failure. Additionally, educators should provide targeted skill training, such as through role-playing and simulated speeches, to enhance students’ practical application abilities, not just linguistic correctness. Educators should also help students set more realistic and achievable learning goals. By teaching metacognitive learning strategies, educators can help students understand their learning processes, learn how to assess their progress, and adjust their learning strategies based on actual conditions. This approach can enhance students’ self-regulation capabilities, reduce

CONCLUSION

The overview of this research indicates the existence of public speaking anxiety, demonstrated by a range of behaviours such as hand tremors, stuttering speech, frequent use of filler words, inconsistent eye contact, and the inability to deliver speeches without relying entirely on scripts. These behaviours mirror the physical tension and psychological strain experienced by students when confronted with public speaking.

Research has also shown that the students' excessive pursuit of pronunciation and English standardisation also aggravates their speech anxiety. This excessive pursuit of perfect pronunciation not only increases students' anxiety but also may affect their self-confidence and performance ability, which will affect their performance and effectiveness in public speech. Besides, students' anxiety during academic presentations is related to the gap between their desire for verbal expression and their actual achievements. Students hold high expectations for improving their verbal skills, such as correct pronunciation, mastering intonation, and avoiding stumbling over words, yet the actual achievement rates are relatively low. This disparity can lead to students feeling anxious during presentations, worrying about whether their oral communication skills are fluent and accurate enough to effectively convey their message to the audience. Additionally, students' desire to use complex sentence structures and formal oral expressions is also high, but the actual achievement rates remain relatively low. This gap may cause students to perceive their presentations as lacking standardisation and professionalism, thus intensifying their anxiety and nervousness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In tackling language anxiety among Chinese international students, educators and language programs should adopt a multifaceted approach.

First, in addition to focusing on the accuracy of language use, the researchers suggest that fostering a supportive and inclusive learning atmosphere is also crucial. Students who experienced a low level of anxiety can perform better and actively participate in the classroom (Bashosh et al., 2013). Therefore, the researchers believe that by creating an open and supportive classroom environment, teachers can encourage students to express their opinions freely. This environment helps students feel accepted and understood, especially when expressing anxiety and concerns. Group discussion and role-playing: Designing group discussion and role-playing activities allows students to do initial practice in smaller groups, helping them build confidence and comfort before expressing themselves in front of a larger group.

Considering that some students may have deeply ingrained habits of excessive pursuit of pronunciation standards, it may require long-term and continuous support and guidance to change. Further research could explore how various teaching methods and strategies affect the pronunciation anxiety experienced by Chinese international students. For instance, a comparison between traditional pronunciation training courses and comprehensive courses focused on communication and interaction may help determine the most effective approach to alleviate students' anxiety and improve their pronunciation abilities (Gani, Fajrina, & Hanifa, 2015). The researchers believe that while attaching importance to pronunciation and language fluency practice, excessive emphasis on perfect standard pronunciation should be avoided so as not to increase the psychological burden of students. Regularly arrange speech practice, which may not be too long or too complicated at the beginning. The focus is to let students gradually adapt to the scene of standing in front of others and speaking. When providing feedback, teachers should emphasise positive feedback, specifically point out areas that can be improved, and avoid excessive criticism, so as not to increase students' psychological pressure.

In addition, the integration of metacognitive strategies into academic speech courses, especially to ease students' speech anxiety, is a very effective approach. These strategies can help students better understand and manage their learning processes and emotional states, thereby improving their confidence and ability to express themselves in public. According to the metacognitive theories, students can learn how to monitor and regulate their learning behaviour, which helps them better manage learning progress and resources when preparing for academic presentations (Flavell, 1979; Schraw & Moshman, 1995; Hartman, 2001). Research suggests a series of practical strategies for reducing speech anxiety, including mindfulness meditation and role-playing exercises, and the self-regulated learning model emphasises the importance of goal setting, strategy implementation, and self-feedback (Schraw & Moshman, 1995; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001; Pintrich, 2002). These elements apply to educating students on how to set specific goals for upcoming presentations, choose appropriate preparation strategies, and conduct effective self-assessments (Ku & Ho, 2010; Rivas et al., 2022).

The researchers suggest that these strategies can be directly applied to the preparation of academic presentations. First, by teaching students how to control their nervousness through techniques such as deep breathing, mindfulness meditation, and self-suggestion, classes will have a few minutes of meditation before the presentation to help students manage their anxiety. Then, the students' sense of preparation and self-control will be enhanced through rehearsals and self-monitoring exercises. The students will have several rehearsals and record their performance and feelings using the self-evaluation form or reflection journal after each rehearsal. The teachers will provide feedback and guide the students to adjust the content and expression of the speech according to the self-evaluation results. In addition, help students see their progress and reduce anxiety through clear goal setting and continuous feedback, guide students to set specific and achievable speech goals, such as improving verbal fluency or using gestures effectively, and review these goals regularly during the course and provide positive, motivating feedback. It also includes steps to analyse and adjust strategies to enable students to adapt learning strategies to their own performance and feelings, improve adaptability, and teach students how to analyse various aspects of a speech (such as content structure, audience response, and personal expression) and adjust their preparation and presentation strategies based on the results of the analysis. Finally, the course design will integrate long-term metacognitive training, such as holding regular seminars and workshops, so that students can share their learning and adjustment experience and learn from each other, so as to cultivate students' metacognitive awareness in the long term and make it become a natural thinking mode. These comprehensive approaches not only reduce students' speech anxiety but also systematically improve their speech skills and self-regulation.

LIMITATIONS

Admittedly, the limited sample size or constraints within the study's scope may prevent this research from fully capturing the overall situation of the Chinese international student population. Future research suggests expanding the sample size and diversifying sample sources to more accurately capture the overall picture of China's international student population by recruiting more participants across different schools, disciplines, and cultural backgrounds while taking into account the differences and characteristics between different groups.

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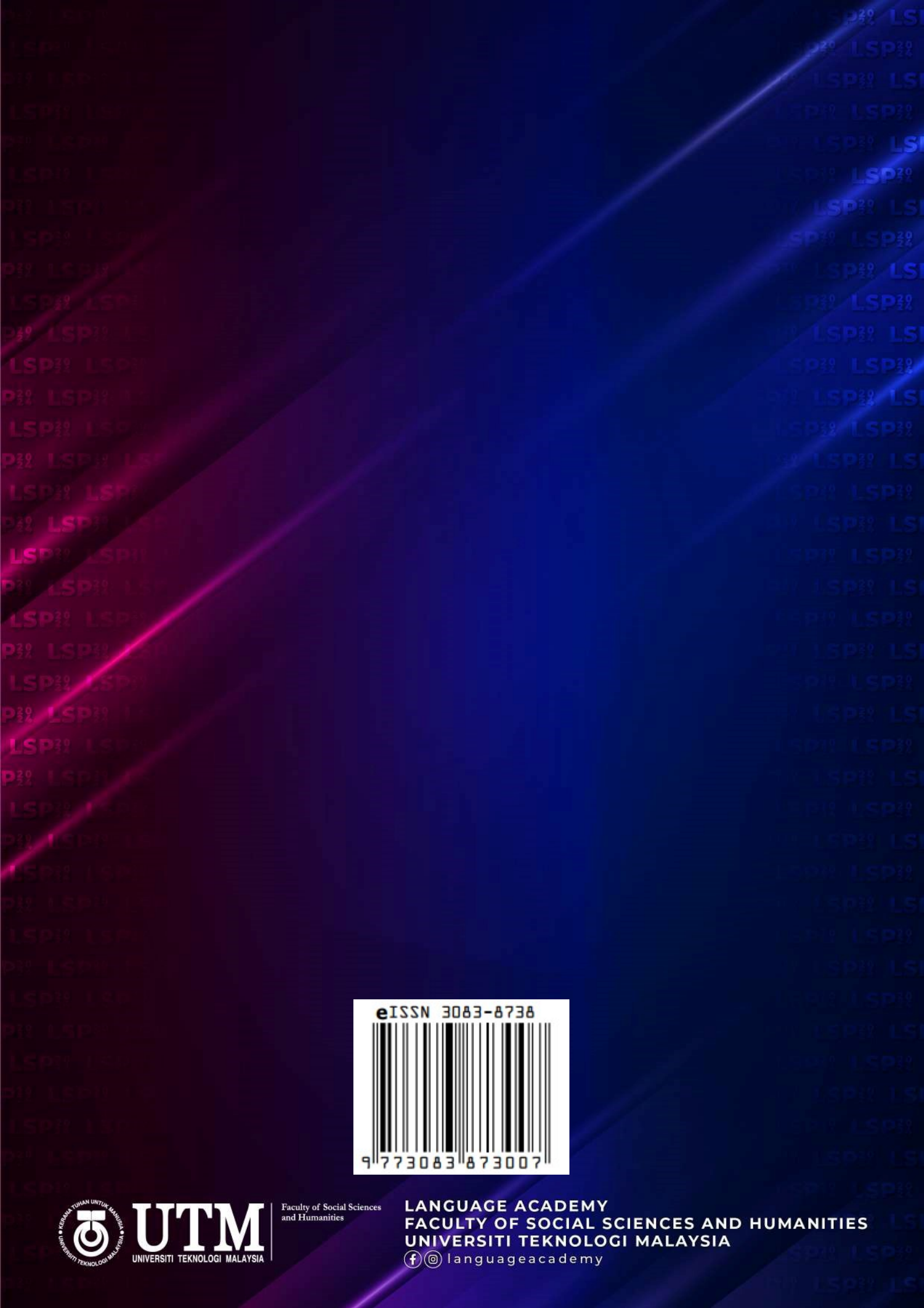
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