

The Impact of Mahmoud Darwish's Diasporic Identity on His Poetry: A Post-colonial Study of Selected Poems

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine the reflection of diasporic identity on Mahmoud Darwish's poetry. The study also examines the impact of Mahmoud Darwish's poetry on Palestinians' suffering in their homeland. As many are aware, immigration or displacement to another country and feeling sad due to being far from home can have an impact on a person's life. Mahmoud Darwish, who was exiled from Palestine, continued to resist compulsory displacement through his unwavering poetry. Despite leaving his homeland, he consistently maintained his Palestinian identity. This is clearly evident in his poems, where his resistance through poetry gained strength even while he was far away. The theoretical framework in this study is mainly based on the postcolonial perspective. Applying postcolonial theory in the analysis of Darwish's poems helps provide new insights into the ways how colonial histories continue to shape and influence the Palestinians' identities. In addition, it sheds light on how Darwish reflected his own experience as a Palestinian living in the diaspora. This hard experience as a diasporic individual, has largely shaped his poetic works. Finally, the findings of the study conclude that diasporic identity was widely portrayed in Darwish's poetry and showed the impact of exile and displacement on the construction of identity in his works.

Keywords: *diasporic identity, homeland, Mahmoud Darwish, poetry, post-colonialism*

Introduction

Being uprooted from one's homeland is one of the most profound hardships a person can experience. Immigration to a foreign land often brings feelings of sorrow and disconnection, as one is far from homeland. Mahmoud Darwish, a prominent poet who was exiled from his homeland Palestine, is a prime example of this kind of expatriation. He is often called the poet of resistance. Throughout his life, he continued to resist the brutal Israeli occupation through his poetry. This strong affinity of his Palestinian land remained rooted in its soil. Despite being physically distant from his homeland, his sense of identity remained deeply tied to it. His poetic voice of resistance only grew stronger in exile.

The current paper explores how Darwish's diasporic identity influenced his poetry and examines how his work reflects the struggles of Palestinians in their homeland. This paper will first present social and historical background of Mahmoud Darwish and the concept of diaspora, whereas the theoretical framework in this study is mainly based on the postcolonial perspective. The study has been constructed in three sections:

First, it provides a background about Mahmoud Darwish, identity, diaspora, and postcolonial theory. Second, it highlights the discussion and analysis of five selected poems. Finally, it exposes the conclusion of the paper.

Mahmoud Darwish (1941-2008)

Mahmoud Darwish was born in Al-Birwa, a village in the Upper Galilee. When the Israeli Army occupied Palestine, Darwish and his family were forced to flee to Lebanon to escape the brutal attacks. Following the 1948 setback (The Nakba), Darwish experienced a profound sense of internal exile and a fractured identity. He was displaced from his homeland at the age of six with the establishment of Israel (Masood, 2020). When Darwish's family returned to their destroyed village, they were labeled as infiltrators; in official Israeli terminology, they were classified as "present-absentees".

As Darwish grew older, his defiant poetry frequently put him at odds with the Israeli authorities (Akter, 2018). Masood (2020) adds that Darwish later relocated to Haifa, where he was confined for ten years without permission to travel. He and his family were treated as internal refugees and aliens. In 1970, he left for Russia to study, and after that, he spent two years in Cairo. From Cairo, he moved to Beirut, where he stayed for another decade. Following the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, he fled to Syria, and eventually settled in Tunisia. Over the next ten years, he divided his time between Paris, Cyprus, and Tunisia. Darwish spent most of his life in exile, a matter which has deepened his national Palestinian identity.

Darwish's poetry steadily resists Israeli attempts to wipe out the Palestinian identity and history. Mena (2009), confirms that Darwish was regarded as the poet of his people, often seen as Palestine's Poet Laureate and a representative for those without a voice. He received several awards and was considered par excellence of the Palestinian National Poet. His poetry conveys a universal message rooted in particular, experiences of suffering, bridging the gaps between languages and nations, as it weaves national identity into a broader, universal context. During his time in Paris, he wrote many of his major poems, including *Fewer Roses* (1985), *I See What I Want* (1990), *Memory for Forgetfulness* (1995), *Why Did You Leave the Horse Alone?* (1995), and *Bed of the Stranger* (1998). Throughout his career, Darwish published fourteen poetic collections, beginning with *Wingless Birds* in 1960 (Masood, 2020).

Diaspora

The term "Diaspora" originated in Greece. It comes from the Greek verb 'diaspeiro', which means "to disperse" or "to scatter" and has been in use since the 5th century B.C. (Thepboriruk, 2015, p.7). The concept of diaspora relates to immigration and dispersal, commonly referring to people living outside their homeland. It is a term of self-identification used by various groups whose members or ancestors migrated to different places. There are three key factors that define a diaspora: First, the relocation to two or more foreign locations after the

initial dispersal; second, the preservation of memories, visions, or myths of the homeland, motivating a commitment to its upkeep; and third, ongoing connections among the dispersed communities, driven by a shared ethnic or communal consciousness and solidarity. Additionally, beyond forced expulsion, other causes for the formation of diasporas include the search for work, trade opportunities, and colonization (Kafle, 2010).

According to Noman (2019), the term "diaspora" has its roots in Western history, originally referring to Jewish diaspora communities. Over time, it has come to encompass other groups like the Armenian, Greek, Chinese, Kurdish, Palestinian, Indian, and Sikh, whose experiences of displacement, cultural preservation, and resistance to assimilation have distinguished them from regular immigrants. The primary drivers of the Arab diaspora are wars and economic or social instability, with conflicts and security crises escalating across various Arab nations. As a result, millions of Arabs have been forced to flee the devastation of war, often resorting to illegal methods to reach foreign lands.

A crucial aspect of the Arab diaspora is the "Middle Passage", the difficult journey from the Arab world to places like Europe or the Americas, often marked by suffering, similar to the plight of Palestinians in 1948. This period marks the beginning of the Arab diaspora, when many Palestinians were expelled from their homeland in an event known as the Nakba in Arabic. The Nakba refers to the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians, leading to the destruction of their communities and their forced displacement, replaced systematically by another population. This event is the primary cause of the Palestinian diaspora, with most refugees settling in Arab countries and living in camps, while others moved to foreign nations, unable to return home to this day (Noman, 2019).

Identity

According to Carter and Marony (2018), identity refers to an individual's internal designation that defines who you are as a unique person. This notion includes someone's morals, his role in a society, such as a social worker, or having a membership in a group, such as being a Democrat. These three components collectively come together to shape the self as a distinctive entity, composed of meaningful structures that differentiate one from others. These identities influence who we are, drive our behavior, and affect emotional outcomes in social settings (Carter & Marony, 2018).

On the other hand, Matsuda (2015), points out that identity has several key characteristics: it is not optional, it is multifaceted and constantly changing. It is shaped through socially shared resources used to create meaning, and it is both personal and social in nature. Additionally, identity cannot be taught, as each person possesses a unique identity (Matsuda, 2015).

Besides, Stets and Serpe (2019) add that identity consists of a set of meanings tied to the roles individuals hold in society (role identities), the groups they belong to (group identities), and the unique ways they view themselves (person identities). These meanings are the result of individuals reflecting on themselves

within these roles, groups, or personal identities. Broadly, identities help define an individual's position in interactions, shape their behavior, support the formation of stable social relationships, and enable social interactions.

The salience of an identity depends on how committed one is to it. Commitment involves social structure, as it refers to the extent of a person's connections to specific social networks. A person's placement in these networks reflects their position within the social structure. When an individual's connections depend on maintaining a certain identity, that identity becomes more salient. Therefore, the stronger the commitment to an identity, the greater its importance or salience Stets and Serpe (2019).

Furthermore, identity is shaped through social interactions with others and evolves within pre-existing "interpretations of the world" that align with people's experiences. The formation of identity is a specific, historically grounded process of interaction, which cannot be simplified to a single, deliberate choice like selecting from a menu or any other singular conscious action (Pierce, 2016, p. 9).

Based on his investigation, Romanovska (2019) concludes that many researchers acknowledge that "living place" plays a crucial role in shaping identity. Current observations suggest that the identity crisis is linked to globalization which is closely related to challenges surrounding national identity. The relationship between individuals and places has been extensively studied and is widely accepted as significant. Psychologists and cultural experts agree that people have a universal need to connect with a specific place. Home, in particular, is regarded as the most essential space for a person's existence. People typically shape their environments, imbuing them with personal, emotional, and symbolic significance. In return, places influence individuals and their characters, fostering a sense of belonging through this interaction (Romanovska (2019, p. 42). In general, people develop a group identity through their attachment to social groups, which forms their "social identity". This connection to groups shapes one's social or collective identity, fostering a sense of belonging. As a result, these social groups come together to form a national identity (Asgarli, 2019).

On the other hand, Thepboriruk (2015), argues that diasporic identities are shaped by the tensions that arise from various factors affecting individuals. These tensions occur between the language and culture of their homeland and that of their host country; between how ethnicity is expressed within their family and their larger community; and between their personal needs and the social constraints of their new environment (private versus public life). In addition, diasporic identities involve a sense of both closeness and separation, based on where we mentally position ourselves in relation to both our homeland and host country Thepboriruk (2015).

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial literature in a theoretical parlance is defined as the literature which belongs to the countries that once have gone through the bitter and biting phase of European Colonialism. In other words, postcolonial literature is the literature that has been written in the Third World Countries like Asia, Africa, South America, and other erstwhile colonized spaces based on the theme of subjugation and resistance. Bill Ashcroft et al. (1989), define postcolonial literature in the context of the following countries:

...Literatures of African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean countries, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island countries, and Sri Lanka are all postcolonial literatures. What each of these literatures has in common beyond their specific and distinct regional characteristics is that they emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with the imperial power... (Ashcroft et al., 1989, p. 2).

Furthermore, the term postcolonial refers to the period following colonization. Colonization has left a lasting influence on the political, economic, and cultural aspects of postcolonial nations and societies. Its effects continue to shape both former colonial powers and their colonies in the present. In this context, some critics state that postcolonial theory is a method of analyzing not only works of literature, but also culture and history that emphasizes the negative consequences of colonization. For instance, Wallascek (2015) argues that the concept of the postcolonial encompasses both the period "after colonization" and the idea of going "beyond colonization", making these two aspects inseparable (Wallascek, 2015, p. 220).

Similarly, Dizayi (2019) argues that postcolonial theory, or postcolonialism, examines the influence and legacy of colonialism from the post-World War II era to the present. It explores the socio-political, psychological, and political effects of colonialism's aftermath. Additionally, it focuses on how newly independent societies navigate the challenges of self-determination while resisting and rejecting colonial social and political structures (Dizayi, 2019, p. 28).

According to Hashim and Ahmed (2014), postcolonial theory is well-established framework which tackles issues such as the pursuit of identity, resistance, displacement, the loss of land, homelessness, and the interactions between the colonized and the colonizers. In addition, postcolonial theory serves as a tool of resistance, allowing for the challenge of any oppressive or discriminatory actions, no matter the context or historical period. It represents an ongoing and enduring fight, intertwined with the broader experience of humanity (Rukundwa & Van Aarde, 2007, p. 1171).

Accordingly, postcolonial theories can be seen as a group of related ideas that share social, political, and moral concerns about the history and lasting impact of colonialism, focusing on how it continues to affect people's lives, well-being, and opportunities (Browne, Smye and Varcoe, 2005).

Discussion

In this research paper, some of Darwish's selected poems have been highlighted in this context. The study critically focuses on the selected poems from a postcolonial perspective. These poems are as follows:

"مطر"
يا نوح
هبني غصن زيتون
ووالدتي حمامة
إنا صنعنا جنة
كانت نهايتها صناديق قمامة
يا نوح
لا ترحل بنا
أن الممات هنا سلامة
أنا جذور لا تعيش بغير أرض

Oh Noah!
Give me an olive branch
And my mother a dove
We made a paradise
Its end was trash cans
Oh, Noah!
Do not take us away
Death here is safety
I am roots that do not live without land.

These verses express the meaning of identity, belonging and diaspora. As in many of his works, Darwish uses symbols to express the Palestinian issue and suffering of exile. Here olive is a symbol of peace in the Arab and Palestinian culture and it is the most important symbol of Palestinian land and identity. Darwish asks for the olive branch which means his desire for stopping the war, bringing peace and belonging to the land. Moreover, mentioning "my mother" refers to the nostalgia for the homeland and return to the roots, as the mother symbolizes the core of heritage and identity.

إنا صنعنا جنة كانت نهايتها صناديق قمامة

This stanza reflects the suffering of Palestinians due to the war. Darwish portrays how Palestinians made their homeland as a paradise, which was a beautiful land before The Nakba and the occupation, but it ends with destruction and displacements that turned paradise into a dark and a pariah place. Indeed, it refers to the diaspora and the loss of the beautiful homeland that has turned into ruins and memories.

يا نوح لا ترحل بنا

Noah may refer to the prophet Noah who believed in Allah that saved him from the flood. Darwish asks not to take them away, which refers to the diaspora. He does not want to leave again, but to stay or come home soon. Here Darwish reflects the suffering of Palestinians who are forced to leave their homeland.

أن الممات هنا سلامة

In a similar way, Darwish prefers to stay in his homeland, even if it means death, rather than living in a diaspora and exile. Death in the homeland is safer and more peaceful than living away from it.

أنا جذور لا تعيش بغير أرض

This phrase directly summarizes the issue of diasporic identity. The roots here refer to the deep belonging for the homeland, his forefather's land. Darwish clearly expresses the impossibility of living away from his homeland where diaspora means uprooting roots of identity and belonging.

"آدم الجنتين"
أنا آدم الجنتين فقدتهما مرتين
فاطردوني على مهل
واقتلوني على مهل
تحت زيتونتي مع لوركا

I am the Adam of two Edens lost to me twice
Expel me slowly
Kill me slowly
Under my olive tree
With Lorca

These verses explain that continuity of exile and uprooting from the land. In addition, they embody the Palestinians alienation which extends across time, making the Palestinians identity an oppressed and exiled identity like Adam after his exclusion from paradise. In most of his works, Palestine is used as a symbol

alluding to the loss of Eden. Moreover, mentioning Lorca brings to mind that the Palestinian issue, identity or diaspora is not just a political issue, but a human suffering that transcends the boundaries of time and place.

"مقعد في القطار"
كل أهل القطار يعودون للأهل
لكننا لا نعود إلى أي بيت
نسافر بحثاً عن الصفر
كي نستعيد صواب الفراش

All the passengers go back to their families
But we do not go back to any home
We travel in search for zero
To regain the rightness of the bed

In these verses, Darwish explains the experience of diasporic identity in his poetry. It can be seen that people usually travel and return back to their families and homes, but for the Palestinians, they cannot return to their homes due to occupation or displacement. There is a sense of loss of place and identity. In addition, using the word "zero" (الصفر) is used as a symbol for something that does not exist or as a starting point. Using "travel" in this line means searching for stability that has been lost as if the Palestinians are traveling in a whirlwind of wandering without finding a clear destination. Furthermore, the word "bed" is used as a symbol of stability, safety and a very simple thing that person owns, but for the Palestinians, it is an unattainable dream. They are trying to restore a place which makes them safe and secure.

In general, Darwish shows the suffering of the Palestinians in losing their spatial identity and feeling alienated. Continuous immigrations and displacements make it possible to return home, making the Palestinians live in a state of constant search for stability and identity that is lost by diaspora.

"من أنا دون منفى"
صرنا طليقين للكانتات الغريبة بين الغيوم
وصرنا طليقين من جاذبية أرض الهوية
ماذا سنفعل ماذا سنفعل من دون
منفى وليل طويل يحدق في الماء

We have come free to the
Strange creatures among the clouds
And we are free from the gravity
of identity's land
What will we do what will we do without
Exile, a long night staring at the water

In this stanza, Darwish explains how the Palestinians are forced to adapt to new conditions, such as living in exile and being away from the homeland. "Among clouds" (بين الغيوم) symbolizes the unstable life where they live between two worlds and not linked to fixed roots in a world full of loss and negation.

وَصَرْنَا طَلِيقِينَ مِنْ جَاذِبِيَةِ أَرْضِ الْهَوِيَةِ

Here Darwish expresses a state of separation from the land and separation from the original identity due to exile and dispersion.

مَاذَا سَنَفْعَلُ مَاذَا سَنَفْعَلُ مَنْ دُونَ مَنْفَى وَلَيْلٍ طَوِيلٍ يَحْدَقُ فِي الْمَاءِ

Darwish is questioning what he would do if there was no exile. It became an integral part of his life, as if he could not imagine existence without exile. Although the exile is painful, it became familiar for them as refugees.

Conclusion

Mahmoud Darwish is undoubtedly one of the most influential Arab poets, who dedicated his life to conveying the message that living in the diaspora, especially due to political issues, is constantly challenging. A person may face inner conflicts regarding his identity, torn between staying in the host country or returning to his homeland. In his poetry, Darwish clearly portrays diasporic identity and illustrates the impact of exile and displacement on the construction of his nation's identity.

Darwish's poetry is the production of his personal experiences with the Nakba and exile. These painful experiences have shaped his works. In addition, the revolution and Israeli occupation have deepened his national Palestinian identity. His poetry is still an icon of resilience, liberation, resistance and identity. He proves himself as the voice of all Palestinian people as well as all oppressed humanity in the world who longs for freedom, peace and justice.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, A.A., & M.D.; Methodology, A.A; data collection, M.D.; data analysis, M.D.; writing—original draft preparation, M.D.; writing—review and editing, A.A. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data Availability Statement

The data used in this study can be accessed by making a reasonable request to the corresponding author. Since our research is in the field of literature, the data was collected from books, academic journals, and online resources. Furthermore, this is a qualitative study, so it does not need any samples, statistical analysis, surveys, questionnaires, images, or similar research tools.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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We solemnly declare that this research has not been sent or published anywhere. It has also been conducted independently and it is the result of our own mutual efforts. There is no external assistance, whether academic, editorial, or financial, was received during the conception, execution, or writing. All sources of information have been appropriately acknowledged and cited.

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Enhancing The PSCAS: New Insights into Public Speaking Anxiety Among ESL Undergraduates

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Abstract

This study examines public speaking anxiety among undergraduate ESL students using the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS). A quantitative approach was employed, with data collected from 65 participants using the 17-item PSCAS questionnaire. Findings reveal that Fear of Negative Evaluation ($M = 3.17$) and Communication Apprehension ($M = 3.06$) are the most significant anxiety factors, followed by Comfort in Speaking English ($M = 3.02$) and Test Anxiety ($M = 2.98$). These results highlight the challenges students face in verbal communication, particularly concerns about social evaluation. Additionally, thematic analysis uncovered anxiety triggers not explicitly addressed in the original PSCAS, underscoring limitations in its ability to capture impromptu speaking anxiety and interactions with fluent speakers. To address these gaps, the study expands the PSCAS to improve its accuracy in assessing speaking anxiety. The refined scale enhances validity, offering a more comprehensive understanding of students' communication challenges. By aligning self-reported experiences with assessment tools, this study emphasizes the need for targeted interventions, including ungraded speaking activities and structured real-world communication exposure. Future research should further validate the revised PSCAS in diverse ESL contexts to enhance its applicability.

Keywords: *disfluency, fluenceme, hesitation, on-screen communication*

Introduction

Public speaking anxiety (PSA) or glossophobia is a common challenge among tertiary students, particularly during classroom presentations (Balakrishnan et al., 2022). Its severity varies, from mild nervousness to panic attacks (Li, 2020). Public speaking is a skill that can be developed and perfected. While some individuals are comfortable speaking and communicating in front of an audience, for others, it can be a source of anxiety. While some individuals are naturally confident speakers, others struggle with symptoms such as stammering, sweating, and dizziness (Lall et al., 2018). Introverted or neurotic individuals are also more prone to PSA (Li, 2020).

University students experience PSA at significantly higher rates than the general population (Fong et al., 2024). Studies have shown that 88.4% of Indonesian senior university students reported moderate to high speaking anxiety (Fathikasari et al., 2022), while 54.67% of Malaysian undergraduates experienced medium

anxiety levels (Nasir & Isa, 2021). In Finland, 57% of education students reported high speaking anxiety (Gallego et al., 2021).

Public speaking requires more than verbal proficiency; it also depends on non-verbal skills such as controlled breathing and body language (Fong et al., 2024). Since not all students are naturally skilled speakers, structured practice is essential for confidence building and career preparation. PSA is often linked to limited English proficiency, vocabulary constraints, and fear of making grammatical mistakes, which hinder students from engaging in academic discussions (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020; Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020; Sadighi & Dastpak, 2017; Mohd Nor et al., 2019).

Hence, the current study is conducted to address the following research questions:

RO1: What are the levels of public speaking anxiety among undergraduate ESL students in classroom settings, based on PSCAS mean scores for the four factors?

RO2: How do undergraduate ESL students describe their public speaking anxiety, and to what extent do their experiences align with the PSCAS framework?

RO3: How can the PSCAS be refined to better capture students' speaking anxiety in academic settings?

By adopting the PSCAS framework, this study aims to assess PSA levels, explore students' experiences, and refine the scale for better representation of speaking anxiety in academic contexts.

Literature Review

The Prevalence and Determinants of Public Speaking Anxiety

Public speaking anxiety (PSA) is a social anxiety disorder that affects individuals who experience distress when speaking before an audience (Gallego et al., 2022). It is particularly common among tertiary students, especially during classroom presentations (Balakrishnan et al., 2022). Approximately one in five people experience PSA, making it one of the most prevalent forms of anxiety (Bartholomay & Houlihan, 2016). Symptoms such as sweating, stammering, and light-headedness arise from overanalysing audience perceptions, leading to a loss of confidence (Lall et al., 2020).

A major contributor to PSA among ESL learners is limited English proficiency. Students often fear speaking due to weak language skills, leading to anxiety and self-doubt (Damayanti & Listyani, 2020). Inadequate proficiency further intensifies fear, as students struggle to express ideas clearly (Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020). Vocabulary limitations also create communication barriers, causing embarrassment and hesitation (Sadighi & Dastpak, 2017). Fear of making grammatical mistakes further discourages students from participating in discussions (Mohd Nor et al., 2019).

Negative feedback and peer assessment also heighten anxiety. Students worry about criticism, leading to distress and avoidance of speaking tasks (Sinaga et al., 2020). Lower proficiency exacerbates this fear, as students struggle to construct grammatically correct sentences under pressure (Bensalem, 2023; Megawati &

Permana, 2022). Additionally, classroom activities such as oral presentations and answering questions trigger anxiety, as students fear judgment from lecturers and peers (Mulyani, 2018; Taly & Paramasivam, 2020). By understanding these factors, targeted strategies can be developed to help students manage PSA and improve their speaking confidence. Given these multiple determinants of PSA, it is crucial to explore comprehensive strategies that not only target language proficiency but also psychological and social factors influencing speaking confidence.

Approaches for Evaluating Public Speaking Anxiety

The study of speaking anxiety is well-established, with several widely used frameworks and scales to assess anxiety levels and factors that contribute to it such as Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and Personal Report of Public Speaking Anxiety (PRPSA). Assessing PSA accurately is crucial for developing targeted interventions, making these tools valuable in both research and practice.

FLCAS was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) which consisted of 33 items that address frequent anxiety related ideas, emotions, symptoms, and actions among foreign language learners (Papi & Khajavy, 2023). FLCAS is one of the commonly used frameworks to investigate language learners' speaking anxiety, as it helps to facilitate research on L2 anxiety by offering a valuable tool for researchers to conduct studies and compare findings across various contexts and groups (Papi & Khajavy, 2023). However, some studies have highlighted the shortcomings of FLCAS. For instance, Lee and Ye (2023) conducted a G theory analysis to examine the reliability of FLCAS, and it was found that when the occasion was taken into account, the reliability coefficients were significantly lower than the Cronbach's alpha values. On top of that, the reliability of one of the factors in FLCAS, which is *test anxiety*, was found to be way lower than the acceptable range of reliability (Lee & Ye, 2023). Additionally, FLCAS may not fully capture the situational and dynamic nature of PSA, particularly in relation to ESL learners who experience anxiety differently in formal and informal settings.

Meanwhile, PRPSA was developed by McCroskey (1970) and consisted of 34 items to measure public speaking anxiety, with 22 negatively formulated items and 12 positively formulated items (Mörtberg et al., 2018). PRPSA focuses on addressing public speaking anxiety within educational settings and since performance anxiety is widespread among students, the PRPSA is likely to be particularly effective in helping individuals in these contexts (Mörtberg et al., 2018). They further add that PRPSA could improve research and clinical practices by providing a reliable tool for diagnosing and treating public speaking anxiety in students. Although incorporating positive and negative items can lead to clear factor loadings and stronger internal consistency, acquiescence bias, where respondents tend to agree with statements regardless of their actual feelings, remains a potential limitation (Miller, Lovler, & McIntire, 2013 as cited in Bartholomay &

Houlihan, 2016). This highlights the need for a more refined evaluation tool that accurately captures PSA dynamics among ESL learners.

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The Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS), developed by Yaikhong and Usaha (2012), has been instrumental in assessing PSA within this demographic. However, recent studies suggest the need to revisit and possibly modify the PSCAS to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. Despite its wide usage, PSCAS may not fully address variations in anxiety triggers across diverse student populations, particularly in ESL contexts where cultural and linguistic factors play a significant role.

The PSCAS has undergone various adaptations to better suit different cultural and educational contexts. For instance, a study by Ediwarman and Pahamzah (2023) employed a modified version of the PSCAS to assess anxiety during student presentations, highlighting the scale's versatility in different academic settings. Besides, several interventions have been explored to mitigate PSA among ESL undergraduates. Pontillas (2020) introduced "Popsispeak," an innovative approach combining popular culture and public speaking exercises, which significantly reduced anxiety levels and improved oral communication skills. However, while such interventions demonstrate promise, their long-term effectiveness and scalability remain areas for further exploration.

The integration of technology in education has opened new avenues for addressing PSA as well. Yaprak (2022) explored the use of the Canvas learning management system to reduce speaking anxiety, demonstrating that digital platforms can provide supportive environments for practice and feedback, thereby alleviating anxiety. Recent developments include free online Virtual Reality platforms designed to help individuals overcome speech anxiety by allowing users to practice public speaking in various virtual settings, from empty rooms to packed stadiums. These tools aim to make public speaking treatment more accessible and cost-effective. Despite their potential, concerns regarding accessibility, student engagement, and technological barriers must be addressed to ensure equitable benefits for all learners.

Enhancing the PSCAS and understanding the multifaceted nature of PSA among ESL undergraduates are crucial steps toward developing effective interventions. Future research should continue to refine assessment tools like the PSCAS and explore diverse strategies, including technological solutions and personalized approaches, to support students in overcoming public speaking anxiety. Further investigations should also consider the intersection of psychological, linguistic, and cultural influences on PSA, ensuring that interventions are tailored to the specific needs of ESL learners.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods design to examine public speaking anxiety levels among ESL students in classroom settings. The aim was to identify sources of anxiety and explore how students experience and describe their anxiety, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis (Dawadi et al., 2021).

The sample consisted of 65 undergraduate students (47 female, 18 male) from Universiti Teknologi MARA, aged 18–26, who participated in an English proficiency workshop. Participants were purposively selected based on their interest in improving their English-speaking skills.

Data were collected using the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) by Yaikhong and Usaha (2012), a 17-item, 5-point Likert scale questionnaire, distributed via Google Forms at the end of the workshop on enhancing English language proficiency. To gain deeper insights, respondents were also asked to describe specific situations in which they felt anxious about speaking English through the open-ended question: "In what situations are you anxious about speaking English?"

The analysis involved several steps:

RO1: Identifying Anxiety Levels – Descriptive statistics were used to calculate mean scores for the four PSCAS factors: Fear of Negative Evaluation, Comfort in Speaking English, Test Anxiety, and Communication Apprehension.

RO2: Exploring Students' Experiences – Thematic analysis of open-ended responses identified recurring anxiety themes, illustrating how students experience and describe their anxiety.

RO3: Refining the PSCAS Framework – Qualitative themes were compared with PSCAS items to assess alignment and identify potential refinements for better capturing students' public speaking anxiety in academic settings.

By integrating both statistical data and thematic insights, the study provided a detailed exploration of the anxiety factors affecting ESL students and how these factors align with students' experiences in classroom speaking tasks.

Result and Discussions

This section presents the findings derived from the analysis of the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) evaluation and the thematic analysis of respondents' experiences with public speaking anxiety. The results are organized around two key areas: the quantitative analysis of anxiety levels based on PSCAS scores and the thematic exploration of how students describe their anxiety, with a comparison to the PSCAS framework.

Analysis of PSCAS Scores and Anxiety Levels

This section outlines the mean scores for the four identified factors of public speaking anxiety, as measured by the PSCAS. It provides an overview of the levels of anxiety experienced by undergraduate ESL students in classroom settings, offering insights into the intensity of their fear and discomfort during speaking tasks.

Table 1: Statistics of all PSCAS factors (Ch'ng et al., 2025)

Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation
Factor 1: Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.17	1.09
Factor 2: Comfort in Speaking English	3.02	0.87
Factor 3: Test Anxiety	2.98	1.07
Factor 4: Communication Apprehension	3.06	1.08

The overall statistics for each PSCAS factor are summarised in Table 1. Factor 1, Fear of Negative Evaluation, had the highest mean score ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 1.09$), indicating it as the most prominent source of anxiety among participants. This was followed by Factor 4, Communication Apprehension, with a mean of 3.06 ($SD = 1.08$), Factor 2, Comfort in Speaking English, with a mean of 3.02 ($SD = 0.87$), and Factor 3, Test Anxiety, with a mean of 2.98 ($SD = 1.07$).

The findings highlight Fear of Negative Evaluation as the most significant contributor to anxiety, followed by Communication Apprehension. While Test Anxiety is present, its impact appears less pronounced compared to the other two factors. The variability in responses, as shown by the standard deviations, suggests differing anxiety levels across participants. These results align with existing literature on language anxiety, which often identifies fear of negative evaluation as a key factor (Toubot et al., 2018; Daud et al., 2019). McCroskey's (1977) work on communication apprehension further supports these findings, underlining its influence on learners' confidence and communication willingness. While Test Anxiety is also notable, its effect is less prominent, corroborating research by Horwitz et al. (1986) and Liu (2007), which suggests that test anxiety frequently interacts with other anxiety types.

These results directly address the study's second and third research questions, focusing on anxiety levels and the key factors contributing to students' anxiety. The variability in anxiety levels emphasizes the need for targeted interventions, especially in addressing Fear of Negative Evaluation and Communication Apprehension, alongside support for managing Test Anxiety.

Thematic Insights and Comparison with PSCAS Factors

This section presents findings from the PSCAS evaluation and thematic analysis of respondents' public speaking anxiety. The focus is on the four PSCAS factors: Fear of Negative Evaluation, Comfort in Speaking

English, Test Anxiety, and Communication Apprehension. Additionally, responses reflecting broader anxiety not captured by the PSCAS factors were classified under the theme of General Anxiety. The analysis compares these themes with the PSCAS framework to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' anxiety in classroom settings.

Table 2: Thematic Insights and Comparison with PSCAS Factors (Ch'ng et al., 2025)

PSCAS Factors	PSCAS Question Items	Theme Identified	Explanation	Respondent Evidence
Fear of Negative Evaluation	6. I am afraid that other students will laugh at me while I am speaking English. 9. I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on. 11. It embarrasses me to volunteer to go out first to speak English 14. I feel anxious while I am waiting to speak English. 13. Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while I am speaking English. 16. I have trouble to coordinate my movements while I am speaking English.	Fear of Making Mistakes	Anxiety stemming from the fear of judgment from peers and instructors, leading to performance apprehension.	"Afraid of mistakes a pronunciation" "Pronounce, language" "Pronouncing the scientific word" "Afraid of wrong pronouns" "when i don't understand the topic"
		Public Speaking and Presentations	Pressure associated with formal speaking tasks, where the stakes of evaluation are perceived as high.	"Speak in public" "Speaking in front of many people." "Public Speaking" "In formal settings, such as presentation when I have to speak in front of people." "When talking in front of people / class" "When present or speaking test" "Presentations & speaking test"

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				"Public speaking and presentation" "I'm anxious about speaking English when i need to present using English language" "When speaking in front to many of audiences" "Presentation " "When do presenting" "In front of many people" "In formal settings, such as a presentation when I have to speak in front of people." "When I'm speaking in a formal situation" "Talking formally"
Comfort in Speaking English	4. I feel confident while I am speaking English. 8. I have no fear of speaking English. 10. I feel relaxed while I am speaking English. 12. I face the prospect of speaking English with confidence.	Understanding and Elaborating Ideas	Struggles with articulating complex thoughts and ideas, reflecting a lack of confidence in using English for communication.	"When I have to elaborate my points" "elaborating ideas" "Thinking about what idea I need to point out while having conversations" "explain something that i don't really know about" "lack of information"
Test Anxiety	1. I never feel quite sure of myself while I am speaking English. 7. I get nervous when the English teacher asks me to speak English which I have prepared in advance. 17. Even if I am very well prepared, I feel anxious about speaking English.	Exams and Tests	Anxiety related to the performance pressure during speaking assessments, which can negatively impact student confidence.	"During speaking test" "During examination" "For a speaking test especially in a group of unknown people" "When I sit for an exam, for example, I sit for a speaking test." "Tests and Exam" "Test I guess" "When present or speaking test"

				"Presentations & speaking test" "During the speaking test, when answering someone's question in English because my grammar is bad and I cannot think of a word in english."
		Impromptu Speaking	Anxiety experienced in unprepared speaking situations, contributing to a sense of helplessness and performance anxiety.	"When someone ask me the sudden question" "Impromptu situations, but I do try to calm myself down" "To think of an answer directly." "When trying to reply to someone who is talking to me." "When under too much pressure" "If I don't understand the question properly"
Communication Apprehension	2. I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation in advance. 3. In a speaking class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know. 5. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English. 15. I dislike using my voice and body expressively while I am speaking English.	Speaking with Fluent English Speakers	Feelings of intimidation and reduced confidence when communicating with more proficient speakers, leading to apprehension in interactions.	"When talking to someone who is more fluent in English" "When speaking with people that are fluent in English because I am afraid that I might get judged for my English accent or pronunciation..." "When talking to someone" "When speaking with someone"
		Meeting New People	Anxiety during initial interactions, where fear of judgment and	"When I meet new people" "Meeting new people"

			miscommunication is heightened.	
General Anxiety	N/A	General Anxiety	Broader feelings of unease that may not be specific to speaking tasks but extend to various aspects of academic life.	"Shaking" "Nothing is impossible" "Trick question"
		Other Situations	Contexts outside typical speaking situations where anxiety manifests, indicating a comprehensive understanding of anxiety triggers.	"Roleplay" "When I feel pressure to find the answer."

Factor 1: Fear of Negative Evaluation

The theme Fear of Making Mistakes emerged strongly, with participants expressing significant concern about making errors during speaking tasks, fearing negative judgement from peers and instructors. One student shared, "I always worry that if I make a mistake, my classmates will laugh at me." This aligns with existing literature, indicating that fear of negative judgement is a prevalent source of anxiety among language learners (Toubot et al., 2018; Daud et al., 2019). The categorisation of this theme under the Fear of Negative Evaluation factor is supported by studies suggesting that learners often fear being perceived as incompetent, leading to heightened anxiety.

The Public Speaking and Presentations theme also reflects the pressure participants feel during formal speaking engagements, where they perceive the stakes to be higher due to the evaluation process. As one participant noted, "I feel like I have to be perfect when presenting in front of everyone. It's terrifying." This fear of judgement can significantly impact students' performance and confidence levels, reinforcing the importance of addressing this factor in public speaking interventions. The findings from this theme support the broader literature on public speaking anxiety, which emphasises the role of perceived evaluation in intensifying anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

Factor 2: Comfort in Speaking English

Participants also highlighted challenges in articulating their thoughts clearly, particularly in formal settings, which is captured in the theme Understanding and Elaborating Ideas. Many respondents noted feeling somewhat comfortable speaking English but lacked confidence when asked to express more complex ideas. One participant shared, "I can speak English, but I struggle to explain my ideas well. I often freeze during presentations." This suggests a transitional stage in language acquisition, where increased exposure and practice may gradually improve comfort levels. Liu and Huang (2011) support this observation, suggesting that familiarity and consistent practice significantly contribute to learners' comfort in using English.

Additionally, the General Anxiety theme reflects broader feelings of unease that participants experience in various speaking contexts. One student mentioned, "Sometimes, I just feel anxious about everything related to school, not just speaking." This theme indicates that the anxiety participants face is not confined solely to public speaking but extends to other academic pressures, such as exams and class participation.

Factor 3: Test Anxiety

The theme Exams and Tests highlights participants' heightened anxiety surrounding assessments, particularly formal speaking tests. The pressure associated with these assessments emerged as a key concern, with respondents noting that the conditions of a test heightened their anxiety, which in turn affected their performance and self-confidence. One student remarked, "When I have to speak for a test, I feel so much pressure that I can't think straight." This finding supports previous research indicating that test anxiety significantly impacts language learners, particularly during high-stakes assessments (Saito et al., 1999; Cheng et al., 2014). The inclusion of Impromptu Speaking under Test Anxiety further underscores the anxiety related to speaking without preparation. A participant shared, "I get really nervous when I have to speak without preparation. I never know what to say." This confirms the established relationship between assessment pressures and performance anxiety, validating the categorisation.

Factor 4: Communication Apprehension

The theme Speaking with Fluent English Speakers highlights the apprehension many participants feel when interacting with more proficient speakers. Several students reported feeling intimidated, fearing they might be judged for their language abilities. One respondent expressed, "I always feel nervous when I have to talk to native speakers. I'm afraid I will sound stupid." This theme aligns with McCroskey (1977), who noted that communication apprehension is often linked to perceived differences in language proficiency. The classification of this theme under Communication Apprehension is well-supported by literature, which identifies how such apprehension can negatively affect learners' willingness to engage in spoken interactions.

Another theme within this factor, Meeting New People, reflects anxiety associated with initial interactions, where participants feared that their English might not meet expectations. One student shared, "Meeting new people is scary because I worry about my English not being good enough." This indicates the complex nature of communication apprehension, emphasising the need for educators to create a supportive and non-judgemental environment, particularly for students facing social anxiety.

General Anxiety

In addition to the specific themes of public speaking anxiety, some responses reflected a broader sense of unease, which did not align with any specific factor in the PSCAS evaluation. Participants mentioned physical symptoms of anxiety, such as "shaking," indicating the physical toll of stress during speaking tasks. Others described the pressure of responding to challenging situations, with one noting, "When I feel pressure to find the answer," while another cited roleplay as particularly anxiety-inducing, highlighting the stress of unprepared speaking tasks.

Some respondents also expressed feelings of uncertainty, like "Nothing is impossible," suggesting the internal pressure to perform perfectly, and "Tricky question," which reflects anxiety around difficult or unexpected queries. These responses point to a broader range of anxiety beyond public speaking tasks, underscoring the importance of addressing general anxiety in language learning environments.

The thematic analysis reveals a multifaceted landscape of public speaking anxiety among undergraduate ESL learners, with significant concerns regarding fear of negative evaluation, comfort in speaking English, test anxiety, and communication apprehension. These findings underscore the importance of addressing these issues in educational settings to help alleviate anxiety and improve students' speaking proficiency. By recognising the specific fears and discomforts articulated by participants, educators can develop targeted interventions, such as ungraded practice sessions, workshops, and more supportive speaking environments. These strategies can assist students in overcoming their anxiety, enhancing their language skills, and fostering greater confidence in diverse speaking contexts. While this study offers valuable preliminary insights, the relatively small sample size limits the generalisability of the findings. Future research with larger and more diverse samples is recommended to further validate these findings and strengthen their applicability across broader ESL populations. The insights from this study contribute to a broader understanding of the factors influencing public speaking anxiety and emphasise the need for a supportive and nurturing learning environment to promote language proficiency and self-assurance.

Implications of Comparison

Based on the themes identified in the study under each PSCAS factor, the findings suggest that some question items need to be added or revised to better capture these themes. The revised or new questions aim to measure the specific anxiety factors identified and provide a clearer understanding of participants' experiences. This section outlines the implications for each factor, along with the reasoning behind the revised questions. While the suggested revisions aim to improve the validity and reliability of the measurements, they are not necessarily conclusive and can be further refined.

Factor 1: Fear of Negative Evaluation

Table 3: Comparison of Original and Modified PSCAS Factor 1 Question Items

Original PSCAS Question	Modified PSCAS Question
6. I am afraid that other students will laugh at me while I am speaking English.	6. I am afraid that others will judge me or laugh at my mistakes, especially when I speak English in public or in front of a group.
9. I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on.	9. I feel my heart pounding with anxiety when I am about to speak in front of others, especially when I fear making a mistake.
11. It embarrasses me to volunteer to go out first to speak English.	11. I feel embarrassed to volunteer or speak first in front of others, especially when I worry about making mistakes in my pronunciation or grammar.
14. I feel anxious while I am waiting to speak English.	14. I feel anxious while waiting to speak, especially when I fear making mistakes or being judged for my speaking ability.
13. Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while I am speaking English.	13. Certain parts of my body feel tense and rigid when I speak English, particularly when I am worried about making mistakes or when speaking in front of an audience.
16. I have trouble to coordinate my movements while I am speaking English.	16. I have trouble coordinating my movements when I speak English, especially in situations where I fear being judged or making mistakes in front of others.

The suggested changes to the PSCAS question items for Factor 1 were informed by an analysis of survey responses, which revealed specific concerns about making mistakes and anxiety related to public speaking or presentations. The original questions were modified to more accurately reflect these issues, particularly in the context of speaking in front of others and the fear of judgment. These adjustments aim to better capture the anxiety participants feel, especially when worried about making mistakes in public settings like presentations.

The original items addressed general anxiety but did not specifically highlight fears related to making mistakes, such as pronunciation or grammar. For instance, Question 6 was modified to explicitly include the fear of judgment for language mistakes, especially in public speaking situations. This change directly responds to participants' concerns about being evaluated for errors in pronunciation or grammar during presentations or tests.

Questions 9, 13, and 16 were revised to encompass both physical anxiety symptoms and the specific fears linked to making mistakes or speaking in front of others. These modifications ensure the questions are more reflective of how anxiety manifests in real-life speaking contexts, such as formal presentations or speaking tests, and accurately capture the physical discomfort participants experience when faced with public speaking challenges.

The revision of Question 11 shifts the focus to the anxiety participants feel when volunteering to speak in front of others. This change addresses the significant concern identified in the thematic analysis about the fear of judgment in public speaking contexts, such as during presentations or formal events.

Finally, Question 14 was adjusted to better capture the anticipatory anxiety participants experience while waiting to speak. This change highlights the fear of being judged or making mistakes, making the question more relevant to real-world speaking situations where evaluation is imminent.

These changes were derived from a detailed analysis of the participants' responses, ensuring that the revised items more accurately reflect the Fear of Negative Evaluation factor, particularly in the context of making mistakes and the anxiety of speaking publicly.

Factor 2: Comfort in Speaking English

Table 4: Comparison of Original and Modified PSCAS Factor 2 Question Items

Original PSCAS Question Items	Modified PSCAS Question Items
4. I feel confident while I am speaking English.	4. I feel confident while speaking English, especially when I need to explain or elaborate on my ideas, even if the topic is unfamiliar to me.
8. I have no fear of speaking English.	8. I have no fear of speaking English, even when I need to explain ideas or elaborate on something I don't fully understand.
10. I feel relaxed while I am speaking English.	10. I feel relaxed while speaking English, even when I need to elaborate on my thoughts or discuss topics I'm not fully familiar with.
12. I face the prospect of speaking English with confidence.	12. I face the prospect of speaking English with confidence, even when I am unsure of how to explain my ideas.

The revisions to the PSCAS items under Factor 2: Comfort in Speaking English were guided by the theme of understanding and elaborating ideas. Participants' responses indicated a particular struggle when asked to explain or elaborate on topics they were unfamiliar with, often causing discomfort and a lack of confidence. Questions 4, 8, 10, and 12 were modified to reflect this concern. For instance, questions about general confidence, relaxation, and fear of speaking were expanded to specifically address elaborating on ideas, particularly when the topic was unclear or lacking sufficient detail. The revised versions now capture the comfort participants feel when required to explain or elaborate on unfamiliar topics, providing a more accurate measure of their speaking comfort in such situations.

These changes aim to improve the PSCAS's ability to assess participants' confidence and comfort in elaborating ideas, a key aspect of speaking English in real-world contexts.

Factor 3: Test Anxiety

Table 5: Comparison of Original and Modified PSCAS Factor 3 Question Items

Original PSCAS Question Items	Modified PSCAS Question Items
1. I never feel quite sure of myself while I am speaking English.	1. I never feel quite sure of myself while speaking English, especially in exams or formal tests.
7. I get nervous when the English teacher asks me to speak English which I have prepared in advance.	7. I get nervous when I have to deliver prepared responses in a speaking test or formal assessment.
17. Even if I am very well prepared, I feel anxious about speaking English.	17. Even if I am well prepared, I feel anxious about speaking English in exams or high-pressure situations.
<i>New Question</i> (N/A in original)	18. I feel nervous when I have to respond to unexpected questions in English without preparation.

The modifications to Factor 3: Test Anxiety were based on respondents' concerns about performance pressure in speaking tests and impromptu speaking situations. The original items broadly measured confidence and nervousness, but they did not specify the high-stakes nature of exams. To address this, Question 1 was refined to highlight exam settings, while Question 7 now explicitly refers to formal assessments, where students must deliver prepared responses under pressure. Question 17 was also adjusted to capture anxiety even when students feel well-prepared, particularly in exam or presentation contexts.

Since the original PSCAS questionnaire consisted of only 17 items, an additional question (Q18) was introduced to measure impromptu speaking anxiety. Respondents frequently mentioned stress when responding to unexpected questions, which was not adequately captured in the original scale. This new item

ensures that the PSCAS accounts for both structured speaking tests and spontaneous speaking challenges, providing a more comprehensive assessment of test-related anxiety.

Factor 4: Communication Apprehension

Table 6: Comparison of Original and Modified PSCAS Factor 4 Question Items

Original PSCAS Question Items	Modified PSCAS Question Items
2. I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation in advance.	2. I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation, especially when speaking with fluent English speakers.
3. In a speaking class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	3. In a speaking class or when meeting new people, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.
5. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English.	5. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English, particularly when speaking to fluent speakers or in unfamiliar situations.
15. I dislike using my voice and body expressively while I am speaking English.	15. I feel uncomfortable using my voice and body expressively while speaking English, especially in conversations with new people.
<i>New Question</i> (N/A in original)	19. I feel anxious when speaking to someone more fluent in English, fearing that I might be judged for my pronunciation or accent.

The revisions to Factor 4: Communication Apprehension incorporate the key themes identified from participant responses: anxiety when speaking with fluent English speakers and meeting new people. The original PSCAS items were modified to reflect these concerns, ensuring better alignment with real-life communication challenges.

Participants reported feeling intimidated by fluent English speakers, worrying about pronunciation and fluency. This concern was integrated into Questions 2, 5, and 15, making the items more relevant to their experiences. Likewise, meeting new people was identified as a source of communication anxiety, leading to adjustments in Questions 3 and 15 to capture nervousness in unfamiliar social interactions.

Since the original PSCAS did not include a direct measure of apprehension when speaking to more fluent individuals, a new item (Q19) was added. This ensures that the scale better captures this specific fear, distinct

from test-related anxiety covered under Factor 3. These refinements improve the questionnaire's accuracy in assessing students' communication apprehension.

General Anxiety

Table 7: Comparison of Original and Modified PSCAS Factor 5 Question Items

Original PSCAS Question Items	Modified PSCAS Question Items
N/A (Not included in original PSCAS)	20. I experience general anxiety that affects my ability to speak English confidently, even in non-speaking situations.

The original PSCAS did not include items addressing general anxiety, yet respondent feedback suggests that anxiety extends beyond specific speaking situations. Many participants reported experiencing physical symptoms like shaking and unease during roleplay activities or when feeling pressured to find answers. This highlights a broader, underlying anxiety that could affect their confidence in speaking English across various contexts.

To address this gap, General Anxiety is introduced as a new factor in the PSCAS questionnaire, with an additional item (Q20) to measure anxiety that may indirectly impact English-speaking performance. This revision ensures a more comprehensive assessment of students' anxiety triggers, recognizing that some learners experience nervousness beyond structured speaking tasks. Incorporating this factor enhances the validity of the PSCAS by capturing a wider spectrum of anxiety experiences relevant to language learning. To sum up, the modifications to the PSCAS questionnaire offer a more precise representation of students' anxiety in English-speaking situations by incorporating insights from their responses. The revised PSCAS more effectively captures key dimensions of speaking anxiety, including fear of negative evaluation, comfort in speaking English, test anxiety, communication apprehension, and general anxiety.

In addition to refining existing items, new questions were introduced to address gaps identified through respondent feedback. Specifically, Q18 (Test Anxiety) addresses students' fear of impromptu speaking in high-pressure situations, Q19 (Communication Apprehension) reflects the intimidation experienced when speaking with more fluent speakers, and Q20 (General Anxiety) acknowledges broader unease beyond structured speaking tasks. These additions strengthen the PSCAS, enhancing its validity and providing deeper insights into students' speaking anxiety. By refining the instrument, this study aims to facilitate more targeted support strategies to help students overcome their speaking-related anxieties. However, given the modest sample size, future validation with larger and more varied groups is essential to further strengthen the robustness and generalisability of the revised PSCAS framework.

The modified PSCAS questionnaire items are presented in the table below.

Table 8: Modified version of PSCAS Question Items

No.	Modified PSCAS Question Items	1	2	3	4	5
1	I never feel quite sure of myself while speaking English, especially in exams or formal tests.					
2	I start to panic when I have to speak English without preparation, especially when speaking with fluent English speakers.					
3	In a speaking class or when meeting new people, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.					
4	I feel confident while speaking English, especially when I need to explain or elaborate on my ideas, even if the topic is unfamiliar to me.					
5	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking English, particularly when speaking to fluent speakers or in unfamiliar situations.					
6	I am afraid that others will judge me or laugh at my mistakes, especially when I speak English in public or in front of a group.					
7	I get nervous when I have to deliver prepared responses in a speaking test or formal assessment.					
8	I have no fear of speaking English, even when I need to explain ideas or elaborate on something I don't fully understand.					
9	I feel my heart pounding with anxiety when I am about to speak in front of others, especially when I fear making a mistake.					
10	I feel relaxed while speaking English, even when I need to elaborate on my thoughts or discuss topics I'm not fully familiar with.					
11	I feel embarrassed to volunteer or speak first in front of others, especially when I worry about making mistakes in my pronunciation or grammar.					
12	I face the prospect of speaking English with confidence, even when I am unsure of how to explain my ideas.					
13	Certain parts of my body feel tense and rigid when I speak English, particularly when I am worried about making mistakes or when speaking in front of an audience.					
14	I feel anxious while waiting to speak, especially when I fear making mistakes or being judged for my speaking ability.					
15	I feel uncomfortable using my voice and body expressively while speaking English, especially in conversations with new people.					

16	I have trouble coordinating my movements when I speak English, especially in situations where I fear being judged or making mistakes in front of others.					
17	Even if I am well prepared, I feel anxious about speaking English in exams or high-pressure situations.					
18	I feel nervous when I have to respond to unexpected questions in English without preparation.					
19	I feel anxious when speaking to someone more fluent in English, fearing that I might be judged for my pronunciation or accent.					
20	I experience general anxiety that affects my ability to speak English confidently, even in non-speaking situations.					

The modified PSCAS scoring calculation follows the original framework while adapting to the expanded 20-item questionnaire. Each item is rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 5 (“Strongly Agree”) to 1 (“Strongly Disagree”). The total score is obtained by summing all responses, with a maximum possible score of 100 and a minimum of 20. To adjust for baseline scoring, the total score is reduced by 20, ensuring consistency in interpretation with the original PSCAS. Anxiety levels are categorized based on proportional thresholds: scores above 80 indicate high anxiety, scores between 80 and 60 reflect moderate anxiety, and scores below 60 represent low anxiety. This refined scoring method ensures a precise evaluation of students' speaking anxiety while maintaining comparability with previous research utilizing PSCAS.

Conclusion

This study examined public speaking anxiety among undergraduate ESL students by focusing on the four original PSCAS factors: Fear of Negative Evaluation, Comfort in Speaking English, Test Anxiety, and Communication Apprehension. Additionally, it identified an extra factor, General Anxiety. The quantitative findings confirm that Fear of Negative Evaluation ($M = 3.17$) and Communication Apprehension ($M = 3.06$) are the most significant anxiety factors. These are followed by Comfort in Speaking English ($M = 3.02$) and Test Anxiety ($M = 2.98$). The results highlight those concerns related to social evaluation and hesitation in verbal communication present major challenges to students' speaking confidence.

The thematic analysis further revealed several anxiety triggers that were not explicitly covered in the original PSCAS. These include the fear of impromptu speaking, intimidation when interacting with fluent speakers, and a broader sense of unease in academic settings. To address these gaps, this study introduced three additional PSCAS items. Q18 (Test Anxiety) captures the fear of impromptu speaking, while Q19 (Communication Apprehension) reflects students' feelings of intimidation in conversations with fluent speakers. Meanwhile, Q20 (General Anxiety) acknowledges a broader sense of academic unease. These

modifications strengthen the validity of the PSCAS by ensuring a more comprehensive assessment of students' speaking-related anxiety.

By bridging the gap between self-reported experiences and existing anxiety scales, this study underscores the need for targeted interventions. Educators can use these findings to develop strategies such as ungraded speaking activities, structured exposure to real-world communication scenarios, and confidence-building exercises. Importantly, given the relatively small sample size and the preliminary nature of this study, future research should focus on validating the revised PSCAS with a larger and more diverse learning contexts to ensure its broader applicability and strong generalisation on the findings.

Author Contributions

Ch'ng, L.C., Noor Ain, S., and Chan, A.N., jointly contributed to the conception and design of the study. Ch'ng, L.C. led the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the findings. All authors played key roles in drafting the manuscript, providing substantial revisions, overseeing the entire project, and safeguarding the research's integrity. They reviewed the final manuscript and approved it for publication.

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Data Availability Statement

The data were collected from all participants who attended the workshop. Their rights were explained, and informed consent was obtained before they completed the survey.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Strategi Retorik dalam Blog Pempengaruh Ben Ashaari

Rhetorical Strategies in Influencer Ben Ashaari's Blog

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Abstrak

Blog telah berkembang menjadi medium yang signifikan, mengintegrasikan elemen retorik dalam era penulisan digital dengan cara yang lebih santai, kreatif, dan relevan dengan gaya hidup moden. Blog membantu penulis mengorganisasi pemikiran dan meningkatkan komunikasi yang lebih berkesan. Namun, bahasa yang digunakan dalam blog menunjukkan sifat yang dinamik dan sentiasa berubah. Penggunaan bahasanya membawa implikasi yang kompleks, iaitu memberi retorik positif seperti dalam penyebaran maklumat yang bermanfaat, namun juga boleh membawa kepada retorik negatif seperti risiko penyebaran maklumat yang tidak sahih atau bersifat provokatif. Oleh yang demikian, kajian ini ingin mengenal pasti dan menganalisis meneliti bahasa yang digunakan dalam penulisan blog dari aspek strategi retorik, ethos, pathos dan logos. Data kajian ini ialah blog pempengaruh Ben Ashaari. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dan kaedah analisis kandungan, data kajian dianalisis berasaskan Teori Strategi Retorik Aristotle. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa Ben Ashaari memanfaatkan semua strategi retorik, namun terdapat kecondongan yang jelas terhadap penggunaan pathos dan logos sebagai strategi utama. Strategi ethos, meskipun diaplikasikan, didapati kurang menonjol berbanding pathos dan logos. Hasil dapatan kajian juga mendapati kandungan blog hanya mengaplikasi retorik positif.

Kata kunci: *retorik, blog, ethos, pathos, logos*

Abstract

Blogs have evolved into a significant medium, integrating rhetorical elements in the era of digital writing in a more casual, creative, and relevant way to modern lifestyles. Blogs help writers organize their thoughts and enhance more effective communication. However, the language used in blogs reflects a dynamic nature that is constantly changing. The use of language carries complex implications, as it can promote positive rhetoric such as the dissemination of useful information, but it can also lead to negative rhetoric, such as the risk of spreading misinformation or provocative content. Therefore, this study aims to identify and analyze the language used in blog writing from the perspective of rhetorical strategies, ethos, pathos, and logos. The study data is based on the blog of influencer Ben Ashaari. Using a qualitative approach and content analysis method, the data is analyzed based on Aristotle's Rhetoric Strategy Theory. The findings show that Ben Ashaari utilizes all rhetorical strategies, but there is a clear tendency towards the use of pathos and logos as the main strategies. The ethos strategy, although applied, is found to be less prominent compared to pathos and logos. The study's results also indicate that the blog content only applies positive rhetoric.

Keywords: *rhetoric, blog, ethos, pathos, logos*

Pengenalan

Latar Belakang Kajian

Dapatan analisis Goggin & Newell (2024) menyatakan retorik dilihat sebagai penggunaan bahasa dan simbol secara strategik untuk mempengaruhi dan memujuk khalayak dalam pelbagai situasi komunikasi. Pernyataan ini menunjukkan peranan retorik dalam dunia komunikasi moden tidak lagi terhad kepada Universiti Teknologi MARA, Vol. 9, No. 3, 2025

ucapan atau penulisan formal, tetapi merangkumi pelbagai bentuk media termasuk media sosial, blog, dan komunikasi dalam talian. Penggunaan bahasa yang berkesan, baik melalui teks, gambar, atau video, dapat memberi impak yang besar kepada penerimaan dan reaksi khalayak. Selain itu, retorik juga menjadi semakin kompleks dengan kehadiran teknologi baru dan platform media sosial. Pernyataan Goggin & Newell (2024) ini memperlihatkan tiga strategi utama retorik iaitu ethos, pathos, dan logos yang diperkenalkan oleh Aristotle, masih relevan terutama sekali dalam konteks komunikasi digital dan media sosial yang semakin berkembang.

Aristotle telah menyarankan tiga cara untuk mempengaruhi manusia menerusi kata-kata, iaitu ethos, pathos dan logos. Tiga cara ini dikenali sebagai strategi pemujukan yang dikemukakan oleh Aristotle. Cara pertama iaitu ethos bermaksud seorang perucap harus berpengetahuan luas tentang topik yang dibincangkan, jujur dan boleh dipercayai serta mempunyai kredibiliti dan dihormati. Cara kedua mempengaruhi audiens pula ialah menerusi emosi (yang disebut sebagai pathos) seperti harapan, cinta, sayang, benci marah dan simpati. Cara ketiga ialah menerusi logos, iaitu hujah atau kata-kata dengan mengemukakan bukti kepada kenyataan yang dikemukakan. Ketiga-tiga strategi ini membentuk asas penting dalam komunikasi yang berkesan untuk mencapai matlamat tertentu, sama ada untuk mempengaruhi, memujuk, atau mengubah pandangan khalayak.

Salah satu alat komunikasi digital yang penting dalam era maklumat masa kini ialah blog. Keupayaan blog untuk membina interaksi dua hala antara penulis dan pembaca menjadikannya platform yang efektif untuk perbincangan yang lebih terbuka dan dinamik. Bahasa yang digunakan dalam blog sering kali bersifat tidak formal, menarik, dan bertujuan untuk mewujudkan rasa hubungan dengan pembaca. Retorik memainkan peranan penting dalam penulisan blog. Penggunaan strategi retorik ethos, pathos, dan logos membolehkan penulis blog mempengaruhi pembaca dengan lebih berkesan (Eyman, 2015; Campbell & Huxman, 2022). Dalam konteks ini, strategi retorik ethos, pathos, dan logos menawarkan kaedah yang efektif bagi penulis blog untuk mempengaruhi audiens mereka. Ethos, atau kredibiliti penulis, sangat penting dalam membina kepercayaan pembaca, iaitu penulis yang berpengetahuan, profesional, dan jujur lebih cenderung untuk diterima oleh audiens mereka (Eyman, 2015; Campbell & Huxman, 2022). Selain itu, penggunaan pathos, melalui cerita peribadi atau contoh kehidupan sebenar, memberi ruang kepada penulis blog untuk menjalin hubungan emosional dengan pembaca, meningkatkan keyakinan dan membangkitkan respon emosi yang mempengaruhi cara pembaca menerima mesej yang disampaikan (Eyman, 2015). Logos, atau penggunaan hujah yang logik dan berasaskan bukti, pula berfungsi untuk memperkukuh kredibiliti mesej, melalui penggabungan data dan fakta yang menyokong topik yang dibincangkan (Foss et al., 2020).

Walau bagaimanapun, bahasa dalam blog menunjukkan sifat yang dinamik boleh memberikan kesan retorik positif atau retorik negatif bergantung pada cara ia digunakan (Rafly, 2023). Hal ini berkait rapat dengan cara blog tersebut menyampaikan maklumat yang boleh dipercayai dan relevan (Foss et al., 2020).

Maka, kajian ini ingin meneliti strategi retorik dalam penulisan blog untuk memahami cara elemen bahasa digunakan bagi menghasilkan penulisan blog yang menarik.

Permasalahan Kajian

Retorik merupakan salah satu elemen utama dalam penggunaan bahasa yang berkesan khususnya dalam penyampaian sesuatu maklumat. Dalam era globalisasi yang semakin berkembang pesat, kemajuan teknologi telah memberi impak yang besar terhadap cara masyarakat memperoleh maklumat. Media memainkan peranan yang amat penting dalam membantu masyarakat mendapatkan maklumat yang tepat dan pantas (Julaina & Nurfatihah Izzati, 2024). Dengan adanya media, akses kepada informasi menjadi lebih mudah dan cepat, serta membolehkan individu berhubung dan berkongsi maklumat. Media sosial, sebagai salah satu cabang utama dalam komunikasi massa, telah berkembang menjadi platform yang sangat berkesan dalam menyampaikan mesej kepada masyarakat moden. Hal ini disokong oleh Khofifah Nizalia et al. (2024) yang menyatakan bahawa media sosial merupakan medium komunikasi yang utama dalam dunia dalam talian pada zaman kini. Mereka juga menjelaskan bahawa media sosial seperti Facebook, Instagram, blog, dan Twitter telah menjadi pilihan utama masyarakat untuk berinteraksi, berkongsi pendapat, dan memperoleh informasi. Forum-forum perbincangan dalam talian juga semakin mendapat tempat, iaitu pelbagai isu boleh dibincangkan secara terbuka dalam kalangan pengguna internet.

Dalam konteks penulisan digital, blog telah muncul sebagai salah satu medium penting yang menonjolkan elemen retorik dalam cara yang lebih santai, kreatif, dan relevan dengan gaya hidup moden (Latifah & Arsanti, 2024; Wina Saputra, 2024). Menurut Hamzah Joseh (2022), blog membantu penulis menyusun pemikiran secara teratur dan mengembangkan komunikasi yang berkesan. Namun, bahasa dalam blog menunjukkan sifat yang dinamik dan sentiasa berubah, yang boleh memberikan kesan positif atau negatif bergantung pada cara ia digunakan (Rafly, 2023). Retorik yang positif boleh menyebarkan maklumat bermanfaat atau membina kesedaran, manakala retorik yang negatif boleh membawa kepada penyebaran maklumat yang tidak sahih atau bersifat provokatif. Justeru, kajian ini akan meneliti teknik retorik dalam penulisan blog untuk memahami cara elemen bahasa dapat digunakan bagi menjadikan penulisan blog lebih menarik.

Objektif Kajian

Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk:

- i. Mengenal pasti strategi retorik ethos, pathos dan logos dalam blog pempengaruh Ben Ashaari.
- ii. Menganalisis strategi retorik ethos, pathos dan logos dalam blog pempengaruh Ben Ashaari.

Persoalan Kajian

Persoalan kajian ini adalah untuk mencari penjelasan berkaitan perkara-perkara berikut:

- i. Apakah strategi retorik ethos, pathos dan logos yang digunakan dalam blog pempengaruh Ben Ashaari?
- ii. Bagaimanakah strategi retorik ethos, pathos dan logos digunakan dalam blog pempengaruh Ben Ashaari?

Kepentingan Kajian

Hasil kajian ini berpotensi mengetengahkan strategi retorik yang diaplikasikan dalam blog, iaitu blog pempengaruh Ben Ashaari. Seterusnya ia dapat menjadi panduan praktikal bagi penulis blog lain mempertingkatkan kualiti penulisan iaitu cara pengaplikasian strategi retorik ethos, pathos dan logos bagi menghasilkan penulisan blog yang menarik. Dalam dunia digital, kajian strategi retorik membantu penulis blog lain menyampaikan kandungan yang lebih boleh dipercayai dan relevan. Dengan menggunakan retorik positif, penulis dapat membina kredibiliti dan membina pandangan pembaca secara positif.

Selain itu, kajian ini menyumbang kepada pengayaan ilmu retorik, terutamanya dari aspek kajian strategi retorik dalam blog berbahasa Melayu, yang masih kurang mendapat liputan. Kajian-kajian terdahulu lebih menumpukan kepada analisis retorik berdasarkan komunikasi politik, krisis kesihatan awam, penulisan akademik, hingga interaksi digital. Hal ini terbukti dengan kajian Gajewska et. al. (2024), Fatema dan Abdul Gabbar (2023), Hairul Azhar (2022), Meng Xia et. al (2022), Nurul Nadiah dan Aini (2021), Suwandonadi (2018), Ekpang (2018), Isai et. al (2020), dan Ting (2018).

Sorotan Literatur

Permasalahan yang Berdasarkan tinjauan literatur yang telah dilakukan mendapati kajian lepas berkaitan retorik oleh sarjana telah memperkukuh penggunaan retorik sebagai seni pemujaan dalam pelbagai bidang. Hasil analisis daripada kajian-kajian terdahulu juga mendapati kajian berkaitan teori strategi Aristotle ethos, pathos dan logos telah juga mendapat perhatian pengkaji lepas. Berikut merupakan kajian yang pernah dilakukan berkaitan strategi retorik Aristotle.

Kajian Gajewska et. al. (2024) menumpukan kepada strategi retorik (ethos dan pathos) dan telah menawarkan pendekatan baharu untuk menganalisis perbincangan dalam talian, menghubungkan retorik Aristotelian klasik dengan interaksi digital kontemporari. Fokusnya pada ethos dan pathos menyediakan kerangka kukuh untuk menganalisis perbincangan dalam talian. Penciptaan korpora multitopik dan multiplatform adalah sumbangan metodologi yang ketara, mengisi jurang dalam ketersediaan set data beranotasi berkualiti tinggi. Dengan menyesuaikan retorik klasik kepada era digital, kajian ini memodenkan teori re-

torik dan aplikasinya kepada isu kontemporari. Kajian ini menawarkan perspektif segar tentang kajian komunikasi dalam talian. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian ini yang hanya menumpukan kepada strategi ethos dan pathos sebagai teras kepada persuasi tetapi mengecualikan logos dalam analisis, mengehadkan komprehensif kajian ini.

Kajian Fatema dan Abdul Gabbar (2023), meneliti strategi retorik yang digunakan oleh kerajaan Oman semasa pandemik COVID-19, dengan fokus khusus pada penggunaan ethos untuk membina kepercayaan dan kredibiliti dalam komunikasi krisis. Kajian ini menangani aspek kritikal komunikasi krisis semasa isu kesihatan global, memberikan wawasan tentang cara kerajaan dapat berinteraksi dengan berkesan dengan orang ramai semasa krisis tersebut. Dengan menggunakan konsep ethos daripada Aristotle, kajian ini menawarkan rangka kerja teori untuk menganalisis strategi persuasif yang digunakan dalam komunikasi kesihatan awam, seterusnya menyumbang kepada wacana akademik tentang komunikasi krisis. Kajian ini walau bagaimanapun, hanya tertumpu kepada ethos, dalam strategi komunikasi yang digunakan.

Hairul Azhar (2022) pula meneliti penggunaan tiga strategi retorik logos, etos, dan pathos dalam abstrak penyelidikan bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa pertama (ENL) dan bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa kedua (ESL). Kajian ini menggunakan analisis perbandingan untuk menilai sejauh mana setiap elemen retorik diterapkan dalam 480 abstrak penyelidikan. Dengan mengintegrasikan teori retorik Aristote, kajian ini menyediakan kerangka kerja yang kukuh untuk menganalisis penggunaan logos, etos, dan patos dalam penulisan akademik. Dapatan kajian memberikan wawasan yang berguna untuk penulis akademik, khususnya dalam konteks ESL, mengenai strategi retorik yang berkesan untuk meningkatkan daya tarikan dan keberkesanan komunikasi mereka.

Meng Xia et. al (2022) dalam kajian *Persua: A Visual Interactive System to Enhance the Persuasiveness of Arguments in Online Discussion* memperkenalkan sistem yang dinamakan "Persua" yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keberkesanan perbincangan dalam talian melalui penggunaan elemen visual interaktif. Sistem ini mengintegrasikan alat visual dengan struktur argumentasi untuk menyokong perbincangan yang lebih jelas dan meyakinkan dalam kalangan peserta. Kajian ini menganalisis dan membina set data yang dilabelkan mengenai strategi persuasif yang terperinci (iaitu, logos, pathos, ethos, dan bukti) dalam 164 hujah dengan penilaian tinggi mengenai keberkesanan dari ChangeMyView, sebuah forum perbincangan dalam talian yang popular. Pembangunan "Persua" sebagai sistem visual interaktif merupakan sumbangan kepada literatur yang semakin berkembang mengenai peningkatan komunikasi digital. Dengan memberi fokus kepada keberkesanan hujah, reka bentuk sistem ini selaras dengan permintaan yang semakin meningkat untuk penglibatan dalam talian yang berkesan dan bermakna. Kajian ini mempersembahkan satu inovasi yang menjanjikan peningkatan dalam perbincangan dalam talian.

Kajian oleh Nurul Nadiah dan Aini (2021) mengenai ucapan kempen Jokowi pada Pilihan Raya Presiden 2019 menggunakan pendekatan teori retorik Aristotle (ethos, pathos, dan logos) memberikan pandangan yang menarik tentang cara strategi retorik digunakan untuk mempengaruhi audiens dalam konteks politik. Analisis ini memberi tumpuan kepada penggunaan *pathos*, *logos*, dan *ethos* dalam ucapan terakhir kempen Jokowi yang disampaikan pada 13 April 2019, dan kajian ini memberikan sumbangan yang signifikan kepada bidang komunikasi politik, khususnya dalam konteks Asia Tenggara. Kajian ini yang mendapati dominasi *pathos* dalam ucapan Jokowi, menunjukkan kepentingan strategi emosional dalam mempengaruhi audiens, terutamanya dalam konteks kempen politik yang bertujuan untuk membina hubungan dengan pengundi. Penggunaan *pathos* yang berkesan melalui ucapan terima kasih, pujian, dan janji membolehkan Jokowi menghubungkan dirinya dengan audiens, menimbulkan rasa empati, dan memberikan kesan yang positif terhadap imejnya. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan penggunaan *logos* dalam ucapan politik adalah penting untuk memberi kredibiliti dan memberi penjelasan yang rasional tentang visi dan dasar politik seseorang calon. Begitu juga, penggunaan *ethos* sebagai elemen kredibiliti dalam ucapan Jokowi yang dikatakan terhad mungkin perlu diberi lebih perhatian.

Kajian oleh Suwandonadi (2018) mengenai penggunaan strategi retorik dalam Debat Pemilihan Jakarta 2017, yang melibatkan calon-calon gabenor iaitu Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama, dan Anies Baswedan, mempunyai objektif yang jelas dan relevan. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa tiga elemen utama retorik ethos, pathos, dan logos digunakan oleh calon-calon gabenor dalam cara yang strategik untuk mencapai tujuan tertentu seperti memuji, menyerang, dan mempertahankan hujah. Hal ini memberikan gambaran yang jelas tentang cara setiap calon mengadaptasi strategi retorik mereka untuk mencapai matlamat pemujukan yang berbeza. Kekuatan utama analisis ini adalah keupayaan untuk menggambarkan cara ketiga-tiga elemen ini digabungkan untuk mempengaruhi audiens dalam pelbagai konteks. Dominasi logos dalam konteks debat politik adalah wajar, kerana rasional dan hujah logik sering kali menjadi elemen utama dalam debat yang berfokuskan penyampaian polisi dan penyelesaian masalah. Kajian ini menekankan pentingnya gabungan ketiga-tiga elemen retorik untuk mencipta keberkesanan dalam pemujukan. Dalam konteks politik, gabungan ketiga-tiga strategi ini dapat membantu calon mencapai tujuan komunikasi yang lebih kompleks.

Kajian oleh Ekpang (2018) mengenai ucapan politik Nelson Mandela berdasarkan teori retorik Aristotle (ethos, pathos, dan logos) memuatkan analisis yang komprehensif mengenai cara Mandela memanfaatkan ketiga-tiga strategi retorik ethos, pathos dan logos untuk menyampaikan mesej yang kuat dan berkesan, terutamanya dalam konteks mengakhiri apartheid dan membina semula Afrika Selatan. Kajian ini dengan jelas menunjukkan cara Mandela menggunakan logos, atau hujah logik, untuk membina imej dan reputasinya di mata audiens. Mandela memperkenalkan hujah-hujah yang bukan sahaja logik tetapi juga menggugah, menimbulkan harapan untuk masa depan yang lebih baik selepas era apartheid. Pendekatan ini menun-

jukkan logos bukan sekadar hujah berasaskan fakta, tetapi juga berfungsi untuk membangkitkan pemikiran kritikal dalam kalangan pendengar mengenai keadaan sosial dan politik yang lebih luas. Hasil dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan Mandela menggunakan pelbagai gaya bahasa retorik seperti anafora (pengulangan frasa), kiasmus (struktur berbalik), epimoni (pengulangan berterusan), dan antitesis (perlawanan yang jelas antara dua idea). Gaya-gaya ini bukan sahaja meningkatkan kesan emosi ucapan tetapi juga memperkukuh pesan Mandela dalam menarik perhatian dan menyentuh hati pendengarnya. Gabungan ketiga-tiga strategi retorik ini, seperti yang dijelaskan dalam kajian ini, memberikan gambaran menyeluruh tentang cara Mandela berjaya mempengaruhi pendengar dengan membina kredibiliti, memanipulasi emosi, dan mengemukakan hujah rasional.

Seterusnya kajian oleh Isai et al. (2020) memfokuskan pada penggunaan strategi retorika yang terdiri daripada ethos, pathos, dan logos dalam penulisan emel persuasif oleh pelajar kejuruteraan di Malaysia. Kajian ini sangat relevan dalam konteks pendidikan tinggi, terutamanya dalam bidang kejuruteraan, iaitu komunikasi profesional seperti penulisan emel adalah kemahiran penting yang perlu dikuasai oleh pelajar. Kajian ini memberikan wawasan tentang cara pelajar menggunakan strategi retorik klasik untuk berkomunikasi dengan lebih berkesan, yang boleh memberi manfaat kepada pembangunan kemahiran komunikasi mereka pada masa depan. Ia menggunakan teori retorik yang kukuh, iaitu ethos, pathos, dan logos yang telah terbukti berkesan dalam mempengaruhi penerima mesej. Dengan memberi tumpuan kepada pelajar kejuruteraan, kajian ini relevan kepada dunia akademik dan profesional. Dalam dunia yang semakin berorientasikan teknologi, pelajar perlu dilengkapi dengan kemahiran komunikasi yang baik, dan kajian ini memberi penekanan kepada strategi komunikasi yang perlu dimiliki oleh graduan untuk berjaya dalam kerjaya mereka.

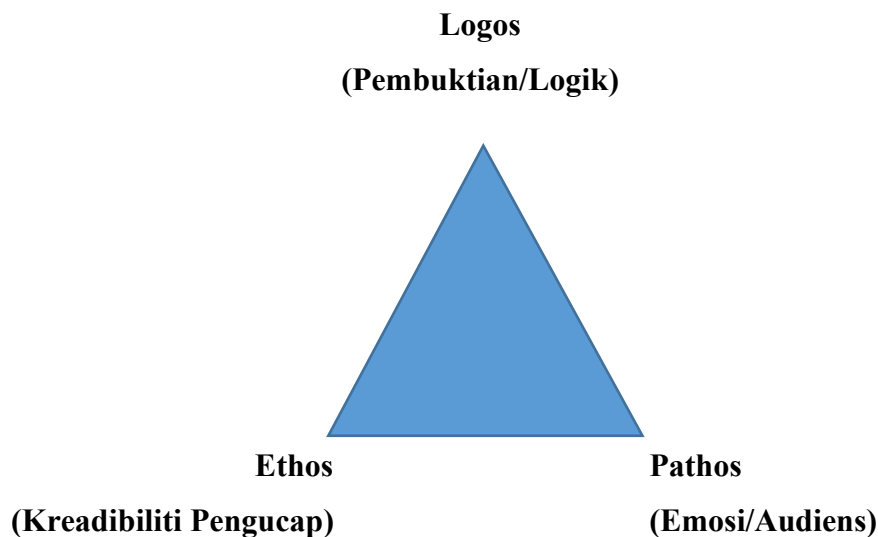
Kajian Ting (2018) pula membincangkan strategi retorik dalam permintaan tidak formal pelajar universiti yang dikemukakan kepada pensyarah mereka. Tumpuan pada permintaan tidak formal mencerminkan konteks dunia sebenar, memberikan pandangan tentang bagaimana pelajar menyusun permintaan tidak formal yang memujuk dapat memberikan panduan untuk latihan komunikasi di tempat kerja, iaitu permintaan tidak formal sering mendominasi interaksi harian. Penggunaan strategi retorik Aristotle (ethos, pathos, logos) menyediakan rangka yang kukuh untuk menganalisis strategi komunikasi. Kajian ini memperluas aplikasi teori retorik kepada komunikasi tidak formal dan digital, memberikan perspektif baharu tentang bagaimana ethos, pathos, dan logos berfungsi di luar konteks formal.

Kajian-kajian yang dibincangkan di atas menunjukkan penerapan strategi retorik Aristotle ethos, pathos, dan logos dalam pelbagai konteks komunikasi. Daripada komunikasi politik, krisis kesihatan awam, penulisan akademik, hingga interaksi digital, kajian-kajian ini menampilkan penerapan teori klasik dalam dunia digital dan dinamik. Namun terdapat kajian yang dibincangkan memberikan tumpuan kepada hanya satu atau dua strategi retorik, seperti *ethos* dan *pathos* dalam kajian Gajewska et al. (2024), dan *ethos* dalam

kajian Fatema dan Abdul Gabbar (2023). Secara keseluruhan, kajian-kajian yang dibincangkan memberikan pemahaman tentang penerapan strategi retorik dalam pelbagai bidang komunikasi serta menunjukkan cara retorik dapat digunakan untuk mempengaruhi audiens dalam konteks yang berbeza. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian ini yang menganalisis strategi retorik dalam blog menawarkan kelebihan dengan memanfaatkan ketiga-tiga strategi retorik dalam analisis yang berfokus pada penglibatan data digital yang kasual.

Kerangka Teori

Kerangka teori yang digunakan dalam kajian ini ialah Teori Strategi Retorik Aristotle. Menerusi teori ini, Aristotle membahagikan retorik kepada tiga (3) kaedah utama iaitu logos, ethos dan pathos sebagai alat pemujukan.



Rajah 1: Teori Retorik Aristotle

Aristotle berpendapat bahawa keupayaan seseorang pengucap untuk mempengaruhi audiens ialah sejauh mana pengucap mampu merayu audiens menerusi tiga (3) kaedah iaitu logos, ethos dan pathos dan ia dikenali sebagai Segitiga Retorik (*Rhetorical Triangle*). Segitiga Retorik Aristotle menjadi asas dalam kajian pemujukan. Aristotle mengenal pasti tiga strategi utama pemujukan iaitu ethos, pathos, dan logos, yang berfungsi sebagai alat utama untuk komunikasi yang berkesan. Strategi ini bukan sekadar konsep teori tetapi strategi praktikal yang telah membentuk wacana persuasif selama berabad-abad. Kerelevanan retorik Aristotle dalam komunikasi kontemporari masih jelas, kerana penyelidikan moden terus meneroka cara strategi ini berfungsi dalam pelbagai konteks (Chkuaseli, 2024).

Ethos, yang sering dianggap sebagai kredibiliti pengucap, merujuk kepada watak atau kebolehppercayaan yang dibina oleh penyampai dengan audiens. Penyampai mesej perlu menunjukkan kelayakan

dan kepakaran mereka, sama ada melalui pengetahuan, pengalaman, atau imej yang membina keyakinan (Chkuaseli, 2024). Aristotle menekankan kepentingan ethos dalam memupuk hubungan antara pengucap dan audiens, dengan menyatakan bahawa audiens lebih cenderung untuk dipengaruhi oleh seseorang yang mereka anggap berwibawa dan bermoral (Aristotle, trans. 1991). Penyelidikan moden mengesahkan pandangan ini, dengan menyatakan bahawa ethos secara signifikan mempengaruhi keberkesanan usaha persuasif mereka. Sebagai contoh, dalam media digital, pengaruh ethos dalam talian atau tokoh politik boleh memberi kesan besar terhadap pendapat awam (Smith, 2022).

Pathos, iaitu rayuan kepada emosi, adalah elemen penting lain dalam retorik Aristotle. Menurut Aristotle, emosi memainkan peranan utama dalam persuasi, kerana ia boleh mempengaruhi sikap dan respons audiens terhadap mesej. Pathos sering digunakan untuk menyelaraskan hujah pengucap dengan disposisi emosi audiens, memunculkan simpati, kemarahan, ketakutan, atau kegembiraan untuk memperkuat kesan pemujuan (Aristotle, trans. 1991). Tingkah laku pengguna menunjukkan bahawa rayuan emosi dalam kempen pemasaran boleh meningkatkan penglibatan dan kadar penukaran, mengukuhkan pandangan Aristotle bahawa emosi boleh menjadi pendorong utama dalam membuat keputusan (Harris & Mazzarella, 2023).

Akhirnya, logos, iaitu rayuan logik, menekankan penggunaan alasan dan bukti untuk mempengaruhi audiens. Aristotle berpendapat bahawa hujah logik yang berasaskan fakta, statistik, dan alasan yang jelas adalah penting untuk meyakinkan audiens tentang kesahihan sesuatu hujah (Aristotle, trans. 1991). Dalam retorik moden, logos terus menjadi asas, terutamanya dalam komunikasi akademik dan saintifik. Misalnya, dalam komunikasi perniagaan atau politik, menggunakan fakta dan analisis statistik yang sahih untuk menyokong suatu cadangan atau polisi boleh memberi keyakinan kepada khalayak untuk menerima atau menolak suatu idea (Portland State University, n.d.) Penyelidikan terkini tentang komunikasi digital menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan data secara strategik dan hujah yang terstruktur dengan baik dalam wacana dalam talian dapat meningkatkan kesan pemujuan mesej, terutamanya dalam perdebatan mengenai kesihatan awam atau isu alam sekitar (Green & Parker, 2024).

Metodologi

Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah analisis kandungan bagi menghuraikan strategi retorik yang terdapat dalam blog Ben Ashaari. Pendekatan kajian ini ialah kualitatif deskriptif. Bowen (2023) menyatakan pendekatan kualitatif sesuai untuk menganalisis teks. Analisis dokumen kualitatif adalah kaedah penyelidikan yang melibatkan penganalisan dokumen secara sistemati, baik yang dicetak mahupun elektronik untuk mentafsir data, mengungkap makna, dan membangunkan pengetahuan empirik (Lumivvero, t.t). Data kajian ini ialah blog berpengaruh Ben Ashaari. Data dikenal pasti berdasarkan berdasarkan Teori Strategi Retorik Aristotle iaitu ethos, pathos dan logos Teori Strategi Retoeik Aristotle Ben Ashaari dikenali sebagai seorang penulis blog yang berpengaruh di Malaysia, khususnya dalam bidang gaya hidup, keluarga, dan komuniti. Universiti Teknologi MARA, Vol. 9, No. 3, 2025

Beliau sebagai seorang personaliti media sosial yang dihormati dan berkreadibiliti dan mempunyai pengalaman luas dalam penulisan blog.

Dapatan Kajian

Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa ketiga-tiga kaedah retorik, ethos, pathos dan logos dimanfaatkan oleh pengucap dalam blog Ben Ashaari. Pathos dan logos merupakan strategi yang paling dominan digunakan, berbanding ethos.

Jadual 1: Strategi Retorik dalam Blog Ben Ashaari

Kaedah Retorik	Kekerapan	Peratusan (%)
Pathos	30	45.5
Logos	30	45.5
Ethos	6	9.0
Jumlah	66	100

Jadual 1 menunjukkan bahawa strategi retorik pathos dan logos mencatatkan kekerapan yang sama dalam data kajian, iaitu sebanyak 30 kali masing-masingnya(45.5%). Strategi ethos pula paling sedikit dipaparkan iaitu sebanyak enam kali sahaja (9.0%). Daripada pemaparan kekerapan kaedah retorik ini, didapati penulis blog gemar menggunakan rayuan emosi (pathos) dan pembuktian dalam menghasilkan penulisan yang mampu mempengaruhi pembaca blognya. Analisis ketiga-tiga strategi retorik pathos, logos dan ethos serta perbincangan adalah seperti yang berikut:

Pathos

Nordiana et. al (2023) menyatakan pathos ialah elemen menitikberatkan kepada pemujukan bahasa yang melibatkan emosi khalayak serta banyak menggunakan unsur bahasa yang mencerminkan emosi seseorang bagi membolehkan pendengar merasai emosi yang disampaikan oleh penyampai. Pathos memiliki kekuatan untuk mempengaruhi pemahaman khalayak terhadap isu atau perkara tertentu. Teknik pathos mencakupi pelbagai elemen emosi, seperti kasih sayang, simpati, rasa rendah diri, rasa bersalah, empati, penghinaan, ketakutan, dan kekeliruan. Berikut merupakan contoh data pathos yang digunakan dalam data kajian ini.

Jadual 2: Data Strategi Pathos

Data 1 (PTH:J11:P1:B2-5)	Macam-macam aku dah alami. Menyeronokkan dan hampa! Resam yang berulang kali namun aku cecal demi mencari rezeki buat
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	keluarga aku. Asalkan berduit. Dapat bayar hutang dan besarkan anak-nak dengan duit berkat lagi halal. InshaAllah
Data 2 (PTH:J2:P20-23)	12 November 1821 merupakan tarikh yang tidak akan dilupakan oleh seluruh rakyat Kedah kerana pada detik itulah Kota Kuala Kedah diserang setelah 5 bulan sebelumnya Pulau Langkawi telah dimusnahkan setelah menyerang Kota Kuala Kedah dan membunuh seluruh penduduk kota tersebut. Angkatan Ligor telah melakukan pelbagai jenis penyeksaan kepada orang-orang Melayu yang berjaya ditangkap. Selain daripada wanita dirogol, para lelaki dipasung atau dipenggal kepala. Terdapat pelbagai bentuk penyeksaan yang lain dikenakan ke atas mereka yang tertewas itu.

Kedua-dua data di atas jelas menunjukkan penggunaan strategi retorik pathos. Penggunaan pathos menyasarkan rayuan kepada emosi audiens. Kebolehan menyentuh emosi audiens dapat membangkitkan perasaan kesalinghubungan dan sekali gus membangkitkan motivasi untuk bertindak balas terhadap pemikiran penghujah.

Data 1 memaparkan perasaan campuran antara kegembiraan dan kekecewaan. Penggunaan kata "menyeronokkan dan hampa" menunjukkan perasaan manusiawi yang boleh menyentuh emosi pembaca, membangkitkan rasa empati terhadap cabaran yang dihadapi oleh seseorang. Menerusi ayat ini, penulis menunjukkan tekad dan kecekalan untuk mencari rezeki demi keluarga. Perasaan tanggungjawab yang tinggi terhadap keluarga adalah sesuatu yang mudah difahami oleh kebanyakan orang dan mampu menyentuh perasaan mereka. Hal ini menciptakan hubungan emosional dengan pembaca yang mungkin turut berusaha untuk keluarga mereka. Ayat "asalkan berduit. Dapat bayar hutang dan besarkan anak-anak dengan duit berkat lagi halal." memberi penekanan terhadap tanggungjawab sebagai ketua dalam keluarga. Frasa "bayar hutang", "besarkan anak-anak", dan "duit berkat lagi halal" mencerminkan niat yang tulus dan suci untuk memberikan yang terbaik kepada keluarga. Keseluruhannya, data 1 di atas bersifat menyentuh emosi pembaca kerana ia menyentuh realiti kehidupan harian, cabaran kewangan, dan nilai keluarga. Ia memancarkan ketekunan, pengorbanan, dan harapan, yang merupakan elemen-elemen penting dalam pathos, membuatkan ia menarik dan penuh makna.

Seterusnya data 2 turut memaparkan pengaplikasian strategi pathos kerana menggambarkan kekejaman dan penyeksaan yang dilakukan terhadap orang-orang Melayu yang ditangkap selepas serangan. Frasa seperti "dibunuh seluruh penduduk" dan "pelbagai jenis penyeksaan" memberikan gambaran visual yang sangat kuat tentang kekejaman yang dilakukan, yang pasti mengundang perasaan jijik, marah, atau sedih daripada pembaca. Penulis menekankan penderitaan yang dialami oleh orang Melayu, seperti wanita yang di-

rogol dan lelaki yang dipasung atau dipenggal kepala. Frasa-frasa ini menekankan ketidakberdayaan dan kezaliman terhadap mereka yang tidak bersalah, yang mampu menimbulkan rasa simpati atau empati daripada pembaca terhadap golongan yang teraniaya. Frasa "membunuh seluruh penduduk kota" dan "dipenggal kepala" pula memaparkan proses kematian hasil penyiksaan yang digambarkan secara terperinci mampu menyentuh emosi pembaca, menyebabkan mereka berfikir tentang ketidakadilan yang berlaku. Perkataan "tertewas," dan frasa "pelbagai bentuk penyiksaan," mencipta suasana ketegangan dan membangkitkan perasaan kemarahan atau kesedihan. Frasa-frasa ini menggambarkan tindakan-tindakan yang tidak berperikemanusiaan dan tidak berperasaan bagi mempengaruhi pembaca untuk merasakan kekecewaan terhadap perlakuan tersebut.

Secara keseluruhan, data-data di atas mengandungi unsur pathos yang kuat kerana ia menimbulkan perasaan empati, kesedihan, dan kemarahan pembaca melalui penggunaan perkataan dan gambaran yang berkaitan emosi.

Logos

Logos memaparkan pemujuan yang menggunakan elemen ini berfokus kepada fakta, ilmu pengetahuan dan perkara-perkara yang difikirkan logik untuk dibahasakan (Nordiana. et. al, 2023). Penulis menggunakan hujah yang logik, mengaitkan sebab dan akibat secara bijaksana, untuk meningkatkan keyakinan pembaca terhadap isi kandungan. Ia digunakan untuk memberikan bukti tentang sesuatu idea atau hujah. Hal ini bermakna pengucap perlu meyakinkan audiens dengan mengemukakan bukti yang kukuh. Berikut merupakan contoh logos yang digunakan dalam data kajian:

Jadual 3: Data Strategi Logos

Data 3 (BA: M14: P5:B1-8)	Hospital Pakar KPJ terletak di lokasi elit di Kuala Lumpur yang serig menjadi pusat ekspatriat dan pemuda eksekutif. Hospital Pakar KPJ Damansara adalah sebahagian daripada KPJ Healthcare Group, salah satu daripada penyedia penjagaan kesihatan swasta terkemuka di rantau ini yang mempunyai pengalaman lebih daripada 29 tahun dalam industri penjagaan kesihatan. Pesakit-pesakit tempatan dan antarabangsa gemar ke hospital ini kerana perkhidmatannya yang dianggap berkualiti setaraf dunia dalam bidang Kardiologi, pembedahan Bariatic, Onkologi, Pemupukan In Vitro (IVF), Ortopedik, Pediatrik & Neonatologi, dan Pemeriksaan Kesihatan.
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Data 4

Oh ya, disahkan selamat oleh perbadanan antarabangsa IFRA

(BA: LOG: JN15: P5:B6-7)

Data 3 menyatakan fakta mengenai Hospital Pakar KPJ yang terletak di lokasi elit di Kuala Lumpur. Ini memberikan konteks logik mengapa hospital tersebut berada di tempat yang strategik dan mempunyai pelanggan yang tertentu, berdasarkan lokasi dan demografi penduduk setempat. Frasa "lebih daripada 29 tahun dalam industri penjagaan kesihatan" merujuk kepada pengalaman jangka panjang KPJ Healthcare Group dalam menyediakan perkhidmatan kesihatan. Ini adalah bukti yang menyokong kredibiliti dan keunggulan hospital tersebut dalam industri, memberikan pembaca alasan yang rasional untuk mempercayai bahawa mereka memiliki kepakaran dan kemampuan untuk menyediakan perkhidmatan berkualiti.

Seterusnya, dengan menyebut bahawa hospital ini menyediakan perkhidmatan yang dianggap "berkualiti setaraf dunia" dalam bidang perubatan tertentu (seperti Kardiologi, Onkologi, IVF, dan lain-lain), ayat ini menunjukkan bahawa hospital tersebut beroperasi pada standard yang tinggi. Hujah ini mengandungi elemen logik bahawa perkhidmatan berkualiti tinggi akan menarik pesakit, baik tempatan mahupun antarabangsa. Dengan pembuktian menerusi strategi logos dalam penulisan, penulis blog ini secara keseluruhan memberikan pembaca hujah yang logik mengenai reputasi, pengalaman, dan kepakaran Hospital Pakar KPJ.

Pada data 4 pula, logos pada data ini dikenal pasti dengan penggunaan frasa "disahkan selamat oleh perbadanan IFRA". Dalam konteks ini, penulis blog menceritakan berkenaan produk mandian penjagaan diri dari jenama Koolit yang mengandungi wangian. Beliau meyakinkan pembaca bahawa wangian yang digunakan sebagai salah satu bahan mandian ini selamat untuk digunakan dengan menyatakan produk ini telah mendapat pengiktirafan daripada pihak *The International Fragrance Association* (IFRA). Logos jelas dipaparkan melalui penggunaan IFRA (International Fragrance Association), yang merupakan badan antarabangsa yang diiktiraf dalam industri wangi-wangian dan keselamatan bahan-bahan kosmetik atau perubatan. IFRA mempunyai autoriti dan kepakaran dalam mengawal selia keselamatan produk-produk wangian, menjadikannya sumber yang sah dan boleh dipercayai. Dengan menggunakan IFRA sebagai sumber, penulis tidak perlu menjelaskan dengan panjang lebar mengenai proses ujian atau kriteria keselamatan yang digunakan; cukup dengan merujuk kepada badan ini, ia sudah cukup memberi bukti bahawa proses tersebut adalah sah dan dipercayai. Rumusannya, fakta yang disokong oleh bukti menunjukkan bahawa penulis mempunyai pengetahuan tentang topik yang dibincangkan.

Ethos

Ethos ialah strategi pemujukan atau rayuan kepada kredibiliti dan kebolehpercayaan khalayak kepada seseorang individu dan elemen ini, berupaya untuk mempengaruhi khalayak dengan memperlihatkan kredi-

biliti semasa berucap (Nordiana et. al, 2023). Berikut merupakan contoh ethos yang dipaparkan dalam data kajian:

Jadual 4: Data Strategi Ethos

Data 5 (BA:ETH:J11:P1:B1)	Aku mula berblog, hujung 2009. Sekarang dah 2020. Dah masuk tahun ke 10 aku dalam dunia blogging dan media sosial.
Data 6 (BA:ETH:J11:P4:B3-4)	Buat pengetahuan korang, aku dulu bekerja di Kementerian Pelancongan.

Data 5 di atas secara langsung mencerminkan strategi ethos melalui penekanan pada pengalaman panjang dalam bidang penulisan blog. Penulis menonjolkan fakta bahawa beliau telah berblog selama 10 tahun. Tempoh yang panjang ini memaparkan kepada pembaca bahawa penulis adalah individu yang konsisten, berdedikasi, dan berpengalaman dalam bidang tersebut. Hal ini secara tidak langsung mencerminkan kredibilitinya dalam bidang penulisan blog. Hal ini disebabkan tahap pertama penilaian terhadap seseorang ialah penilaian audiens terhadap kreadibiliti penghujah. Sebelum seseorang penghujah berhujah, audiens telah mula menilainya dalam pelbagai cara. Kredibiliti penghujah dinilai oleh audiens menerusi persepsinya terhadap penghormatan, kuasa, kebolehpercayaan, kepakaran, penampilan fizikal dan emosi serta sejarah atau latar belakang seseorang penghujah. Maka dalam konteks data di atas, latar belakang dan kepakaran penulis blog selama 10 tahun dalam penulisan blog boleh memberi kesan kepada pembaca terhadap tahap keyakinan pembaca kepada gaya penulisan dan kandungan penulisan blog beliau.

Menerusi data 6 di atas, penulis blog menggunakan strategi ethos untuk memaparkan kredibiliti beliau dalam bidang pelancongan. Pada awal entri blog tersebut, beliau menceritakan tawaran yang beliau terima iaitu menjadi pemandu pelancong kepada Syarikat NQ Services. Beliau juga menyatakan bahawa tawaran tersebut memang diimpikan selama ini dan telah menjadi kenyataan. Maka, dalam entri blog ini, beliau memaparkan bahawa beliau juga mempunyai latar belakang dalam bidang pelancongan dengan memaparkan pengalaman beliau pengalaman beliau yang pernah bertugas di Kementerian Pelancongan. Dengan menonjolkan pengalaman tersebut, beliau ingin memaparkan kelayakan beliau sebagai seorang pemandu pelancong. Hal ini penting kerana kelayakan ini memberi maklumat bahawa beliau sebagai pemandu pelancong yang berkaliber dan ada pengalaman dalam bidang pelancongan untuk meraih tanggapan positif pembaca blog akan kredibilitinya dalam bidang tersebut.

Justeru strategi ethos pada kedua-dua data di atas jelas digunakan bagi menonjolkan sama ada kredibiliti penulis blog, menunjukkan kepakaran beliau dalam bidang yang diceburi mahupun menunjukkan kelebihanannya di sebalik kelemahan sikap yang ditonjolkan. Amida (2015) menyatakan pengalaman yang luas dan mendalam dalam bidang yang diceburi oleh seseorang mampu memberi keyakinan kepada audiensnya tentang sesuatu yang disampaikan oleh beliau.

Perbincangan

Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa penulis blog memanfaatkan ketiga-tiga strategi retorik yang diperkenalkan oleh Aristotle pathos, logos, dan ethos untuk menarik perhatian pembaca. Walau bagaimanapun, terdapat kecenderungan terhadap penggunaan pathos dan logos, yang masing-masing digunakan sebanyak 30 kali, berbanding ethos yang didapati kurang signifikan. Analisis terhadap penggunaan logos menunjukkan bahawa ia memainkan peranan dalam memperkuat hujah penulis blog. Aplikasi logos dalam bentuk penyampaian fakta dan hujah logik bukan sahaja meningkatkan kredibiliti kandungan, tetapi juga memperkuat pandangan penulis, menjadikannya lebih berasas. Sebaliknya, pathos, yang dijalankan melalui penceritaan yang menghubungkan pengalaman peribadi dan penceritaan, menjadikan kandungan lebih relevan. Penekanan terhadap penggunaan pathos dalam kajian ini menunjukkan cara penulis blog berusaha membangkitkan empati pembaca.

Walaupun ethos ialah strategi yang berkait rapat dengan kredibiliti dan kewibawaan, ia dilihat kurang dominan dalam penulisan blog ini. Hasil kajian mendapati penggunaan ethos berlaku dalam konteks yang lebih terbatas. Penulis blog cenderung menggunakan ethos untuk menonjolkan pengalaman peribadi, terutama sekali dalam situasi tertentu yang memerlukan pengesahan kredibiliti. Fakta bahawa penulis blog ini sudah mempunyai pengikut yang ramai, lebih daripada 24,604 orang, menunjukkan bahawa penulis tidak perlu terlalu bergantung pada ethos secara berlebihan. Pendekatan santai yang digunakan dalam menonjolkan ethos boleh dianggap sebagai strategi yang disengajakan untuk mengekalkan hubungan yang lebih autentik dengan pembaca. Dalam konteks ini, penulis blog tidak hanya mengandalkan kredibiliti yang sudah terbina, tetapi juga memilih untuk mendekati pembaca dengan cara yang lebih mesra dan kurang formal, yang mungkin membantu memperkuat kepercayaan dalam cara yang lebih tidak langsung.

Secara keseluruhannya, kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa, sementara ketiga-tiga strategi retorik pathos, logos, dan ethos berperanan dalam menambah nilai kepada penulisan blog, keutamaan terhadap penggunaan pathos dan logos mencerminkan trend yang semakin penting dalam komunikasi digital yang memfokuskan kepada bukti dan pengaruh emosional dalam membentuk pandangan pembaca. Hasil kajian turut menunjukkan penulisan blog ini menggunakan komunikasi retorik positif dengan mengaplikasikan kandungan yang interaktif, peribadi, dan kasual.

Kesimpulan

Hasil analisis kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa ketiga-tiga strategi retorik pathos, logos, dan ethos telah diaplikasikan dalam penulisan blog yang dikaji. Pathos dan logos muncul sebagai strategi yang lebih dominan dalam wacana tersebut, sementara ethos paling kurang digunakan. Penulis blog cenderung memanfaatkan rayuan emosi (pathos) dan pembuktian (logos) sebagai pendekatan utama untuk menarik perhatian dan mempengaruhi pembaca. Penggunaan ethos yang minimal dalam blog ini mencerminkan bahawa penulis

tidak terlalu menonjolkan kelebihan diri, tetapi lebih fokus kepada mencipta hubungan emosional dan membuktikan hujah-hujah yang dikemukakan.

Penulisan dalam era digital kini jelas menunjukkan bahawa retorik masih memainkan peranan penting dalam menyampaikan mesej dengan berkesan. Walaupun pendekatan tradisional menggunakan ethos untuk menunjukkan kredibiliti dan autoriti masih relevan, penulis blog ini lebih banyak mengutamakan elemen emosi dan pembuktian untuk menarik minat audiens. Oleh itu, aplikasi strategi retorik dalam penulisan blog ini mencerminkan peranan penting retorik dalam membentuk komunikasi yang efektif dalam dunia digital.

Sumbangan Pengarang

Pengkonsepkan, [Farah Hanini Abdul Rahman] dan [Lee Ai Chat]; methodology, [Farah Hanini Abdul Rahman]; [Farah Hanini Abdul Rahman]; pengesahan, [Sembang Lee Ai]; analisis formal, [Farah Hanini Abdul Rahman]; siasatan, [Farah Hanini Abdul Rahman]; sumber, [Sembang Lee Ai]; data curation, [Farah Hanini Abdul Rahman]; penulisan—penyediaan draf asal, [Farah Hanini Abdul Rahman]; menulis—menyemak dan menyunting, [Sembang Lee Ai]; visualisasi, [Nama Anda]; pengawasan, [Lee Ai Chat]; pentadbiran projek, [Farah Hanini Abdul Rahman]. Semua pengarang telah membaca dan bersetuju dengan versi manuskrip yang diterbitkan.

Pembiayaan

Tiada.

Pernyataan Ketersediaan Data

Data yang digunakan dalam kajian ini, termasuk petikan blog dan analisis yang berkaitan, tersedia secara terbuka dalam [Blog Ben Ashaari] di [<https://www.benashaari.com/>].

Konflik Kepentingan

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Enhancing English Pronunciation among Indian Students in Malaysia: Exploring the Preference for Imitation vs. Repetition Methods

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Abstract

English has gained significant importance in Malaysia, serving as a widely used global and acknowledged second language. Thus, it is common for Malaysians to be able to speak in English, at least enough for casual conversation. The Indian community in Malaysia, as part of its multicultural fabric, seeks to improve their English-speaking abilities. However, like other foreign language learners, Indian speakers face difficulty achieving accurate pronunciation due to phonetic differences with their native languages. This study intends to identify the methods applied by the Indian community in speaking English. The study examines the preferences between imitation and repetition methods to enhance English pronunciation. 36 Form Four Indian students in a suburban secondary school in Selangor took part in this study. Through a set of 5-likert scale 10-question questionnaires, participants indicated their preference on which method they practised. The results indicate that the participants preferred for imitation over repetition, which aligns with Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory. These findings emphasise the importance of incorporating imitation techniques in English pronunciation instruction for Indian speakers and contribute to understanding effective language learning strategies. Educators and curriculum developers can benefit from these practical insights when aiming to enhance English pronunciation skills among Indian students.

Keywords: *English pronunciation, Indian speakers, imitation, repetition, ESL*

Introduction

This world is home to thousands of languages. Language is a fundamental communication tool, allowing individuals to convey and exchange information across diverse cultural boundaries (Ahtif & Gandhi, 2022). The need for a common language has become even more pressing in today's globalised world, characterised by frequent interactions between linguistically diverse communities (Rao, 2019). English has emerged as the lingua franca for international communication and is paramount for various aspects of life, including education and employment (Herbert, 2023; Sing, 2017). Interestingly, English is no longer exclusive to the Western world, specifically to the British and American, as various variants of English are available.

In Malaysia, using different English variants, such as Malaysian English, Singaporean English, and Indian English, necessitates intercomprehension among speakers. The phonology of these new English differs most significantly from existing variations of English in that it preserves many unique characteristics, allowing the users to have better tolerance in a variety of English (Boonsuk et al., 2021). However, these English varieties often diverge considerably from the native languages of Malaysian students, leading to pronunciation difficulties due to phonological transfer from their first language (Darmi et al., 2018). One of

the common thread skills in communication is pronunciation. For an individual to enunciate each word correctly, this can be achieved by changing how they perceive the sounds that create those words. This applies to larger aspects of speech, such as syllables, stress patterns, and individual sounds. Notably, pronunciation is vital to language proficiency, significantly impacting an individual's communication ability (Muroya, 2022). Despite being a medium of education and employment, students encounter numerous challenges concerning English pronunciation (Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz, 2021).

Malaysia's various races and ethnicities do not deter its citizens from embracing English as the second official language in the country. However, navigating the linguistic landscape in Malaysia can be particularly challenging for students, especially those of Indian descent, when it comes to mastering English pronunciation. This challenge arises primarily due to the multilingual environment that characterises Malaysia, where various languages and dialects are spoken (Hays, 2013, as cited in Duka and Abdul Aziz, 2019). The majority of Indians worldwide speak an English dialect known as Indian English (henceforth, IE). According to Wiltshire (2020), the contrast realisation of /v/ and /w/ issue existed across Indian communities due to the absentees from their native tongue. The coexistence of these languages introduces a complex interplay of phonological systems that significantly impact the pronunciation acquisition process. For non-native speakers, such as Malaysian Indian students, the journey to acquire a second language, like English, is often fraught with difficulties and obstacles (Jahara & Abdelrady, 2021; Purnama et al., 2023). These linguistic hurdles hinder their academic progress and affect their social integration within the multicultural Malaysian society (Nguyen, 2022). Pronunciation, a fundamental aspect of language acquisition, plays a pivotal role in effective communication. Mispronunciations can lead to misunderstandings (Megariani et al., 2020) and communication breakdowns, ultimately impeding language learning.

Furthermore, the significance of pronunciation is amplified by the widespread use of English in official capacities within Malaysia. Tasks such as sending emails or participating in job interviews often demand proficiency in English pronunciation. However, Cameron (2012) claimed that non-native speakers frequently grapple with discrepancies between English word spelling and pronunciation, resulting in actual pronunciation problems as they pronounce the words based on their native tongue (as cited in Purnama et al., 2023). Compounding this issue is the unfortunate fact that pronunciation instruction is often overlooked during students' formative years in school, leaving them to navigate these complexities independently. The root causes of these challenges can be traced back to the inherent differences between learners' native languages and the target language, in this case, English (Priya & Prasantha Kumar, 2020).

Despite Malaysia's extensive promotion of English language proficiency in schools, there tends to be an inclination towards emphasising a native pronunciation model, inadvertently side-lining the nuances of local English pronunciation characteristics (Abu Bakar et al., 2021). The resulting neglect of pronunciation strategies and techniques in the English as a Second Language (ESL) environment underscores the need for

a comprehensive exploration of the perspectives held by Malaysian English learners concerning the acquisition of accurate English pronunciation. Thus, within this context, it becomes imperative to embark on an in-depth examination of the strategies and techniques employed by Indian students in Malaysia to enhance their English pronunciation skills. This study, therefore, endeavours to shed light on these strategies and techniques while upholding the rigorous standards of academic research. By doing so, we aim to contribute valuable insights to the broader realm of language learning and teaching, potentially revolutionising language education practices in multilingual societies like Malaysia.

Literature Review

Suryanto and Eka Sari (2021) highlighted that despite English being a global language, students encounter numerous challenges in studying it, with speaking proficiency being a common problem. Researchers and linguists have identified several linguistic aspects contributing to these challenges, including disparities between the first language (L1) and English (L2) sound systems, irregularities in English sounds, mother tongue interference, and spelling's impact on pronunciation (Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz, 2021). Consequently, previous research has recommended pronunciation training as a solution. This chapter delves into these issues, drawing from prior studies and reviews that have served as the foundation for this research.

Indian Speakers' First Language in Malaysia

The Indian population in Malaysia is renowned for its diversity in terms of culture, ethnicity, and linguistic origin. Malaysia's Indian population, known as Malaysian Indians, is culturally diverse and comprises various linguistic groups, including Malayalee, Sindhi, Gujarati, Bengali, and Punjabi communities. Tamil, spoken predominantly in Peninsular Malaysia, is the most common language among Malaysian Indians (Hoh et al., 2022). This paper focused on the most spoken Indian language in Malaysia, as explained in Table 1.

Table 1: Indian languages in Malaysia

Language	Description
Tamil	• Tamil, a South Dravidian language with historical significance, exhibits diglossia with distinct spoken and written forms, differing pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar (Ramasamy, 2010). • Tamil vowel length and compared it to English vowels, revealing phonological and phonetic differences between the two languages • Tamil also lacks a consonant analogous to English /v/ or /w/, leading to difficulties for Indian English speakers in distinguishing between /v/ and /w/ sounds (Maskara, 2013; Ruzkina et al., 2016).

Punjabi	● Punjabi, an Indo-Aryan language, is widely spoken in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh (Singh & Kaur, 2021). ● It holds cultural significance for Sikhs and has many native speakers worldwide. ● Pronunciation challenges arise from Punjabi speakers' stress patterns and vowel and consonant substitutions when speaking English.
Gujarati	● Gujarati, an Indo-Aryan language, has its origins dating back to the 12th century AD (Maher, 2016; Mukhopadhyay, 2021). ● Gujarati speakers in Malaysia primarily originate from the Indian ports of Cambay, Kutch, and Surat (Sivanantham & Suberamaniam, 2014) ● Differences between English and Gujarati phonologies, including vowel and consonant counts and articulation modes, pose challenges for pronunciation.

English as a Second Language in Malaysia

English, as the preeminent global language for communication, holds immense significance in today's world. Consequently, English as a Second Language (ESL) has become an integral part of the curriculum for students worldwide, particularly in nations with historical ties to British or American colonialism, such as Malaysia, India, the Philippines, and Nigeria (Dascomb, 2019). In Malaysia, where a multilingual education system has been implemented, the challenge lies in striking a delicate balance between national and international linguistic demands, as outlined in the linguistic educational policy (Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz, 2021). Within the Malaysian educational framework, English is formally recognised as the second language (L2), mandated by education policy as a compulsory subject across all educational levels (Farah Hussan & Mahani Stapa, 2021). This emphasis on English proficiency stems from the conviction that fluency in this global language catalyses language acquisition and proficiency among learners.

However, language acquisition entails more than merely comprehending linguistic structures and concepts. Some students exhibit competence in English and excel in written communication but grapple with verbal communication (Romero & Manjarres, 2017). Schools play a pivotal role in shaping students' attitudes toward the value of English and their approach to language acquisition with teachers the main role of owning a great knowledge themselves (Purnama et al., 2023) and planning great activities (Megariani et al., 2020). The enduring legacy of British colonisation in Malaysia has left an indelible imprint on the nation's education system. The British established English as the medium of instruction in primary and secondary schools and evolved into the primary language for corporate communication (Ng & Cavallaro, 2019).

The Importance of Speaking English

Speaking proficiency assumes paramount importance in daily life (Clampitt, 2017). Confidence demands extensive verbal interaction, a necessity for individuals who communicate extensively, such as politicians, auctioneers, and negotiators. Hence, people endeavour to acquire effective and engaging communication skills, encompassing linguistic competence and maturity (Youngblood, 2010). This quest becomes even more complex when individuals must navigate this challenging terrain in a new language, replete with social and cultural nuances (Light & McNaughton, 2014). Consequently, mastering speaking skills in a new language, such as English, becomes indispensable, significantly enhancing overall language proficiency as well as elevate one's social status (Carrie, 2017; Choi, 2020).

Nonetheless, proficiency in professional and effective communication often necessitates structured instruction. Accordingly, Copland et al. (2020) underscore the role of English language teachers in guiding their most capable students toward achieving speaking proficiency. Paradoxically, despite the boost in self-assurance that accompanies effective self-expression, students often grapple with speaking skills (Maher, 2016). Proficiency in speaking empowers students to converse fluently in compelling English, underpinned by consistent practice (Suroso et al., 2021). To utilise English as a means of communication, especially in academic and professional contexts, students and the general populace must cultivate specific foreign language competencies to attain high levels of verbal proficiency (Nur Faizah, 2021).

English Pronunciation

British English Pronunciation

Given Malaysia's history as a former British colony, there is a predilection for embracing British pronunciation models. Some even contend that Malaysian English's acrolectal variety is similar to Received Pronunciation (RP) (Chiew, 2021). Consequently, Standard British English has been adopted as a pedagogical model within the Malaysian English language curriculum to acquaint students with the proper pronunciation of English words spoken by native speakers (Jayapalan & Pillai, 2011). Nevertheless, this choice is subject to scrutiny, considering the many accents that characterise spoken English globally (Trudgill, 1999). A fixed standard for spoken English is scarcely tenable in global English usage (Chiew, 2021).

Excessive reliance on models for pronunciation may lead to an inaccurate understanding and representation of the language, failing to address learners' communicative needs. It is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of such models and supplement them with other resources to ensure a comprehensive and nuanced approach to language learning. Graddol (2006) further elucidates this point, contending that the notion of students needing to speak English like a native speaker is antiquated. With English emerging as a global lingua franca, speakers increasingly employ it to express their nationality and identity. Consequently, the absence of a native-speaker accent no longer serves as an indicator of incompetence. Contemporary trends in

pronunciation instruction advocate exposure to various English dialects, emphasising intelligibility over the imitation of native models (Kirkpatrick, 2007). In Malaysia, however, the trend appears to be inclined toward a British-centric paradigm rather than an endonormative one.

Malaysian English Pronunciation

Malaysian English encompasses numerous dialects derives from the many languages exist in Malaysia (David et al., 2017). Educated Malaysian English, in particular, exhibits a spectrum with three distinctive levels: highly educated Malaysian English, moderately educated Malaysian English, and lowly educated Malaysian English. Highly educated Malaysian English pertains to individuals who have typically received a university education in English. Moderately educated Malaysian English is prevalent among individuals pursuing their initial university degrees, with English as the primary medium of instruction. In contrast, lowly educated Malaysian English is associated with individuals who have completed secondary school, with Bahasa Malaysia, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tamil, or other local languages serving as their primary medium of instruction. For this group, English is usually studied as a subject in school, and its utilisation outside the classroom is varies (Jassem, 2014).

One might conjecture whether Malaysian English speakers pattern their accents after British English, American English, Australian English, or even a distinct Malaysian English accent. In line with the preceding definition, personal observations, teaching experience, and academic research suggest that most Malaysian English speakers lean toward British English, specifically English, as their preferred accent model rather than Scottish or Irish English. A minority may draw inspiration from American English, with the most noticeable American feature being the /r/ sound. Importantly, it should be noted that the presence of the /r/ sound is not exclusive to American English; it is also prevalent in several British English accents (Trudgill, 1999).

Theories Related to Second Language Acquisition

Understanding the mechanisms of second language acquisition (SLA) involves exploring various theories and perspectives. This section delves into three significant SLA-related theories, highlighting their fundamental principles and implications.

L1 Interference

Language acquisition is an innate process that commences at a tender age with minimal conscious awareness or deliberate effort (Muriel, 2012). It is, therefore, crucial to acknowledge the role of the first language (L1) or mother tongue, acquired during childhood and employed in daily life. This phenomenon, often called L1

interference, occurs when individuals use a second language in grammatical, lexical, or phonological contexts (Krahnke & Krashen, 1983).

In their study, Krahnke and Krashen (1983) highlight the prevalence of L1 interference in English-speaking contexts, especially within classroom presentations and interactions. To address L1 interference issues, the Contrastive Analysis (CA) approach was widely employed in SLA studies during the 1950s and 1960s. CA primarily focused on evaluating the linguistic systems of both L1 and L2, particularly their phonological and grammatical structures, to anticipate errors and potential difficulties in L2 acquisition (Richards & Richard, 2002). However, CA's predictions were not consistently aligned with L2 learner performance, as not all L1-L2 distinctions posed challenges to L2 acquisition. Simultaneously, some challenges in L2 acquisition were unrelated to L1-L2 differences (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005). This prompted the development of Error Analysis (EA) in the 1960s, an analytical approach aimed at detecting L2 errors rather than predicting them (Corder, 1981, as cited in Saeed Al-Sobhi, 2019).

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, as expounded by Santrock (2011), revolves around how individuals learn by observing and imitating others. The desire to acquire knowledge and enhance skills often stems from individuals' motivations for engaging in specific behaviours. Hence, creating a conducive learning environment plays a pivotal role in teaching and learning, as learners exposed to a supportive environment tend to emulate one another's behaviours and actively participate in the learning process.

Bandura et al. (1988) posited that positive outcomes observed during the initial stage of social learning are catalysts for subsequent stages, namely imitation and behaviour modelling. For instance, an instructor who observes and appreciates students' engagement and enjoyment during an in-world course is more likely to be motivated to teach a similar course. This observation allows instructors to replicate and model effective teaching strategies in real-world settings (Bandura, 2005; 2006). Previous research has demonstrated that modelling can facilitate learning various behaviours, such as children observing their parents reading or students witnessing demonstrations of mathematical problem-solving.

Strategies for Enhancing Pronunciation Among Indian Students

Psychological concerns, bad managerial positions, and the impact of teachers' and colleagues' passion on learners' desire can all be addressed, according to Rusreena et al. (2018), when all students recognise their own skills and strive to pick tasks that are better suited to them. Improving pronunciation among Indian students is a multifaceted task that involves addressing psychological factors, effective teaching techniques, and student engagement. This section explores strategies to enhance pronunciation skills among Indian students, shedding light on their significance and practical applications.

Repetition Technique

The repetition technique strongly emphasises the communicative aspects of speaking and aims to align teaching programs with students' communicative goals (Richards & Richard, 2002). In this approach, students actively participate by listening to their instructor, imitating pronunciation, words, and sentences, and then replicating the model provided by the instructor. Repetition should be context-specific to effectively achieve teaching and learning objectives (Kuliahana & Marzuki, 2020).

Repetition provides a platform for the students to practice and chance to participate in class activity (Mendrofa & Wijaya, 2022). More importantly, it fosters communication for the sake of communication, allowing students to communicate more freely and comfortably. Short-term repetition techniques tolerate minor grammatical errors, understandable pronunciation, and the occasional use of the native language. Variants of repetition drills include choral repetition, individual repetition, and cue-response drills (Kartikasari et al., 2015).

Imitation Strategy

Imitation entails replicating the words, stress patterns, pauses, intonation, facial expressions, and gestures of a native English speaker, facilitating students' ability to listen to English sounds and patterns (McCrocklin, 2012). This strategy harnesses technology, allowing teachers to incorporate engaging English videos into the classroom, providing a multimedia approach to instruction (Hänze & Berger, 2007).

Incorporating multimedia, such as videos with subtitles, allows students to listen, imitate, and replicate conversations and word pronunciations. This approach is particularly effective in helping students understand native speakers' pronunciation and learn syntax, phrase structure, and body language. It promotes active learning and engagement, as students often prefer learning through videos over rote memorisation (Shabiralyani et al., 2015). Utilising technology for pronunciation instruction offers advantages that traditional methods cannot match (Neri et al., 2016). In summary, imitation through multimedia enhances students' language acquisition by making learning enjoyable and effective. Although not rigid, intonation patterns are vital in helping learners produce natural utterances and build confidence in communicating with English speakers (McCrocklin, 2012).

Previous Studies

Several previous studies highlight the pressing issue of Malaysian students' communication skills, underscoring the importance of English as a second language (ESL) for Malaysia's progress (Kashinathan & Aziz, 2021). However, challenges arise as teachers' instructional approaches often diverge from their beliefs. Students are not properly taught to speak, but force to break the silence before they are ready. Their educational ideas and instructional approaches are misaligned, preventing them from putting their convictions into prac-

tice in the language classroom. They have no choice but to prepare pupils for the exam, which entails providing grammar-based, teacher-centred classroom education, due to exam-oriented education nature in Malaysia. Many Malaysian companies believe the graduates' communication skills, including English-speaking inadequacies contribute to unemployment (Kumar Hemanth & Salahudin, 2023). Despite years of English language education, graduates often perform poorly in speaking and communication. This discrepancy underscores the need for ESL students to improve their English proficiency, especially in speaking. Limited opportunities to use English outside the classroom further compound the issue.

Students who are unable to communicate effectively in an international setting will almost certainly lack the requisite social skills. One of the linguistic talents that has provoked much debate among educators and policymakers is speaking ability. Although the majority of students passed the English exam, they are not fully fluent in the language. It is clear that ESL students have few chances to use English outside of the classroom, especially if they speak another language. Saudi English faces similar challenges in improving students' speaking and pronunciation skills as a Foreign Language (EFL) (Al-Rubaat & Alshammari, 2020). The undergraduate EFL curriculum must prioritise listening and speaking instruction to underscore the significance of pronunciation training. Elumalai et al. (2021) support this viewpoint, emphasising that pronunciation is vital in language acquisition. Due to the higher numbers of vowels and consonants in Bangla compared to English, the Bangladeshi speakers have the tendency to experience vowel confusion. For example, /ɑ/, /o/, /ʊɑ/, /u/ sounds were produced instead of /ɔ/ sound.

Kuliahana and Marzuki (2020) believe that students' speaking problems such as mispronunciation, unwilling to make mistakes and ungrammatical sentences can be solved by practicing repetition technique. They applied action-research design, employing collaborative action research, among 25 Indonesian speakers. In Cycle 1, participants were tested to identify their ability to speak and pronounce difficult words. In Cycle 2, participants were allowed to practice as much as they wanted. The result shows a significant improvement, hence validating that repetition can improve students' communication ability. Practicing drilling repetition is helpful in enhancing students' ability to speak (Mendrofa & Wijaya, 2022). Teachers targeted the students' hearing and speaking sense by providing a lesson that highlighted the targeted word through high audio exposure and verbal repetition. Additional supporting materials such as pictures, video and recording were also used. The students' speaking ability showed a great improvement after completing the task with the teacher, thus proving the repetition does improve one's speaking ability.

82 Mandarin speakers took part in an elicit imitation task (EIT) to improve English proficiency (Wu et al., 2022). The participants were allowed to repeat the target sentences as much as they can before the test started. Surprisingly, High and Advance groups choose imitation to be more challenging than comprehending the sentence. The other groups, Low and Mid claimed that inability to comprehend caused them to be unable to imitate the sentence properly. Another research done by Llompart and Reinisch (2019) identify the

relationship between imitation and the ability to perceive and produce English sounds. The participants were 42 female German speakers, and underwent three tasks; perceptual categorisation task, phonetic imitation task and word reading. Focusing on the imitation task, participants listened to ‘sheep’-‘ship’ and ‘bet’-‘bat’ sequence, and were told to imitate the sound as closely as possible. The result showed that imitation strongly influences the perception ability, especially on the difficult L2 contrast. However, the relationship between imitation and production ability is more complex, due to other factors.

In essence, these studies collectively stress the importance of addressing pronunciation issues among ESL students, not only for educational purposes but also for future employability and global communication. They underscore the need for effective strategies and pedagogical approaches to enhance pronunciation skills in the classroom.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design to determine effective strategies for addressing these issues. The target population comprised 370 Form Four students from a suburban secondary school in Selangor. Stratified sampling was utilised to categorise the population based on ethnicity, resulting in a sample of 40 Form Four Indian students. The data collection instrument consisted of a questionnaire on the effectiveness of methods (repetition and imitation) in improving pronunciation. 5-option Likert scales were utilised for responding to the questionnaire items, ensuring efficient data collection. To ease the collection process, Google Form was used to distribute the questionnaire. After data collection, the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 18.0) analysed the closed-ended questions, allowing for a comprehensive examination of the collected data. This methodological approach enables a systematic investigation into the identified factors affecting pronunciation problems among students and provides valuable insights into potential solutions.

Findings

Table 2 displays one of the strategies for improving the pronunciation of English words and phrases: repetition. It is revealed that the repetition strategy was ineffective as item 3, *‘I have a habit of repeating after the words I hear in the media, but it did not help my pronunciation’*, received the highest mean scores ($M = 0.81$, $SD = 0.40$). Twenty-nine respondents (80.56%) agreed with this statement, while the other seven respondents (19.44%) disagreed. This is probably because the respondents believed that repetition did not improve the quality of word representations in their memories, as eighteen respondents (50.00%) agreed with the statement.

Table 2: Repetition to improve English pronunciation (standard deviation in parenthesis)

Item	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Mean (SD)
Repetition does require a lot of effort, therefore I do not prefer to study English pronunciation through it.	17 (47.22)	19 (52.78)	0.53 (0.51)
I have a habit of repeating after the words I hear in the media, but it did not help my pronunciation.	7 (19.44)	29 (80.56)	0.81 (0.40)
Based on my experience, a teacher-led repetition drill pronunciation has slightly improved my pronunciation.	8 (22.22)	28 (77.78)	0.78 (0.42)
Repeating difficult words in conversation did not help my pronunciation.	14 (38.89)	22 (61.11)	0.61 (0.49)
Repetition is an effective way to improve the quality of word representations in my memory.	18 (50.00)	18 (50.00)	0.50 (0.51)
Total	64	116	180

They also asserted that repeating difficult words in conversation is futile, as most (61.11%) agreed. As a result, numerous of them (52.78%) agreed that repetition does require much effort, therefore, they prefer not to implement this technique in improving their pronunciation. However, it was discovered that repetition only worked in the presence of a guide, as item 3, 'Based on my experience, a teacher-led repetition drill pronunciation, has slightly improved my pronunciation', received the second highest mean scores ($M = 0.78$, $SD = 0.42$). Twenty-eight respondents (77.78%) agreed with this statement, while the other eight (22.22%) disagreed.

Table 3 displays the other strategy, imitation, which could be used to improve the pronunciation of English words and phrases. It was revealed that the respondents favoured the imitation strategy for improving their pronunciation, as item 1: 'Imitation does not use much of my time, therefore I choose to study English pronunciation through it', received the highest mean scores ($M = 0.97$, $SD = 0.17$). Thirty-five respondents (97.22%) agreed with this claim, and only one (2.78%) disagreed. This is probably due to their belief that English intonation patterns can be practised by imitating them, as a majority of them (33) (91.67%) agreed with the statement despite the other three respondents (8.33%) disagreeing.

Following that, the respondents found descriptions, charts, facial diagrams, and video recordings were helpful in their imitation process as Item 3: 'Descriptions, charts, facial diagrams, and video recordings were helpful in helping me imitate difficult sounds', obtained the second highest mean score of 0.94 and a standard deviation of 0.23. Thirty-four respondents (94.44%) agreed with the statement, whereas the remaining two (5.56%) disagreed. Furthermore, the findings showed that attentive listening leads imitation to be effective, which enhances their pronunciation, with thirty respondents (83.33%) agreeing to this statement and

six respondents (16.67%) disagreeing. Their pronunciation could be enhanced even more if they imitate the language patterns employed in conversation by native speakers, as thirty respondents (88.89%) agreed with this statement. In comparison, the remaining four respondents (11.11%) disagreed.

Table 3: Imitation to improve English pronunciation (standard deviation in parenthesis)

Item	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Mean (SD)
Imitation does not use much of my time, therefore I choose to study English pronunciation through it.	1 (2.78)	35 (97.22)	0.97 (0.17)
I do believe that English intonation patterns can be practised by imitating them.	3 (8.33)	33 (91.67)	0.92 (0.28)
Descriptions, charts, facial diagrams, and video recordings were helpful in helping me imitate difficult sounds.	2 (5.56)	34 (94.44)	0.94 (0.23)
Listen attentively to the productions of native speakers and imitate them did improve my pronunciation.	6 (16.67)	30 (83.33)	0.83 (0.38)
Imitating native speakers' language patterns used in conversation through any possible exposure has improved my pronunciation.	4 (11.11)	32 (88.89)	0.89 (0.32)
Total	16	164	180

Discussion

Regular practice is significant in improving pronunciation skills, echoing Comay's (2015) emphasis on this crucial aspect of language learning. However, it notes an interesting phenomenon: learners often fail to fully recognise the positive impact of repetition on pronunciation. Even though they understand its importance, they tend to overlook the need to practice English words and phrases regularly. The role of drilling in language acquisition is discussed in line with Mendrofa and Wijaya's (2022) perspective. Drilling is portrayed as a method that provides learners extensive practice opportunities, allowing them to grasp correct word structures and pronunciation. This practice not only enhances speaking skills but also boosts learners' self-confidence. The study reveals a preference among respondents for teacher-led drill pronunciation, especially when dealing with challenging pronunciation aspects. This aligns with the principles of Mathison and Ross's (2007) learning mastery approach, which focuses on self-improvement and skill development.

The importance of imitation, as outlined by Mccrocklin (2012), is highlighted in the discussion. Imitation involves replicating native English speakers' speech patterns, intonation, and gestures, enabling learners to internalise the sounds of the language. Respondents in the study acknowledge the value of imitating English intonation patterns, recognising its role in facilitating natural speech production and boosting confi-

dence in English communication. (Mayer, 2014) endorsement of multimedia instruction, incorporating visuals and sounds, further supports this perspective. Respondents find descriptions, charts, facial diagrams, and video recordings particularly useful in imitation exercises. These findings are consistent with the Social Cognitive Theory, as developed by Albert Bandura, which emphasises the role of observation and imitation in the learning process. This theory underscores the importance of a positive learning environment and the learner's motivation to improve, aligning with (Krahnke & Krashen, 1983) concept of subconscious language acquisition driven by a focus on meaning and motivation.

The phonetic convergence plays a crucial role in developing language proficiency. The idea is that mimicking your conversation partners can lead to better pronunciation skills, as supported by Pardo et al. (2010). Thus, it is imperative to engage in authentic conversations with native speakers to enhance your language acquisition. The findings underscore the importance of consistent practice, imitation, and observation in enhancing the pronunciation abilities of second language learners.

Conclusion

To sum up, Form Four Indian students encounter several obstacles when it comes to improving their spoken English. These include interference from their native language, limited exposure to English, concerns about their identity and self-worth, insufficient practice in English pronunciation, lack of motivation, and worries about achieving good pronunciation. It is essential for authorities to address these challenges, as they can lead to a lack of drive to learn and result in inadequate English-speaking skills. To maintain their level of proficiency and prepare for undergraduate studies, students must be academically and mentally ready to face the challenges and expectations. Additionally, they should create a conducive learning environment that fosters confidence, promotes self-learning, encourages discussion, and facilitates collaborative work towards excellence. By meeting the demands and resolving the issues of students, the nation can achieve its goal of producing highly skilled scholars.

Author contributions

Nurul Izzah (N.I.A) - Conceptualisation, data collection, data analysis and writing (original). Raja Rosemawati (R.R.R.A) - data analysis, writing (review and editing), and supervision. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data availability statement

The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article [and/or] its supplementary materials.

Conflicts of interest

None.

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Bahasa Humor dan Makna Implisit dalam Sitkom Komedi Melayu ***Humorous Language and Implicit Meaning in Malay Comedy Sitcoms***

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Abstrak

Humor merupakan suatu keadaan atau peristiwa yang mampu membangkitkan rasa geli hati dalam kalangan individu yang mendengar dan melihatnya menerusi bahasa yang dituturkan dan gerak geri yang dipersembahkan. Untuk memahami humor, pendengar perlu mengaitkan konteks yang sesuai dengan situasi atau peristiwa tertentu untuk memahami humor tersebut. Humor yang disampaikan kadangkala membawa kepada penyalahafsiran makna sehingga menyukarkan pendengar untuk menyingkap makna sebenar sesebuah persembahan sekiranya mereka tidak berada dalam konteks yang sama dengan penutur yakni pelawak. Hal ini kerana bahasa humor mempunyai makna yang tersirat atau implisit. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti unsur-unsur bahasa humor yang digunakan dalam sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion 2022 berdasarkan kerangka konsep bahasa humor oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2008), mengklasifikasikan makna eksplisit dan makna implisit unsur-unsur bahasa humor serta menganalisis makna implisit unsur bahasa humor dengan mengaplikasikan Teori Hibrid. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dan kaedah analisis kandungan. Data diperolehi secara atas talian yang dicapai menerusi platform penstriman atas talian Sooka TV di <https://www.sookatv.com/>. Unsur bahasa humor yang telah dikenal pasti penggunaannya dalam sitkom komedi adalah penggunaan bahasa kiasan, permainan kata, penggunaan pantun jenaka, cara bercerita dan mencarut. Bahasa humor yang digunakan lebih mengandungi makna implisit berbanding makna eksplisit. Makna implisit yang terkandung dalam bahasa humor ini juga bersifat metaforikal iaitu makna atau mesej yang cuba disampaikan oleh penutur (pelawak) itu mengkonsepsikan entiti yang abstrak dan implisit untuk menjelaskan sesuatu konsep yang kompleks, rumit dan baharu. Antaranya konsep emosi, cinta, kasih sayang, kehidupan, kematian, sikap dan sifat manusia serta nilai murni.

Kata Kunci: *Bahasa humor, Makna implisit, Sitkom komedi, Teori Hibrid, metafora konseptual*

Abstract

Humor is a situation or event that can evoke a sense of amusement among individuals who hear and see it through spoken language and presented gestures. To understand humor, listeners must relate the appropriate context to a particular situation or event. The humor presented sometimes leads to misinterpretation of the meaning, making it difficult for listeners to reveal the true meaning of a performance if they are not in the same context as the speaker, the comedian. This is because the language of humor has an implied or implicit meaning. This study aims to identify the elements of humorous language used in the comedy sitcom Sepahtu Reunion 2022 based on the conceptual framework of humorous language by Asmah Haji Omar (2008), classify the explicit meaning and the implicit meaning of the elements of humorous language as well as analyze the implicit meaning of the elements of humorous language by applying Hybrid Theory. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach and content analysis method. Data is

obtained online and accessed through Sooka TV's online streaming platform at <https://www.sookatv.com/>. Elements of humorous language that have been identified for use in comedy sitcoms are the use of figurative language, wordplay, the use of humorous rhymes, storytelling, and rants. The humorous language used contains more implicit meaning than explicit meaning. The implicit meaning contained in the language of humor is also symbolic, meaning the meaning or message that the speaker (comedian) is trying to convey is conceptualizing an abstract and implicit entity to explain a complex, complicated, and new concept. Among them are the concepts of emotions, love, affection, life, death, attitudes, and human nature as well as pure values.

Keywords: Humorous Language, Implicit Meaning, Malay Comedy Sitcoms, conceptual metaphor

Pengenalan

Humor berasal daripada perkataan *You-moors* yang bererti cairan-mengalir (Mustofa Hilmi, 2019). Humor merupakan sifat dan suatu situasi yang kompleks yang boleh menimbulkan keinginan untuk tertawa (Hartanti, 2008). Humor juga merupakan aspek universal dalam pengalaman manusia yang berlaku dalam semua budaya malah hampir semua individu di seluruh dunia. Bukan itu sahaja, humor juga adalah sebahagian daripada komunikasi dan kehidupan seharian dan ketawa adalah penting untuk kesejahteraan sesama manusia dan merupakan pertimbangan sosial (Ulloth, 2002). Collectt (2004) mendapati, individu yang tertarik dengan ujaran yang berunsurkan humor akan memberi tindak balas yang positif seperti ketawa dan tumpuan perhatian yang sepenuhnya terhadap humor. Hal ini kerana humor dapat dilihat pada konteks dan penggunaan yang menggembirakan dan rasa lucu yang dikongsi bersama antara pelawak dan pendengar atau penonton (Ziyaemehr dan Kumar, 2014). Sejajar dengan perkembangan komedi, dilihat banyak media yang cuba mengangkat dunia komedi dalam berbagai media dan salah satunya melalui acara program televisyen seperti sitkom komedi. Hal ini turut menjadikan sitkom sebagai salah satu bentuk alternatif baru dalam menyampaikan isu, idea, kritikan dan buah fikiran masyarakat terhadap isu-isu yang berlaku di Malaysia (Rahmanadji, 2017). Sitkom dapat dimanfaatkan sebagai cabang media yang dapat menjadi salah satu cara untuk mengungkapkan keresahan masyarakat menerusi penggunaan unsur humor yang didalamnya sarat dengan makna implisit dan mesej yang tersirat (Rahmanadji, 2017).

Sebagaimana pernyataan yang dikemukakan oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2000: 226), humor disampaikan ada kalanya dalam bentuk ragam bahasa naratif seperti puisi, pantun dan seloka, teka-teka, metafora, metonimi, hiperbola, simile dan lain-lain. Misalnya, metafora yang bertindak sebagai permainan bahasa zaman dahulu bertujuan untuk membangkitkan humor. Metafora berfungsi sebagai pemakaian kata atau ungkapan lain yang memfokus kepada konsep atau objek yang lain menerusi persamaan dan kiasan yang boleh menerbitkan makna yang lain daripada makna tersurat atau makna eskplisit (Rahman Shaari, 2001:58). Hal ini turut disokong oleh Za'ba, (2012) (dalam Rozaimah Rashidin dan Nor Hashimah Jalaluddin, 2013), iaitu metafora dapat mengumpakan sesuatu kepada perkara yang lain sehingga makna tersebut menjadi tidak literal dalam menyampaikan makna sebenar. Hal ini pula dinamakan sebagai sebagai *deviant* atau penyelewengan daripada bahasa harfiah.

Humor merupakan peristiwa atau suatu keadaan yang mampu mencetuskan rasa geli hati dalam hati manusia yang mendengar dan melihatnya menerusi bahasa yang dituturkan dan gerak geri yang dipersembahkan. Dalam erti kata lain, penggunaan humor adalah sebahagian daripada komunikasi dan kehidupan seharian dalam menjamin kesejahteraan sesama manusia dan pertimbangan sosial (Ulloth, 2002). Bahasa humor yang disampaikan boleh membawa kepada penyalahafsiran makna sehingga menyukarkan pendengar untuk menyingkap makna sebenar sesebuah penulisan mahupun persembahan. Sekiranya diteliti, bahasa figuratif ditafsirkan sebagai bahasa yang mempunyai makna tersirat iaitu menyamaertikan sesuatu perkara dengan perkara yang lain. Ekoran daripada ini menyebabkan humor mempunyai makna implisit dan bukannya makna yang literal.

Pernyataan ini juga turut diperkukuhkan dengan pendapat Nur Afiah dan Nor Hashimah Jalaluddin (2017), dalam komunikasi lisan manusia, menyatakan wujud dua jenis makna iaitu makna eksplisit dan makna implisit. Komunikasi yang mengandungi makna implisit lebih sukar difahami kerana adanya unsur-unsur tersirat yang boleh membawa kepada penyalahafsiran makna (Rozaimah Rashidin, 2016) sehingga menyukarkan pendengar memahami makna sebenar yang cuba disampaikan. Hal ini kerana humor yang berbentuk komedi bukan hanya sebagai lawak dan jenaka semata-mata, namun ia dipersembahkan untuk memberi mesej kepada masyarakat (Hatta Azad, 2021). Sekiranya mesej yang dibawa hanya untuk gelak ketawa tanpa pengisian, maka seperti itu juga masuk ke minda penonton dan masyarakat. Sehubungan itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti unsur-unsur bahasa humor yang digunakan dalam sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion 2022 berdasarkan kerangka konsep bahasa humor oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2008), mengklasifikasikan makna eksplisit dan makna implisit unsur-unsur bahasa humor serta menganalisis makna implisit unsur bahasa humor dengan mengaplikasikan Teori Hibrid.

Tinjauan Literatur

Melalui tinjauan ke atas kajian-kajian lepas mengenai humor dari pelbagai dimensi ilmu telah membawa pengkaji kepada satu kesimpulan bahawa keberhasilan humor bukan sahaja terhenti untuk menghiburkan manusia semata-mata, namun humor ini berperanan sebagai instrumen mengubah sikap, persepsi dan pandangan manusia terhadap sesuatu, menimbulkan kesedaran khalayak dalam pelbagai aspek kehidupan sama ada moral, agama, kemasyarakatan mahupun kekeluargaan yang dapat dilihat menerusi kajian Aria Bayu Setiaji dan Enggal Mursalin (2021). Keberhasilan fungsi humor ini juga mampu meningkatkan kualiti komunikasi dan sesebuah persembahan kerana sebuah persembahan itu akan dianggap berjaya sekiranya khalayak terhibur (Rahmanadji, 2007) yang dibuktikan menerusi kajian Mohd Zaki Rahim (2017), Hafifi Horace (2021) dan Roswati et al., (2017) yang lebih menyentuh kepada fungsi humor melalui teknik dan strategi humor.

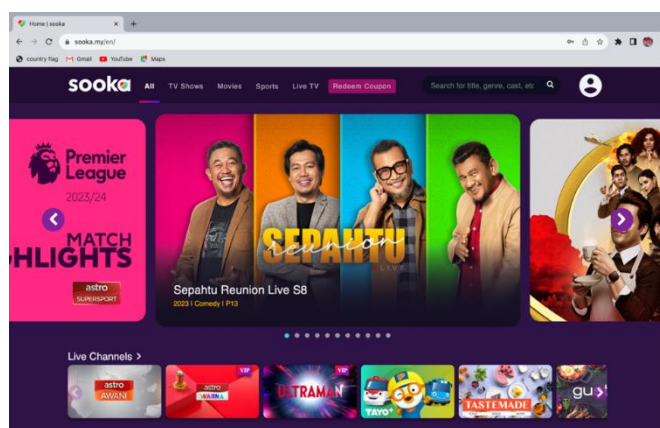
Namun begitu, pengkaji mendapati bahawa elemen linguistik terhadap humor ini masih kurang diterokai khususnya dalam bidang bahasa dan linguistik. Adapun kajian humor dalam bidang bahasa seperti kajian Aria Bayu Setiaji dan Enggal Mursalin (2021), kajian ini hanya tertumpu kepada bidang pragmatik atau apa yang diimplikasikan, bukan apa yang diperkatakan (semantik). Dalam erti kata lain, kajian ini hanya tertumpu kepada lakuan bahasa dalam satu proses komunikasi yang wujud dalam sesuatu perbualan atau wacana (Abdullah Yusof et al., 2009), bukan dilihat dari sudut makna. Sperber dan Wilson (1981) berpendapat bahawa ilmu pragmatik perlu digandingkan dengan ilmu semantik bagi melicinkan proses pentafsiran sesuatu makna dalam komunikasi dengan berkesan. Bertitik tolak daripada hal ini, pengkaji berpendapat bahawa kajian humor khususnya dalam bidang semantik yang meneliti humor dari aspek makna menggunakan kerangka teori yang berpada perlu dijalankan.

Hal ini kerana humor ada kalanya wujud dalam bentuk ragam bahasa naratif atau bahasa figuratif seperti metafora, simpulan bahasa, peribahasa, puisi, pantun, seloka dan sebagainya (Asmah Haji Omar, 2008). Sekiranya diteliti, bahasa figuratif ditafsirkan sebagai bahasa yang mengandungi makna tersirat iaitu menyamakan sesuatu perkara dengan perkara yang lain. Ekoran daripada ini menyebabkan humor mempunyai makna tersirat dan bukannya makna yang literal. Dua jenis makna iaitu makna implisit dan makna eksplisit merupakan dua makna utama yang wujud dalam komunikasi lisan manusia (Nur Afiah & Nor Hashimah Jalaluddin, 2017). Komunikasi yang mengandungi makna implisit lebih kompleks dan rumit difahami kerana adanya unsur-unsur tersirat yang boleh membawa kepada penyalahafsiran makna (Rozaimah Rashidin, 2016) sehingga menyukarkan pendengar memahami makna sebenar yang cuba disampaikan. Hal ini kerana humor yang berbentuk komedi bukan hanya sebagai lawak dan jenaka semata-mata, namun ia dipersembahkan untuk memberi mesej kepada masyarakat (Hatta Azad, 2021). Menurut beliau lagi, sekiranya mesej yang dibawa hanya untuk gelak ketawa tanpa pengisian, maka seperti itu juga masuk ke minda penonton dan masyarakat. Ekoran daripada hal ini juga kajian ini dijalankan untuk meneliti unsur humor, jenis makna dalam unsur humor serta menganalisis makna humor yang terkandung dalam sitkom komedi Melayu.

Metodologi

Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah analisis kandungan iaitu suatu penghuraian yang objektif dan sistematik bagi suatu kandungan tersurat (*manifest content*) (Sabitha Marican, 2012). Pengkaji menggunakan kaedah analisis kandungan kerana sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion Live 2022 merupakan satu rancangan situasi komedi yang disiarkan secara langsung di kaca televisyen. Bagi memperolehi data, pengkaji perlu mendengar dengan teliti kesemua ujaran yang berbentuk humor atau lawak yang diujarkan oleh pelawak-pelawak dalam kumpulan tersebut. Analisis kandungan tidak mungkin dapat dilakukan ketika pelawak-pelawak kumpulan Sepahtu Reunion Live 2022 sedang membuat persembahan secara langsung.

Oleh itu, analisis kandungan dilakukan ke atas persembahan mereka yang telah direkodkan. Setiap ujaran mereka yang didengari oleh pengkaji perlu melalui proses pentranskripsian (*transcribing*) yang menukar atau menyalin rakaman perkataan ke dalam bentuk penulisan menggunakan perisian penyimpanan Microsoft Word. Analisis kandungan yang dimaksudkan adalah ujaran yang didengari oleh pengkaji diteliti dengan berhati-hati satu persatu untuk mencari data humor dengan berpegang kepada persoalan serta objektif kajian yang ingin dijawab pada bahagian dapatan kajian. Data diperolehi secara atas talian yang dicapai menerusi platform penstriman atas talian Sooka TV di <https://www.sookatv.com/>. Data diambil daripada Sitkom Komedi Sepahtu Reunion 2022, musim ke-6, Episod 2 yang berdurasi selama 49 minit. Pemilihan Episod 2 ini dilakukan dengan kaedah persempelan rawak bertujuan.



Rajah 1: Paparan Sooka TV

Sumber: <https://sooka.my/en/>

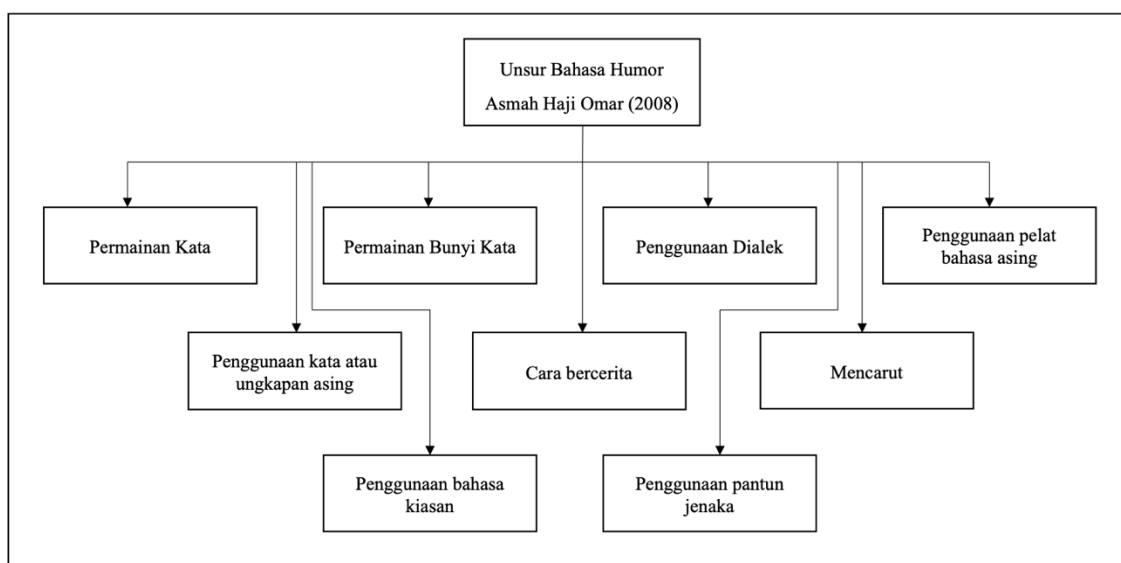
Sooka TV juga merupakan alternatif kepada Astro kerana penggunaannya mudah tanpa memerlukan pemasangan piring satelit dan kotak media seperti Ultra Box di samping tidak terikat dengan kontrak, relevan, mudah diakses dan boleh berhenti melanggan pada bila-bila masa sahaja menerusi alat peranti mudah alih masing-masing. Oleh hal yang demikian, pengkaji menggunakan himpunan siri sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion Live 2022 sebagai sampel kajian berdasarkan prosedur persampelan bertujuan. Ada beberapa kewajaran mengapa data ini dipilih sebagai data kajian:

- i. Sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion Live 2022 merupakan sitkom komedi Melayu yang terbaru dan terkini. Tema-tema yang dipersembahkan dalam bentuk humor dan lawak pada setiap episod sebenarnya sarat dengan mesej, pengajaran dan falsafah hidup untuk disampaikan kepada masyarakat dalam suasana yang santai dan menghiburkan (Hatta Azad, 2021).
- ii. Dilakonan dengan gaya *Devised Theater* iaitu kaedah teater yang direka adalah berdasarkan improvisasi dan eksperimen yang bermaksud segala pemikiran, idea dan pengalaman disampaikan disampaikan secara spontan tanpa menggunakan skrip (Lehtonen, 2012).

iii. Kumpulan Sepahtu Reunion Live 2022 telah memenangi beberapa anugerah di Malaysia seperti Anugerah Meletop Era 2018 (Program TV Meletop), Anugerah Meletop Era 2019 (Artis Lawak Meletop & Program Meletop), Anugerah Meletop Era 2020 (Program Meletop) dan yang terbaru iaitu Anugerah Seri Angkasa 2022 dalam kategori Komedi TV.

Kerangka Konsep

Unsur-unsur bahasa humor yang diutarakan oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2008) terdiri daripada sembilan unsur bahasa humor seperti dalam Rajah 2 di bawah:



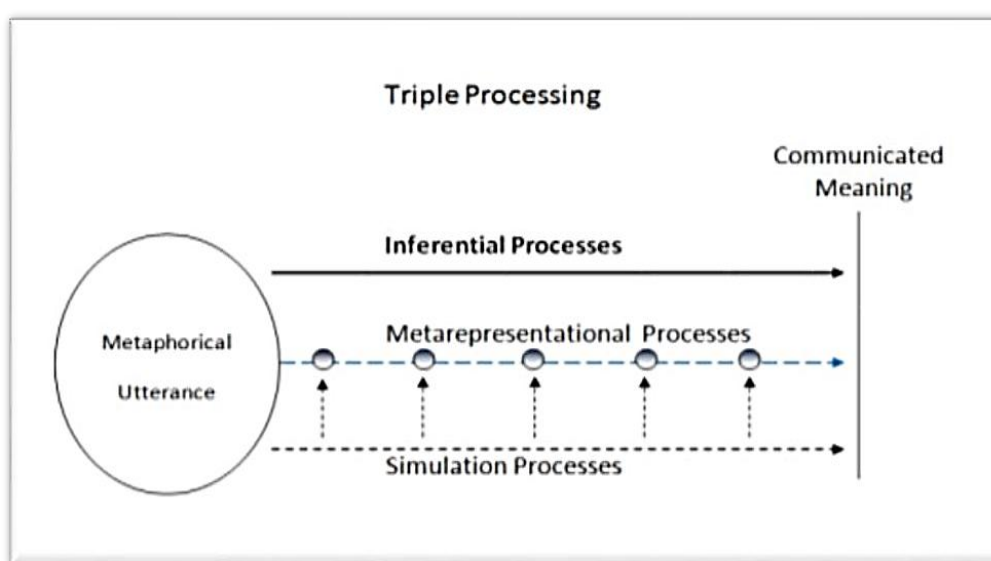
Rajah 2: Kerangka Konsep Unsur Bahasa Humor (Asmah Hj Omar, 2008)

Namun begitu, hasil kajian mendapati hanya lima unsur bahasa humor sahaja yang terdapat dalam sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion 2022. Kesemua unsur bahasa humor tersebut adalah permainan kata, mencarut, penggunaan bahasa kiasan, cara bercerita dan penggunaan pantun jenaka.

Kerangka Teori Hibrid

Teori yang dibawa oleh Tendahl (2008) merupakan satu teori baharu yang menggabungkan dua bidang ilmu iaitu pendekatan linguistik kognitif dan pendekatan bidang pragmatik (Teori Relevans). Melalui Teori Relevan, konsep ad hoc diaplikasikan dan pemetaan domain pula digunakan dalam linguistik kognitif. Gabungan di antara dua bidang yang berupaya menghasilkan Teori Hibrid ini membawa satu matlamat utama bahawa pengintepretasian makna dalam kognisi manusia amat memerlukan penglibatan proses pemetaan domain dan kesimpulan secara pragmatik (Rozaimah Rashidin, 2016).

Namun begitu, teori ini pada awalnya dibawa oleh Tendahl (2008) ini dilihat mempunyai sedikit kelemahan kerana Tendahl (2008) tidak boleh menunjukkan batasan dan sempadan antara bidang semantik dan pragmatik. Hal ini turut dinyatakan dalam Rozaimah Rashidin (2016) yang mana teori ini masih belum mampu menjelaskan secara mendalam tentang cara dan langkah operasi Teori Relevan dan linguistik kognitif, serta proses yang terlibat dalam usaha untuk menginterpretasikan makna yang bersifat implisit sekaligus menghasilkan rantau konsepsi. Oleh hal yang demikian, teori ini ditambah baik oleh Stover (2010) dengan memperkenalkan satu model yang dipanggil Model Proses Tiga Serangkai atau dikenali sebagai *Tripple Processing Model*. Rajah 2 berikut merupakan proses yang terlibat dalam model Proses Tiga Serangkai:



Rajah 3: Proses Tiga Serangkai (Stover, 2010)

Proses Tiga Serangkai

Proses Tiga Serangkai atau dikenali sebagai *Tripple Prosessing Model* melibatkan tiga peroses yang dinamai sebagai Proses Simulasi, Proses Metarepresentasi dan Proses Pentaabiran. Ketiga-tiga proses yang terlibat ini yang saling memerlukan dan berlaku secara serentak dalam masa yang sama. Menurut Stover (2010) dalam Anida Sarudin dan Parameswary Shanmugam (2023), proses simulasi (*Simulation Processes*) membentuk linguistik kognitif berdasarkan proses pemetaan domain sumber (konkrit) dan domain sasaran (abstrak) yang berupaya menghasilkan skema imej, metafora konseptual dan metonimi konseptual. Rozaimah Rashidin (2016) menjelaskan proses ini melibatkan sesuatu makna diinterpretasikan secara harfiah dan literal. Pada tahap ini, setiap frasa dan ujaran yang difahami oleh manusia adalah secara literal, bersifat eksplikatur dan tersurat. Menurutnya lagi, pembentukan skema imej adalah didasari dengan pengalaman yang dialami oleh seseorang individu atau disebut sebagai pengalaman jasadiyah atau *embodied experiential* melalui simulasi beberapa representasi mental yang terbentuk menerusi peristiwa yang telah dialami.

Bagi penghasilan metafora konseptual, domain sumber yang mengandung unsur konkrit ini dipetakan kepada domain sasaran yang berunsurkan entiti abstrak. Hal ini bertujuan untuk memperlihatkan kepada manusia bahawa sesuatu yang abstrak dapat dijelaskan dan difahami dengan berbantuan komponen yang konkrit. Metonimi konseptual pula hanya melibatkan satu domain konseptual sahaja dan lebih bersifat sebagai rujukan. Oleh hal demikian, dapat disimpulkan bahawa proses simulasi atau proses konseptualisasi merupakan proses penerapan linguistik kognitif dalam diri individu iaitu makna yang dibawa oleh ungkapan humor itu cuba difahami, diinterpretasikan, dan dikonseptualkan daripada perkara abstrak kepada entiti yang bersifat konkrit.

Proses pentaabiran (*Inferential Processes*) pula merupakan proses pemahaman berdasarkan konteks melalui Teori Relevans (Anida Sarudin & Parameswary Shanmugam, 2023). Dengan kata lain, ia merupakan frasa, ujaran serta implikatur yang implisit dan tersurat (taksa). Untuk memahami sesuatu makna sesuatu leksikal atau frasa, proses simulasi dan proses pentadbiran akan berlaku pada masa yang sama dengan melibatkan Teori Relevan melalui konsep ad hoc dan proses pemetaan dua domain dalam pendekatan linguistik kognitif (Rozaimah Rashidin, 2016). Proses metarepresentasi (*Metarepresentational Processes*) pula merangkumi gambaran mental (representasi imaginasi-pengalaman) yang terbina dari imaginasi dan pengalaman, serta berperanan sebagai perantara dalam menyalurkan maklumat ke proses pentadbiran (Stover, 2010; Rozaimah Rashidin, 2018).

Dapatan dan Perbincangan

Bahagian ini memapar dan membincangkan dapatan keseluruhan analisis. Unsur-unsur bahasa humor yang diutarakan oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2008) terdiri daripada sembilan unsur bahasa humor. Namun begitu, hasil kajian mendapati hanya lima unsur bahasa humor sahaja yang terdapat dalam sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion 2022. Kesemua unsur bahasa humor tersebut adalah permainan kata, mencarut, penggunaan bahasa kiasan, cara bercerita dan penggunaan pantun jenaka. Unsur ini mengandungi nilai humor berbentuk punchline iaitu lakuan dialog yang diikuti dengan kemuncak ketawa oleh pendengar atau penonton. Goatly (2012: 22) menyatakan bahawa punchline kebiasaannya disebutkan pada frasa atau ayat terakhir dalam lawak yang mengandungi unsur humor. Penanda humor dalam data sitkom komedi ini adalah pada ujaran yang disusuli dengan ketawa yang dipancarkan antara pelawak dan penonton dan disusuli dengan tepukan.

Dalam konteks lawak sitkom komedi, unsur humor dapat diklasifikasikan sebagai lawak apabila kesemua pelawak sitkom komedi berinteraksi. Berdasarkan kesemua data yang ditranskripsi, punchline dapat dilihat sebelum *penonton ketawa serentak* iaitu apabila kedengaran gelak tawa daripada pelawak itu sendiri dan penonton disusuli dengan tepukan. Jadual 1 menunjukkan dapatan kajian terhadap unsur-unsur bahasa humor berdasarkan konsep Asmah Haji Omar (2008) dan dua unsur bahasa humor tambahan.

Jadual 1: Unsur Bahasa Humor dan Jenis Makna Unsur Bahasa Humor dalam Sitkom Komedi Sepahtu Reunion 2022

Bil	Unsur Bahasa Humor Asmah Haji Omar 2008	Jumlah	Peratus (%)	Jenis Makna		Jumlah
				Eksplisit	Implisit	
1.	Permainan Kata	3	6.82	3	-	3
2.	Mencarut	1	2.27	-	1	1
3.	Cara Bercerita	1	2.27	1	-	1
4.	Penggunaan Pantun Jenaka	2	4.55	-	2	2
5.	Penggunaan Bahasa Kiasan	16	36.36	-	16	16
Jumlah		23	52.27	4	19	23
Unsur Tambahan Bahasa Humor						
6.	Implikatur	19	43.18	-	19	19
7.	Kata Pikat (<i>Pickup line</i>)	2	4.55	-	2	2
Jumlah		21	47.73	-	21	21
JUMLAH KESELURUHAN DATA		44	100	4	40	44

Hasil analisis daripada 44 data unsur bahasa humor, 23 data dikelompokkan dalam unsur bahasa humor berdasarkan konsep yang telah dinyatakan oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2008) seperti yang dipaparkan dalam Jadual 1. Manakala, 21 data pula mengandungi unsur humor tambahan iaitu implikatur dan kata pikat. Berdasarkan Jadual 1, jumlah tertinggi adalah unsur bahasa humor: Penggunaan bahasa kiasan iaitu sebanyak 16 data. Manakala unsur bahasa humor kedua tertinggi disusuli dengan permainan kata dan penggunaan pantun jenaka yang mencatatkan jumlah sebanyak 3 dan 2 data. Unsur bahasa humor yang kurang mendominasi dalam sitkom komedi pula adalah mencarut dan cara bercerita yang mencatatkan jumlah yang sama iaitu masing-masing 1 data sahaja.

Unsur-Unsur Bahasa Humor dalam Sitkom Komedi *Sepahtu Reunion 2022*

Enam unsur bahasa humor berdasarkan kerangka konsep bahasa humor oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2008) telah dikenal pasti dalam sitkom komedi *Sepahtu Reunion 2022*. Pada bahagian ini menghuraikan secara terperinci tiga unsur bahasa humor yang tertinggi iaitu penggunaan bahasa kiasan, permainan kata dan implakatur berserta contoh data.

Penggunaan Bahasa Kiasan

Unsur bahasa humor dalam kategori penggunaan bahasa kiasan merupakan unsur humor yang paling digemari untuk menimbulkan sesuatu situasi humor. Dalam berkias, manusia sebenarnya melakukan perbandingan secara halus walaupun perkara yang dibandingkan itu besar maknanya. Asmah (2008, p. 232) mengemukakan

contoh bahasa kiasan dalam humor melalui cara bercerita dengan menggunakan metafora *padang terbakar* untuk maksud kepala botak. Jadual 2 merupakan contoh dialog antara pelawak-pelawa sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion yang mengandungi unsur bahasa humor penggunaan bahasa kiasan:

Jadual 2: Unsur Bahasa Humor Penggunaan Bahasa Kiasan

Dialog
Nabila Huda (Nisa): Oh, Ali. Saya ada soalan untuk awak. Rahim (Ali): Silakan. Nabila Huda (Nisa): Awak tahu tak beza awak dengan emas dekat kedai ni? Rahim (Ali): Apa bezanya? Nabila Huda (Nisa): Emas dekat kedai ni menyinari kedai ni. Tapi awk <u>menyinari hidup saya</u> . *penonton ketawa serentak* (minit ke-13:20)

Berdasarkan dialog di atas, unsur bahasa humor dalam kategori penggunaan bahasa kiasan dapat dilihat menerusi frasa *menyinari hidup* yang merupakan frasa humor yang berbentuk metafora. Sebagaimana yang dikemukakan oleh Asmah Haji Omar 2008, kewujudan humor adakalanya berbentuk ragam bahasa naratif seperti perumpamaan, peribahasa, simile, hiperbola dan metafora salah satunya. Frasa *menyinari hidup saya* dikatakan sebagai ungkapan metafora kerana wujudnya dua elemen penting dalam pembentukan ungkapan yang bermetafora iaitu elemen abstrak dan konkrit (Rozaimah Rashidin dan Nor Hashimah Jalaluddin, 2015).

Elemen abstrak ditandai dengan leksikal *hidup* dan elemen konkrit menerusi leksikal *menyinari* dalam ujaran tersebut. Unsur humor yang berbentuk metafora merupakan salah satu alat retorik atau seni berbahasa untuk menzahirkan kelainan, mewujudkan imaginasi puitis dan retorik serta memperlihatkan keindahan sesuatu penulisan mahupun sesebuah persembahan (Rozaimah et al, 2022). Dalam hal ini, frasa *menyinari hidup* dikatakan titik berlakunya unsur humor dalam ujaran kerana ia merupakan satu bentuk ujaran metafora untuk memikat atau mendekati seseorang yang tidak dikenali seperti mana yang diujarkan oleh Nabila Huda (Nisa) kepada Rahim (Ali).

Dalam hal ini, Nabila Huda (Nisa) sebagai seorang anggota polis yang sedang menyamar cuba menarik perhatian Rahim (Ali) sebagai perompak untuk jatuh cinta padanya dengan mengucapkan ayat-ayat yang berbau cinta seperti frasa *awak menyinari hidup saya*. Dengan erti kata lain, Nabila Huda (Nisa) cuba untuk memikat di samping meyakinkan Rahim (Ali) bahawa Nabila Huda (Nisa) benar-benar ikhlas suka pada Rahim (Ali) walaupun pada hakikat dan niat sebenarnya jauh menyimpang kerana ia hanya satu perangkap dalam misi penyamaran semata-mata.

Humor dalam ujaran yang bermetaforikal menjadi alat yang kuat untuk memberikan kesan kreatif, mengekspresikan perasaan atau emosi secara halus dan indah sehingga sesuatu pernyataan lebih menarik dan menggugah perhatian. Ini dapat dibuktikan dengan berlakunya penanda humor apabila penonton *ketawa serentak* menandakan bahawa penggunaan bahasa kiasan dalam bentuk metafora menjadi dan berjaya digunakan sebagai *punchline* yang dapat memberi kesan humor kepada penonton seterusnya mencetuskan rasa geli hati menerusi ketawa dan tepukan gemuruh yang dizahirkan oleh penonton sitkom komedi tersebut.

Permainan Kata

Permainan kata melibatkan penggunaan kata yang boleh menimbulkan pelbagai tafsiran daripada pendengar (Asmah Haji Omar, 2008: 227). Beliau juga menyatakan bahawa permainan kata kebiasaannya disampaikan melalui teka-teki yang bertujuan untuk memperindah ujaran humor yang disampaikan. Asmah Haji Omar (2008) juga menyatakan bahawa permainan kata ini juga merujuk kepada kata yang mengandungi makna sinonim. Titik berlakunya humor bagi unsur ini apabila pendengar berusaha untuk memberi tindak balas terhadap ujaran tersebut dengan sesuatu makna yang berbeza dengan konteks. Jadual 3 merupakan contoh dialog antara pelawak-pelawak sitkom komedi Sepahtu Reunion 2022 yang mengandungi unsur bahasa humor permainan kata:

Jadual 3: Unsur Bahasa Humor Permainan Kata

Dialog
Jep (Abbas): (<i>ketawa</i>) Hahaha! Nanti lah. Ada kerja lagi kita nak buat ni. Eh eh. Kita dah rompak kedai macam-macam dah. Hari tu kedai <i>sport rim</i>. Cuba kita rompak kedai emas nak? Rahim (Ali): Cantik jugak tu. Sekarang tengah <i>trend</i> ni. Jep (Abbas): (<i>muka penuh dengan tanda tanya</i>) Apa? Rahim (Ali): Ni ha, yang ni (<i>buat aksi bentuk pelitup muka (mask)</i>) Jep (Abbas): <u>Itu <i>mask</i>!</u> *penonton ketawa serentak* Jep (Abbas): Ini mas mas, emas! (<i>tunjuk bentuk emas di pergelangan tangan</i>). Itu <i>mask</i> muka. Rahim (Ali): Ooo... cakap la yang macam rantai semua tu. Jep (Abbas): Haaa... rantai! Gelang! Itu <i>mask</i> muka covid aku nak buat apa! Rahim (Ali): (<i>ketawa</i>) Hahaha ye lah. Tapi aku kalau nak rompak, aku nak yang tebal-tebal dekat leher tu kan. Cantik. (<i>tunjuk bentuk gaya medal</i>) Jep (Abbas): (<i>muka penuh dengan tanda tanya</i>) Emas? Rahim (Ali): Ha. Yang lari-lari, dapat tu. Jep (Abbas): <u>Itu <i>medal</i>. Yang emas yang kau cakap tu <i>medal</i>.</u> Tu buat apa? Tak da harga! Rahim (Ali): Oh, eh?
(minit ke- 5:14)

Berdasarkan data di atas, unsur bahasa humor permainan kata yang digunakan adalah pada perkataan *mask* yang disama ertikan dengan kata emas. Perkataan tersebut merupakan *punchline* dalam perbualan tersebut kerana Rahim (Ali) sengaja menyalahafsirkan emas dengan *mask* yang mana kedua-dua perkataan ini mempunyai sebutan, bunyi dan intonasi yang hampir sama. Emas merupakan logam berharga, berwarna kuning dan simbol kekayaan peradaban manusia manakala *mask* iaitu pelitup muka yang telah menjadi kewajipan untuk memakainya sebagai pencegahan penyebaran penyakit ke saluran pernafasan manusia. Medal pula merupakan sebuah logam tanda penghargaan dan pencapaian seseorang dalam apa jua bidang acara kesukanan dan sebagainya.

Dalam situasi di atas, Jep (Abbas) cuba menyuarakan hasratnya untuk merompak emas tetapi disalahtafsirkan oleh Rahim (Ali) dengan mengatakan beliau bersetuju kerana sudah menjadi *trend*. Hal ini menimbulkan kekeliruan dan tanda tanya siapa yang mendengarnya (Jep @ Abbas) kerana niat jahatnya dibalas dengan tindak balas positif dan riak wajah teruja yang dizahirkan oleh Rahim (Ali) dan merompak emas bukanlah menjadi satu *trend* dan terbukti salah di sisi undang-undang di Malaysia. Sebagaimana yang disebut oleh Asmah Haji Omar 2008, permainan kata kebiasaannya disampaikan melalui cara teka-teki yang bertujuan untuk memperindah ujaran humor yang disampaikan.

Bertepatan dengan konsep unsur bahasa humor permainan kata oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2008) yang mengatakan bahawa titik berlakunya humor pada unsur ini apabila pendengar berusaha untuk memberi tindak balas terhadap ujaran. Tindak balas tersebut juga mengandungi makna yang berbeza dengan konteks yang dibincangkan. Dalam hal ini, konteks yang dibincangkan adalah untuk merompak emas namun Rahim (Ali) sengaja menyalahafsirkan emas (logam berharga) itu merujuk kepada *mask* (pelitup muka) dan medal (emas, perak, gangsa) yang sudah tentu tiada nilainya untuk dirompak.

Hal ini secara tidak langsung membangkitkan rasa humor yang dapat dilihat menerusi teka-teki bahasa yang dibuat oleh Rahim (Ali) menerusi kata *mask* dan medal kepada Jep (Abbas) untuk beliau mencari jawapan terhadap makna kata-kata dan situasi yang Rahim (Ali) diberikan. Hal ini turut disokong dengan berlakunya penanda humor apabila kesemua penonton sitkom di studio tersebut *ketawa serentak*. Ini menandakan bahawa permainan kata yang digunakan oleh Rahim (Ali) menjadi dan berupaya disebut sebagai *punchline* yang dapat memberi kesan humor kepada penonton seterusnya mencetuskan rasa geli hati menerusi ketawa dan tepukan gemuruh yang dizahirkan oleh penonton sitkom komedi tersebut.

Unsur Bahasa Humor Tambahan dalam Sitkom Komedi *Sepahtu Reunion 2022*

Terdapat dua tambahan unsur bahasa humor yang mengandungi *punchline* disampaikan secara implisit. Unsur ini merupakan cadangan tambahan kepada unsur-unsur bahasa humor yang telah dinyatakan oleh Asmah Haji Omar (2008). Sebanyak dua unsur tambahan dikenal pasti dalam sitkom komedi *Sepahtu Reunion 2022*

Musim Ke-6 iaitu unsur bahasa humor implikatur dan kata pikat (*pickupline*). Jadual 4 memaparkan jumlah unsur-unsur tambahan bahasa humor dalam sitkom komedi:

Jadual 4: Unsur Bahasa Humor Tambahan dalam Sitkom Komedi *Sepahtu Reunion 2022*

Bil	Unsur Bahasa Humor	Jumlah
1.	Implikatur	19
2.	Kata Pikat (<i>Pickupline</i>)	2
Jumlah		21

Berdasarkan Jadual 4, unsur tambahan bahasa humor implikatur merupakan unsur yang paling tinggi iaitu sebanyak 19 data yang mana hampir keseluruhan data yang mengandungi unsur ini mengandungi makna yang bersifat implisit. Manakala unsur tambahan bahasa humor iaitu kata pikat (*pickup line*) mencatatkan sebanyak dua data sahaja.

Implikatur

Implikatur merupakan unsur tambahan bahasa humor yang mengandungi makna implisit dalam sesuatu ujaran yang disampaikan (Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat, 2016). Unsur implikatur ini merupakan sejenis humor yang mewakili perihal lain untuk mengatakan perihal yang lainnya. Bergantung kepada tahap kefahaman pendengar, sekiranya pendengar mudah memahami maka unsur tambahan bahasa humor implikatur ini akan mudah difahami. Walau bagaimanapun, penggunaan unsur implikatur ini sememangnya memerlukan daya berfikir yang tinggi. Berikut merupakan contoh data unsur tambahan bahasa humor implikatur:

Jadual 5: Unsur Bahasa Humor Implikatur

Dialog
Jep (Abbas): (<i>teruja bertanya</i>) Eh, bila nak merompak? Dah lama tak merompak ni. Rahim (Ali): (<i>ketawa kecil</i>) Wui kau ni. <u>Ajak merompak macam ajak main futsal eh?</u> *penonton ketawa serentak* Jep (Abbas): (<i>ketawa</i>) Hahaha. Yelah, alah kau ni. Kita dah lama ni, kalau tak buat, tu la kekok! Jom la. (minit ke-7:50)

Dalam Jadual 5 menerusi ujaran “*ajak merompak macam ajak main futsal eh?*” kemungkinan wujud *punch line* dalam bentuk implikatur yang berpotensi untuk ditafsir dan difahami oleh pendengar. Implikatur merupakan mesej yang tersirat yang cuba disampaikan dengan ujaran yang tersurat. Implikatur melibatkan

apa-apa yang diujarkan secara eksplisit dan juga apa-apa yang dilahirkan secara implisit (Carston, 1988). Terdapat dua jenis implikatur, iaitu implikatur konvensional dan implikatur perbualan (Thomas, 1995).

Secara harfiahnya, kata *futsal* dalam ujaran “*ajak merompak macam ajak main futsal eh?*” merujuk kepada satu bentuk permainan bola sepak dalaman. Futsal merupakan permainan yang hampir sama dengan bola sepak namun dengan jumlah pemain dan saiz gelanggang yang agak kecil bilangannya iaitu di antara dua kumpulan yang terdiri daripada 5 orang setiap kumpulan yang dimainkan secara dalaman di atas permukaan gelanggang yang sebesar gelanggang bola keranjang. Permainan futsal ini juga merupakan minat utama golongan lelaki dari pelbagai peringkat umur dan biasanya dimainkan pada waktu petang dan malam di samping turut dijadikan sebagai aktiviti riadah utama mereka.

Dalam konteks data di atas, Jep (Abbas) menyatakan hasrat dan keinginannya untuk merompak kedai emas menerusi ujarannya iaitu “Eh, bila nak merompak? Dah lama tak merompak ni.”. Ujaran yang dizahirkan juga penuh perasaan teruja, riak wajah yang gembira tanpa ada sedikit rasa gentar dalam intonasi suaranya. Hal ini menimbulkan kekeliruan dengan tanda tanya dalam diri Rahim (Ali) menyebabkan beliau menjawab soalan dengan jawapan berimplikatur iaitu “*ajak merompak macam ajak main futsal eh?*” yang bertujuan untuk mengupayakan atau menyedarkan pendengar (Jep @ Abbas) terhadap makna sebenar yang cuba disampaikan oleh penutur (Rahim @ Ali) sebagai mana yang disebut oleh Muhammad Zuhair et al (2018), kata atau ujaran yang berbentuk implikatur yang terdapat dalam ujaran tersebut sebenarnya memberikan implikasi terhadap ketepatan makna niat penutur.

Andaian yang diinterpretasikan oleh Rahim (Ali) adalah sangat mustahil dan agak sukar untuk merompak kedai yang penuh dengan kawalan kamera keselamatan (CCTV) di samping wujud pengawal keselamatan bersenjata yang berfungsi untuk mengawasi keadaan sekitar bangunan atau lingkungan kedai tersebut. Hal ini kerana secara harfiahnya, rompak atau merompak didefinisikan sebagai aktiviti seorang atau lebih individu merampas atau mencuri harta benda individu lain yang bernilai dan berharga seperti wang, barang kemas, kenderaan secara paksaan, ancaman dan menggunakan kekerasan (Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat, 2016). Tujuan perompakan biasanya bertujuan untuk mendapatkan keuntungan dengan cepat secara haram dan salah di sisi undang-undang.

Ini bermakna kata implikatur *futsal* ini sengaja diada-adakan bertujuan untuk mengupayakan atau menyedarkan pendengar (Jep @ Abbas) bahawa makna yang dia ingin sampaikan adalah bertentangan dengan keinginan yang Jep (Abbas) hasratkan. Dalam erti kata lain, niat Rahim (Ali) yang sebenarnya adalah ingin mematahkan dan menolak hasrat dan keinginan Jep (Abbas) untuk merompak kedai emas secara implisit menerusi kata implikatur *futsal*. Beliau menyamaertikan kesukaran merompak kedai emas agak mustahil untuk dilakukan dan kegiatan merompak bukanlah sesuatu hal yang mudah seperti mudahnya permainan futsal yang boleh dimainkan dan dijadikan rutin kebiasaan pada setiap hari. Penanda humor dapat dikenal pasti apabila kesemua penonton sitkom di studio tersebut *ketawa serentak* yang menandakan bahawa unsur implikatur

yang digunakan secara implisit oleh Rahim (Ali) berupaya menjadi *punchline* yang mencetuskan rasa geli hati untuk ketawa dizahirkan oleh penonton sitkom komedi tersebut.

Makna Implisit Unsur-Unsur Bahasa Humor Dalam Sitkom Komedi *Sepahtu Reunion 2022*

Kesemua unsur bahasa humor ini mengandungi nilai humor yang memerlukan tahap kefahaman yang tinggi untuk difahami. Hal ini kerana unsur-unsur bahasa humor ini mengandungi dua jenis makna yang berbeza iaitu makna eksplisit yang disampaikan secara langsung dan makna implisit yang disampaikan secara berlapis dan bukan secara literal. Goatly (2012) menyatakan bahawa elemen *punchline* mengandungi ujaran berbentuk implisit yang sukar difahami oleh pendengar. Penyampaian bahasa humor secara implisit dalam bentuk seperti implikatur dan penggunaan bahasa kiasan (metafora) misalnya merupakan satu bentuk kata tersirat yang menyukarkan penginterpretasian makna sesuatu ujaran (Siti Norsyahida dan Nor Azuwan, 2017).

Makna implisit merujuk kepada mesej atau makna yang tersirat atau tersembunyi dalam teks, pernyataan atau karya seni. Makna ini tidak dinyatakan secara langsung atau jelas, tetapi mesti ditafsirkan atau difahami melalui konteks, rujukan, atau pemahaman yang lebih mendalam (Nor Hashimah Jalaluddin dan Norsimah Mat Awal, 2006). Makna tersirat selalunya memerlukan penaaakulan atau tafsiran yang lebih mendalam daripada penerima mesej untuk difahami sepenuhnya dengan mengambil kira konteks yang melatarinya (Nor Hashimah Jalaluddin dan Norsimah Mat Awal, 2006).

Jadual 6: Jenis Makna Bahasa Humor dalam Sitkom Komedi Melayu

Bil	Unsur Bahasa Humor	Jenis Makna	
		Eksplisit	Implisit
1.	Permainan Kata	3	-
2.	Mencarut	-	1
3.	Cara Bercerita	1	-
4.	Penggunaan Pantun Jenaka	-	2
5.	Penggunaan Bahasa Kiasan	-	16
Jumlah		4	19
JUMLAH KESELURUHAN		23	

Analisis Makna Implisit Unsur-Unsur Bahasa Humor dalam Sitkom Komedi *Sepahtu Reunion 2022*

Jadual 7 merupakan contoh dialog yang mengandungi humor yang mengandungi makna implisit. Berdasarkan dialog, unsur bahasa humor dalam kategori penggunaan bahasa kiasan yang mempunyai makna implisit dapat dilihat menerusi frasa *menyinari hidup* yang merupakan humor berbentuk metaforikal. Sebagaimana yang

dikemukakan oleh Asmah Haji Omar 2008, kewujudan humor adakalanya berbentuk ragam bahasa naratif seperti perumpamaan, peribahasa, simile, hiperbola dan metafora salah satunya. Frasa *menyinari hidup saya* dikatakan sebagai ungkapan metafora kerana wujudnya dua elemen penting dalam pembentukan ungkapan yang bermetafora iaitu elemen abstrak dan konkrit (Rozaimah Rashidin, 2016). Elemen abstrak ditandai dengan leksikal *hidup* dan elemen konkrit menerusi leksikal *menyinari* dalam ujaran tersebut. Unsur humor yang berbentuk metafora merupakan salah satu alat retorik atau seni berbahasa untuk menzahirkan kelainan, mewujudkan imaginasi puitis dan retorik serta memperlihatkan keindahan sesuatu penulisan mahupun sesebuah persembahan (Rozaimah et al., 2022).

Jadual 7: Unsur Bahasa Humor: Penggunaan Bahasa Kiasan (Implisit)

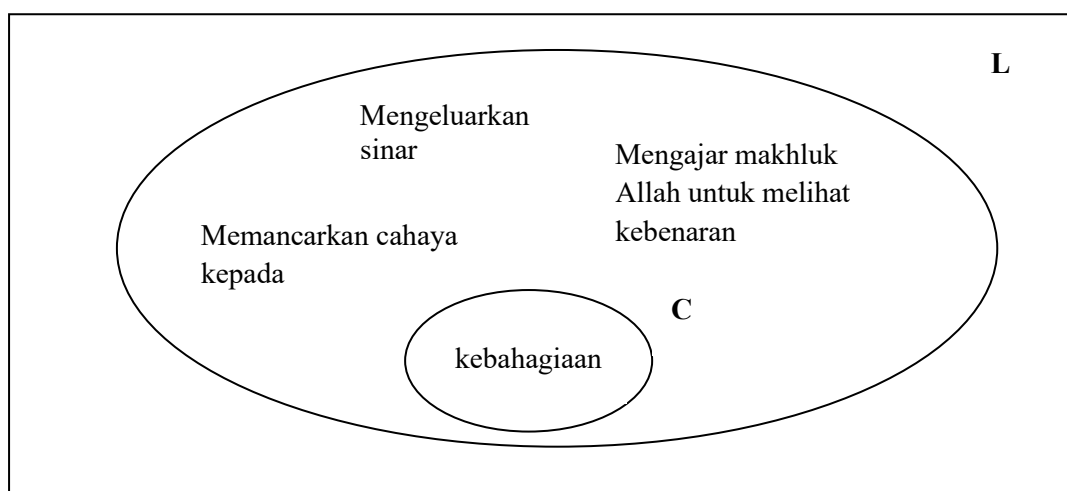
Dialog
Nabila Huda (Nisa): Oh, Ali. Saya ada soalan untuk awak. Rahim (Ali): Silakan. Nabila Huda (Nisa): Awak tahu tak beza awak dengan emas dekat kedai ni? Rahim (Ali): Apa bezanya? Nabila Huda (Nisa): Emas dekat kedai ni menyinari kedai ni. Tapi awk <u>menyinari hidup saya</u>. *penonton ketawa serentak* (minit ke-13:20)

Frasa *menyinari hidup* dalam Jadual 7 memperlihatkan data humor yang bersifat metaforikal. Data 1(a) iaitu *menyinari hidup* dianggap sebagai kabur dan mempunyai makna implisit kerana mempunyai pelbagai makna rujukan yang boleh menimbulkan kekeliruan kepada pembaca. Berdasarkan Kamus Dewan (2014: 1498), leksikal *menyinari* merujuk kepada 1; mengeluarkan sinar, memancarkan cahaya kepada, menerangi, menyulahi, 2; mengajar makhuk Allah (manusia, dll) untuk melihat kebenaran. Oleh yang demikian, hal ini jelas memperlihatkan bahawa frasa *menyinari hidup* mempunyai pelbagai inferens yang boleh menimbulkan kekeliruan kepada pembaca dalam memahami frasa tersebut.

Frasa *menyinari hidup* ini merupakan data yang berbentuk metafora linguistik yang melibatkan konsep *ad hoc* penyempitan melalui proses pentadbiran kerana frasa tersebut merupakan ujaran yang taksa. Pada kebiasaanya, konsep *ad hoc* penyempitan diaplikasikan apabila wujudnya ketaksaan dan kekaburan makna yang mempunyai pelbagai inferens dan rujukan yang terdapat dalam sesuatu ungkapan. Menerusi konsep *ad hoc* penyempitan ini, pembaca mahupun pendengar akan melakukan pemilihan dengan menggugurkan inferens yang tidak relevan seterusnya menyempitkan makna yang tidak diinginkan.

Frasa *menyinari hidup* dianggap kabur dan mempunyai makna implisit kerana wujudnya kepelbagaian makna yang diperolehi daripada leksikal *menyinari* iaitu mengeluarkan sinar, memancarkan cahaya,

menerangi, kebahagiaan dan mengajar makhluk melihat kebenaran (Kamus Dewan, 2014, p. 600). Namun begitu, sekiranya melihat dari keseluruhan konteks bagi data tersebut, *menyinari* lebih merujuk kepada kebahagiaan dan kegembiraan. Walaupun leksikal *menyinari* mempunyai andaian sinonim dengan makna literalnya iaitu seperti menerangi, namun ia bukan merujuk kepada perkara tersebut. Hal ini kerana *menyinari* boleh ditafsirkan sebagai satu bentuk perbuatan menyuluh objek atau satu satu kawasan lapang yang mempunyai ruang untuk diberikan sumber pencahayaan. Walhal, leksikal *hidup* yang merupakan maklumat selepasnya adalah unsur abstrak yang tidak boleh disentuh, dilihat, dan tidak kelihatan oleh deria manusia. Hal ini menyebabkan frasa tersebut bersifat metaforikal kerana *hidup* yang bersifat abstrak itu telah ditafsirkan sebagai objek, iaitu entiti konkrit yang boleh disinarikan oleh manusia. Oleh hal yang demikian, berdasarkan konsep ad hoc penyempitan, pembaca akan membuat pemilihan dengan memilih andaian yang paling relevan mengikut konteks iaitu dalam lingkungan [C*] bagi frasa *menyinari hidup*. Maka, terhasil makna yang cuba diinterpretasikan iaitu leksikal *menyinari* merujuk kepada memberi kebahagiaan dan kegembiraan kepada hidup manusia lain. Oleh sebab itu, makna dalam L digugurkan seperti dalam Rajah 3 di bawah.



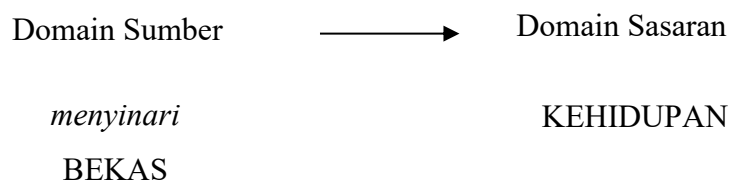
Rajah 3: Pemetaan konsep *ad hoc* penyempitan bagi leksikal *menyinar*

Hal ini kerana leksikal *menyinari* yang terbit dari kata dasar sinar itu memberi satu gambaran bahawa sinar itu ialah cahaya yang mampu menerbitkan rasa bahagia. Berdasarkan pengalaman kognitif yang sedia ada, cahaya itu ditafsirkan sebagai pancaran yg datangnya dari objek yang bersinar seperti matahari, lampu, dan api yg membolehkan sesuatu objek dan kawasan dilihat (Kamus Dewan, 2014, p. 715). Dalam bidang pendidikan biologi misalnya, cahaya matahari merupakan salah satu faktor yang mempengaruhi proses pembuatan makanan oleh tumbuhan. Fotosintesis adalah tindak balas penting dalam tumbuhan yang berfungsi untuk menukar tenaga (cahaya) matahari menjadi tenaga kimia yang disimpan dalam sebatian organik (Campbell & Reece dalam Maria Yustiningsih, 2019) yang bertujuan untuk membenarkan tumbuhan kekal terus hidup.

Menurut Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia dalam Portal Rasmi MyHEALTH, dalam bidang perubatan, cahaya juga membantu untuk melihat organ atau struktur di dalam badan manusia melalui beberapa modaliti bagi tujuan pengimejan seperti tomografi berkomputer (*CT - computed tomography scanner*), mesin sinar-X, imbasan magnetik resonan (*MRI - magnetic resonance imaging machine*) dan ultrasound sebagai alat pengesanan di peringkat awal, melihat tahap kesihatan janin serta melihat saiz dan ukuran ketumbuhan dalam otak dan anggota badan manusia. Pesta kerakyatan juga tidak terkecuali seperti pesta cahaya di Thailand dan India yang mana masyarakat India menyimbolikkan cahaya pelita itu lambang kepada kemenangan, kehidupan dan kebahagiaan (Universiti Malaysia Pahang, 2010).

Pertunjukkan bunga api yang biasanya diraiikan oleh masyarakat Cina dan Melayu juga melambangkan kebahagiaan kerana bunga api mewakili detik kekaguman dan keajaiban kolektif. Keindahan dan keterujaan bunga api boleh menimbulkan perasaan teruja. Kejadian semula jadi alam seperti bintang misalnya, cahaya bintang yang berkelip membangkitkan perasaan yang ajaib dan misteri, kemungkinan yang tidak terhingga dan rasa bahagia kepada orang yang melihatnya. Disamping rasa kedamaian, keajaiban dan kebahagiaan kepada manusia, simbol bintang juga berperanan penting dalam pelbagai budaya dan agama serta turut berfungsi sebagai panduan untuk pengembara dan pelayaran (Nazhatulshima Ahamd & Mohd Zambri Zainuddin (2001).

Melalui proses simulasi, frasa *menyinari hidup* akan dapat menghasilkan skema imej dan metafora konsepsi. Hal ini kerana proses simulasi melibatkan pendekatan linguistik kognitif serta pemetaan dua domain. Dalam konteks ini, penghasilan skema imej bagi leksikal *menyinari hidup* ialah skema imej BEKAS yang dapat dilihat melalui pembuktian linguistik daripada leksikal *menyinari*. Berikut merupakan pemetaan domain:



Metafora Konseptual: KEHIDUPAN IALAH SEBUAH BEKAS

Hal ini kerana leksikal *menyinari* ini memberi satu gambaran yang jelas tentang satu tindakan untuk memberi pencahayaan pada suatu tempat yang mempunyai dimensi ruang atau objek untuk membuatnya lebih terang dan mudah dilihat. Menurut Johnson 1987 (dalam Rozaimah Rashidin, 2016), skema imej BEKAS merujuk kepada skema imej yang mengungkap sesuatu pengalaman dalam bentuk sebuah bekas. Berdasarkan pengalaman kognitif yang telah tersedia, dimensi ruang merupakan bentuk fizikal sebuah bekas yang berfungsi

untuk memenuhi keperluan khusus dalam penyimpanan. Bentuk fizikal sebuah bekas juga amat berbeza bergantung kepada tujuan dan fungsi bekas tersebut seperti yang ditunjukkan dalam gambar Rajah 4.



Rajah 4: Skema Imej BEKAS bagi frasa *menyinari hidup*

Sumber: https://ms.pngtree.com/freebackground/lamp-sitting-on-a-small-post-in-a-dark-outdoor-setting_2466744.html

Bagi frasa *menyinari hidup*, domain sumber *menyinari* dipetakan kepada domain sasaran iaitu KEHIDUPAN. Hasil daripada pemetaan kedua-dua domain ini seterusnya membawa kepada pembentukan metafora konsepsi iaitu KEHIDUPAN IALAH SEBUAH BEKAS sebagai mana yang ditunjukkan dalam Rajah 4. Melalui pembentukan konseptual ini juga membolehkan pembaca memahami bahawa kehidupan manusia itu ditentukan corak perjalanannya bergantung sepenuhnya terhadap apa yang mereka tentukan ke atas diri mereka sama sama keputusan ke atas keinginan, persahabatan, kehendak untuk berpasangan, percintaan, perkahwinan dan sebagainya.

Kesimpulan

Unsur bahasa humor yang telah dikenal pasti penggunaannya dalam sitkom komedi adalah penggunaan bahasa kiasan, permainan kata, penggunaan pantun jenaka, cara bercerita dan mencarut. Selain itu juga dua unsur tambahan bahasa humor turut digunakan dalam sitkom komedi tersebut iaitu implikatur dan kata pikat. Bahasa humor yang digunakan lebih mengandungi makna implisit berbanding makna eksplisit. Makna implisit merujuk kepada mesej atau makna yang tersirat atau tersembunyi dalam teks, pernyataan atau karya seni. Makna eksplisit selalunya mudah difahami dan ditafsirkan oleh penerima mesej. Berbantuan teori Hibrid, makna implisit yang terkandung dalam bahasa humor ini juga bersifat metaforikal iaitu makna atau mesej yang cuba disampaikan oleh penutur (pelawak) itu mengkonsepsikan entiti yang abstrak dan implisit untuk menjelaskan sesuatu konsep yang kompleks, rumit dan baharu. Antaranya konsep emosi, cinta, kasih sayang, kehidupan, kematian, sikap dan sifat manusia serta nilai murni. Dapatan kajian ini dapat meningkatkan kefahaman terhadap penggunaan unsur bahasa humor dalam sitkom komedi yang mengandungi makna

implisit dan bersifat metaforikal. Peningkatan kefahaman terhadap penggunaan unsur bahasa humor dalam sitkom komedi yang mengandungi makna implisit dapat mengurangkan isu penyalahafsiran makna sehingga menyukarkan pendengar untuk menyingkap makna sebenar sesebuah persembahan sekiranya mereka tidak berada dalam konteks yang sama dengan penutur yakni pelawak.

Sumbangan Pengarang

Nor Umiumairah Mohamad: Konsep dan reka bentuk kajian, pengumpulan data, analisis, penginterpretasian hasil serta penulisan dan penyediaan makalah; Rozaimah Rashidin: Analisis, penginterpretasian hasil serta penulisan; Normah Ahmad: penyediaan, semakan dan pengesahan makalah.

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Data yang menyokong kajian tersedia dalam makalah ini. Data yang menyokong kajian ini tersedia daripada pengarang utama [Nor Umiumairah Mohamad], atas permintaan.

Konflik Kepentingan

Pengarang tidak mempunyai sebarang konflik kepentingan dari segi kewangan dan bukan kewangan untuk diisytiharkan.

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Before, While, and After Writing: A Study on Mother Tongue Reliance and Native Language Transfer among Students at Various Levels of Proficiency

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Abstract

Writing stands out as an exceptionally effective means for articulating thoughts and emotions, assuming a crucial role in the evaluation of learners' overall competence and is considered an essential element in English examinations. Nevertheless, the performance of high school students in China frequently fails to meet the anticipated standards in this domain. The influence of native language transfer is proposed as a primary factor contributing to this less-than-ideal outcome. This study investigates the influence of native language transfer during the English writing process of high school students. The study employed quantitative research methodology, including a writing test and a questionnaire, and applied transfer theory, comparative analysis, and error analysis theory as the theoretical frameworks. The findings indicate the levels of reliance on the mother tongue and its transfer show differences before, during, and after writing among students with varying levels of second language proficiency. This bears noteworthy pedagogical implications for the development of intervention or remedial programs for high school students.

Keywords: *language transfer; EFL writing; mother tongue influence; proficiency levels*

Introduction

English holds a significant importance in China, being a mandatory subject from primary to postgraduate education. Chinese high school students undergo formal English education for at least nine years and are expected to excel in vocabulary and grammar. Despite adequate input, many struggle to proficiently apply their English skills in speech and writing. This dilemma renders them susceptible to the influence of native language transfer, a widely studied phenomenon in second language acquisition.

Research has shown that learners often rely on the structure and semantics of their mother tongue when producing utterances in the target language, which may promote or hinder the language learning process (Ellis, 1994). According to Hu (2021), high school students frequently adopt a Chinese thinking pattern when tackling essay writing tasks, perceiving it as easier to comprehend than adjusting to the organisational framework of English. This reliance on their native language often leads to negative transfer, hampering the

development of their English skills. Therefore, researchers have been increasingly concerned about finding effective strategies for learners and educators.

In the field of second language acquisition, researchers have noticed that second language acquisition is strongly influenced by the learner's first language (Lado, 1957; Selinker, 1969; Odlin, 1989). Native language transfer is one of the principal factors leading to various kinds of errors in lexicon, syntax, and discourse in their writings (Wu, 2023). Many empirical studies involving contrastive analysis and error analysis emerged in the 1960s and 1970s (e.g., Dušková, 1969; Richards, 1974; Selinker, 1969). Over the past decade, a significant amount of research has been conducted on EFL students' error analysis and native language transfer in English learning, especially in English writing (Cen, 2023; Liu, 2021). Different types of errors in EFL students' writing have been investigated and analysed (Sun, 2023; Chen & Zhang, 2022; Wei, 2022). However, these studies have predominantly concentrated on native language transfer within the framework of error taxonomy made by EFL learners. Studies that examine the impact of reliance on the mother tongue at various stages of writing have been scarce. There is also a lack of comprehensive analysis on the transfer among Chinese high school students of different proficiency levels. Thus, the current study intends to fill this gap and seek answers to the following research question:

- i. How do the levels of involvement of the native language transfer vary across different stages of the writing process, i.e. before writing, while writing, and after writing?

Literature Review

Second Language Acquisition and Native Language Transfer

Understanding second language acquisition (SLA) is crucial for studying native language transfer in EFL writing. Researchers such as Muriel Sacille-Troike (Cook, 2016) have emphasised the relevance of early linguistic approaches to SLA. The theoretical foundations of SLA provide insights into how learners acquire a second language and how aspects of their native language may influence this process.

Language transfer, a key concept in second language learning, refers to the influence of a learner's native language on their target language production (Odlin, 1989). Corder (1981) categorised language transfer as a crucial aspect of applied linguistics, emphasising its significance in understanding language-related challenges faced by learners. Jarvis (2000) suggested that to identify first language (L1) influence reliably, there must be a significant statistical connection between L1 background and interlanguage behaviour. This connection can be established through comparing the L1 and interlanguage behaviour within a learner group or between different learner groups. Jarvis (2000) states that the following three types of evidence should be examined when evaluating whether certain learner behaviour is caused by transfer: i) intra-L1-group-homogeneity in learners' interlanguage performance, ii) inter-L1-group-heterogeneity in learners'

interlanguage performance, and iii) intra-L1-group congruity between learners' L1 and interlanguage performance.

As also discussed in Jarvis (2000), the methodological approach outlined above applies to an ideal investigation of L1 influence. Identifying all these three transfer effects constitute the most convincing evidence for transfer, but two of these effects, intra-L1-group-homogeneity in learners' interlanguage performance and intra-L1-group congruity between learners' L1 and interlanguage performance, are sufficient for verifying the presence of L1 influence. This study, thus, combined evidence from these effects to demonstrate the impact of mother tongue transfer on the Chinese high school students' English writing.

Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis

Corder's framework of applied linguistics introduces essential methodologies for investigating language transfer. Contrastive analysis, error analysis, and transfer analysis are tools that have been extensively employed to examine how learners' native language influences their target language production (Corder, 1981). These approaches offer valuable insights into specific linguistic challenges encountered by EFL learners and help identify patterns of native language interference in written expression.

Contrastive Analysis emerged for the pedagogical purpose, as mentioned by Larsen-Freeman (1991). Fries (1959) argued that teaching materials should be designed based on a careful comparison between the learner's native language and the target language. Lado (1957) also emphasised that teachers who made this comparison would have a better understanding of their students' real challenges, thus, enhancing the effectiveness of second language (L2) teaching. Consequently, Contrastive Analysis was developed to identify potential errors, aiming to determine what aspects need to be learned and what aspects do not need to be learned in L2 learning situations (Douglas et al., 1994). According to Karim and Nassaji (2013), the productive and receptive skills of L2 learners are influenced by their L1 patterns, and the similarities and differences between L1 and L2 play a crucial role in predicting the ease or difficulty of L2 learning. When similarities exist between the two languages, positive transfer occurs, while differences can lead to negative transfer or interference.

Error Analysis (EA) has evolved as a prominent tool in applied linguistics, supplanting Contrastive Analysis (CA) in the 1970s. CA, focused on predicting errors by identifying linguistic differences between learners' native language (L1) and the target language (L2), assumed that errors resulted from interference when L1 habits were transferred to L2. However, this assumption faced challenges, leading to the rise of EA. Unlike CA's exclusive focus on fully formed languages (L1 and L2), EA introduced a comprehensive methodology for investigating learners' language. It became an essential starting point for studying learners' language and second language (L2) acquisition. Although not entirely new, EA gained recognition in the 1970s, notably influenced by the work of Corder (1981). In an influential article, Corder (1981) highlighted

three significant roles of errors: informing teachers about learners' progress, providing researchers with insights into language acquisition, and serving as tools for learners to discover target language rules. Corder (1981) proposed a systematic approach for EA research, involving the collection of learner language samples, error identification, error description, error explanation, and error evaluation. These steps aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of errors in language acquisition. While the traditional role of EA centered on informing teaching practices, Corder's emphasis on error analysis as a tool for L2 researchers marked a paradigm shift. Researchers in the 1970s, motivated by a dual purpose of enhancing pedagogy and understanding L2 acquisition, laid the foundation for the systematic study of learner errors in applied linguistics.

Research on Native Transfer in English Writing

The influence of L1 on L2 language production, especially on L2 writing, has drawn considerable attention of generations of linguists. Gayo and Widodo (2018) investigated the errors that occurred on students' English writing at the morphological and syntactical levels and the factors that caused these errors by qualitative descriptive research. Chaudhary and Zahrani (2020) examined linguistic errors in EFL students' writings at a Saudi university, identifying interlingual and intralingual interference as the main error sources. Alotaibi (2023) revealed that a large percentage of errors in students' writing could be attributed to L1 transfer, emphasizing the importance of understanding linguistic differences between Saudi students' L1 and English to address first language interference in writing.

Due to various factors such as history and social development of China, research on language transfer and English writing teaching started relatively late. However, in recent decades, many Chinese researchers have identified the influence of negative transfer of first language on English writing. Liu (2021) examined the relationship between mother tongue negative transfer and English writing, comparing vocabulary semantics, syntactic function, discourse structure, and writing habits in English and Chinese to enhance vocational college students' English writing skills and suggested strategies to mitigate negative transfer interference. Guo et al. (2022) discovered that obstructive interference from negative transfer of the mother tongue occurs at a significantly higher rate than intervention interference. Li and Wang (2023) analysed the types of errors made by third year English major students in writing classroom tests and found that negative transfer of mother tongue is one of the important sources of errors.

To sum up, the current research on language transfer is relatively rich and diverse. Some empirical studies are conducted from the perspective of language and learners itself, while there are relatively inadequate studies on examining the errors in writing among English learners of varying proficiency levels influenced by their mother tongue, as well as the extent of mother tongue influence at different stages of the writing process.

Methodology

This study employed quantitative research methods on essay analysis and questionnaires to examine the relationship between the reliance on mother tongue and native language transfer in the English writing among high school students. The subjects involved were the Grade 2 students from Jigang High School, Shandong province, China.

Data Collection and Analysis

A total of 912 students' compositions were collected from a city-wide simulated joint examination in Jinan. The task in the examination requires participants to read a narrative material and then continue writing two paragraphs based on the content they have read. The first sentence of the two paragraphs that need to be continued is provided. It is worth emphasising that the paper requirements, evaluation criteria, and scoring procedures implemented in this English examination adhere rigorously to the protocols outlined in the Chinese college entrance examination. The test papers underwent a standardised evaluation process by two examiners and the overall score was determined by the average of the scores. Instances where the score disparity between two examiners amounted to three points or more required a subsequent re-evaluation. This measure ensures the reliability and robust standardisation of the materials amassed in the present research. The compositions were then categorised into three levels based on their respective results: 1) very proficient, 2) proficient, and 3) less proficient. Following this, a comprehensive sample of 60 compositions was selected using a simple random sampling method, with 20 drawn from each level.

To achieve a better understanding of the students' use of writing strategies and investigate to what extent Chinese high school students of different proficiency levels rely on their mother tongue in terms of lexis, syntax, and discourse, as well as at different stages of English writing, a student questionnaire adapted from Wen Qiufang (2003) was utilised with some appropriate modifications. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: i) participants' background information, and ii) strategies utilised across the entire writing stages. The Five-point Lickert scale of i) Never; ii) Rarely; iii) Sometimes; iv) Often; v) Always was employed. To avoid misunderstanding of the questions and ensure the accuracy of the data, the Chinese version of the questionnaire was also provided. The reliability and validity of test of the 23-item questionnaire yielded a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.846, signifying high reliability. The questionnaire was made available online and the students were invited to take part in the survey right after the examination.

To find out the extent to which the students relied on their mother tongue and the evidence of the native language transfer in their writing, this study adopted Corder's (1974) error analysis method and Dulay et al.'s (1982) surface strategy taxonomy in classifying the errors. Errors evidenced in the students' composition were categorised under James' (2013) three classifications of errors: lexis, syntax and discourse. To

estimate the number and frequency of errors and native language influence, mathematical calculations were employed to demonstrate the percentage (Sudijono, 2018):

$$P = F/N \times 100\%$$

Note:

P is the percentage of errors

F is the frequency of errors

N is the total number of samples

Following error classification, participants' error descriptions served as a foundation to elucidate the reasons behind their occurrences.

Data from the survey questionnaire were used to confirm the findings from the writings, figure out the extent to which high school students resort to their mother tongue and investigate how much native language transfer involvement varies across distinct stages of the writing process, i.e. before writing, while writing, and after writing. To facilitate the description and analysis of the data, the enumeration of errors in compositions and the examination of responses in the questionnaire were then tabulated.

Findings and Discussions

Speech Act Native Language Transfers and Errors in English Writing

The analysis of the data shows that the students' compositions contain all the three categories of errors with the lexical errors being the most prominent ones. This is shown in Figure 1 below.

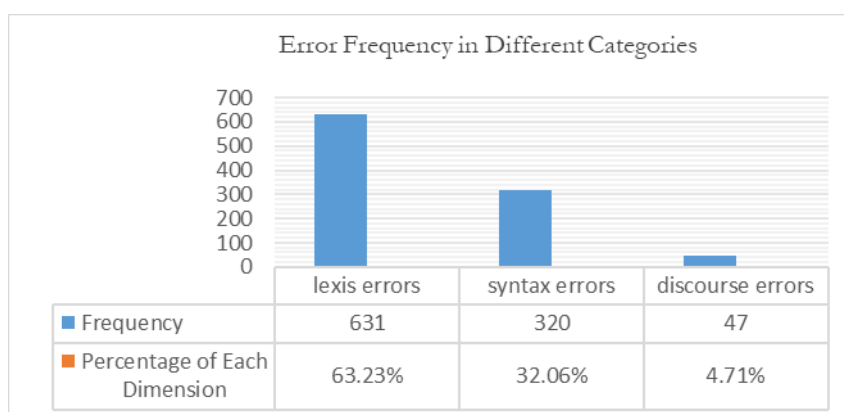


Figure 1: Error Frequency in Different Categories

From Figure 1, it is evident that among the three primary error categories, students' compositions exhibit the highest frequency of lexis errors, comprising 63.2% of the total errors, followed by the syntax er-

rors which account for 32.1%. In addition, errors ranking the third are those at the discourse level accounting for 4.7%. This study's results align closely with Duan's (2019) research on mother tongue transfer in high school English writing, where lexical errors accounted for 45.29%, syntax errors for 29.89%, and morphology errors for 24.82% due to mother tongue transfer. Both studies underscore the significant impact of mother tongue transfer on students' writing errors, particularly in lexis and syntax. While the quantity of errors in this category may not be as substantial as in the empirical studies, it still highlights the errors that students commonly commit in their writing.

According to the Senior High School English Curriculum Standards (2020) formulated by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, high school students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in at least 3,000 words and a comprehensive understanding of English grammatical rules. However, upon analysing the data, it becomes apparent that despite acquiring a certain level of vocabulary mastery and a systematic grasp of grammar, students' overall written expression falls short of the expected standard. A scrutiny of the 60 written texts from students across different proficiency levels, encompassing those classified as very proficiency, proficiency, and less proficiency, highlights notable errors in both vocabulary and grammar.

Table 1 provides insights into the analysis of 60 paper samples, revealing a total of 998 errors. Notably, students at the proficient level (PL) exhibit the highest total errors among the three proficiency levels, reaching 402, constituting 40.28% of the overall errors. Following are students at the less proficient level (LP), with a total error count of 358, accounting for 35.87%. The students with the lowest total errors belong to the very proficient level (VPL), tallying 238 errors, making up 23.85% of the total errors.

Table 1: Errors caused by Negative Language Transfer across Proficiency Levels

Variable	Number of Students	Number of Errors	Ratio to Total Number of Errors	Total Number of Words	Average Error Rate
VPL	20	238	23.85%	3134	7.59%
PL	20	402	40.28%	3130	12.84%
LPL	20	358	35.87%	2031	17.63%
Total	60	998	100.00%	8295	/

*VPL=Very Proficient Level PL=Proficient Level LPL=Less Proficient Level

Upon closer examination, it becomes apparent that while the total number of errors made by students at the proficient level exceeds that of their less proficient counterparts, this discrepancy is partly attributable to the composition sample's higher word count for proficient-level students, which stands at 3130 words, resulting in an average error rate of 12.84%. In contrast, the total word count for essay samples from less pro-

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efficient-level students is only 2031 words, with an average error rate of 17.63%. Additionally, for highly proficient students, the total word count in their essay samples is 3134, leading to an average error rate of 7.59%. Based on the data analysis, it becomes evident that students at three distinct proficiency levels are subjected to varying degrees of influence from mother tongue transfer in their compositions.

The Influence of Native Language during the Writing Process

The study also explores the influence of the native language during the process of writing. Specifically assesses the extent to which the students rely on their mother tongue in the aspects of vocabulary, syntax, and discourse, and to determine the frequency of native language transfer across different stages of writing: pre-writing, while-writing and after-writing.

The Before-Writing Stage

The analysis indicates that students at all levels of proficiency rely on their native language before writing the composition. At this pre-writing stage, they analysed themes, constructed frameworks and organised the content. As shown in Table 2, students at the very proficiency level rely more on their native language at these tasks in the pre-writing stage compared to their counterparts. Conversely, students at less proficiency level tend to engage less in thematic analysis, framework construction, and content organisation before writing.

Table 2: The Influence of Native Language during the Before-Writing Stage

Question Responses	Q1			Q2			Q3		
	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL
A. Never	0%	7%	0%	0%	13%	50%	0%	5%	25%
B. Rarely	10%	2%	25%	20%	17%	25%	10%	10%	25%
C. Sometimes	30%	22%	0%	10%	15%	0%	10%	12%	25%
D. Often	30%	35%	50%	30%	35%	0%	40%	48%	25%
E. Always	30%	35%	25%	40%	20%	25%	40%	25%	0%

**Q1. Before English writing, I use Chinese to analyse and determine the topic and the writing task.*

Q2. Before English writing, I use Chinese to organise the structure and the outline of the article.

Q3. Before English writing, I use Chinese to brainstorm the general content of each paragraph.

Qin's 2017 study highlighted that low-proficient English majors heavily rely on their native language before writing, with a significant portion resorting to Chinese both in analysing writing tasks and planning

content. Furthermore, the study indicated that these students tend to formulate their opinions in their native language despite reading instructions in English. These findings are consistent with the results of this study, emphasising the prevalent dependence on the native language in pre-writing stage among students, especially with lower English writing proficiency.

The while-writing stage

The analysis at the while-writing stage gauges the extent to which students depend on their native language in terms of lexis, syntax, and discourse. The results are generated under 3 different aspects; i) vocabulary translation, word formation, and memorisation as shown in Table 3a, ii) word form, meaning and parts of speech as shown in Table 3b, iii) verb usage, word combination and tenses as shown in Table 3c, iv) syntax as shown in Table 3d, and v) discourse as shown in Table 3e.

Table 3a: The Influence of Native Language during the while-writing stage
(vocabulary translation, word formation and memorisation)

Question Responses	Q4			Q5			Q6		
	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL
A. Never	0%	3%	0%	20%	12%	0%	20%	13%	0%
B. Rarely	20%	7%	0%	50%	23%	25%	60%	28%	25%
C. Sometimes	10%	20%	25%	30%	35%	25%	20%	37%	0%
D. Often	40%	40%	0%	0%	12%	25%	0%	12%	0%
E. Always	30%	30%	75%	0%	18%	25%	0%	10%	75%

**Q4. During the process of writing in English, I first think of Chinese vocabulary and then translate it into the corresponding English words.*

Q5. During the process of writing in English, due to insufficient English vocabulary, I may create words, for example: using "fire stick" instead of "match."

Q6. In the process of learning English vocabulary, I only memorise the meaning of the Chinese language, and do not consider its use in the English context.

As can be seen from Table 3a, students in the low proficiency group rely more on their native language in the aspects of vocabulary translation, word formation and memorisation. Specifically, 75% of low proficiency students tend to think in Chinese first and then translate into English, compared to 30% in the other two proficiency groups. In terms of word formation, 50% of low proficiency students often create new words due to limited vocabulary, such as using “fire stick” instead of “match,” while this occurs only 30% among the students at the proficient level. High proficiency students experience this occasionally (30%) or

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rarely/never (70%). As for vocabulary memorisation, there are notable differences among the three groups of students. 75% of less proficiency level students only remember Chinese meanings without considering English usage. In contrast, 22% of proficient students and 20% of highly proficient students sometimes face this issue, emphasising the importance of contextual vocabulary acquisition in English learning.

Table 3b presents the analysis on the extent to which high school students are influenced by their native language in terms of word form, meaning, and parts of speech during the writing process. The survey results reveal significant differences among students at the three proficiency levels in these aspects.

Table 3b: The Influence of Native Language during the while-writing stage
(word form, meaning and parts of speech)

Question Responses	Q7			Q8			Q9		
	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL
A. Never	60%	18%	0%	40%	17%	0%	40%	10%	0%
B. Rarely	30%	45%	25%	50%	23%	25%	50%	25%	0%
C. Sometimes	10%	30%	25%	10%	47%	25%	10%	53%	25%
D. Often	0%	5%	0%	0%	10%	25%	0%	8%	25%
E. Always	0%	2%	50%	0%	3%	25%	0%	3%	50%

**Q7. In English writing, I often make errors in word form changes due to the influence of Chinese thinking, such as mistakenly using "their" instead of "them".*

Q8. In the process of English writing, I often use the "word-to-word" literal translation method of Chinese and English due to the influence of Chinese thinking, resulting in the wrong choice of words, such as: a big (large) number of

Q9. In English writing, influenced by Chinese, I tend to simply compare the meanings of English vocabulary, neglecting the changes in word forms.

Students at lower proficiency levels exhibit a notable influence of their native language on word form, meaning, and part of speech, with rates of 50%, 25%, and 50% respectively. In contrast, students at the intermediate proficiency level show less influence of their native language in these aspects, with rates of 2%, 3%, and 3%, respectively. 10% of high-level students reported that they sometimes make errors in word form changes and part of speech due to the influence of Chinese thinking, as well as using the word-to-word translation writing method, resulting in vocabulary selection errors. In Liu's study (2020), it was found that the proportion of individuals not considering the part of speech of words was 78.10%, the proportion of individuals overlooking singular and plural forms of words was 74.29%, and the proportion of individuals us-

ing Chinese vocabulary combinations was 84.76%. The findings of this study are largely consistent with those of the previous study. The analysis also yields the influence of the native language in terms of verb usage, word combinations and tenses in the students' writing. This is shown in Table 3c.

Table 3c: The Influence of Native Language during the while-writing stage
(verb usage, word combination and tenses)

Question Responses	Q10			Q11			Q12			Q13		
	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL
A. Never	60%	27%	0%	60%	18%	25%	60%	20%	25%	60%	8%	0%
B. Rarely	30%	45%	50%	30%	38%	0%	30%	58%	0%	20%	35%	0%
C. Sometimes	10%	20%	0%	10%	37%	25%	10%	20%	50%	20%	52%	25%
D. Often	0%	7%	0%	0%	5%	25%	0%	2%	25%	0%	5%	50%
E. Always	0%	2%	50%	0%	2%	25%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	25%

**Q10. In English writing, influenced by Chinese, I tend to have instances of verb concatenation. For example: "I like play the piano."*

Q11. In English writing, I make errors by directly fitting Chinese vocabulary combinations into English sentences (e.g., eat lunch).

Q12. In English writing, I make grammar mistakes by trying to apply Chinese grammar directly into English sentences. For example: "Although..., but..."

Q13. In English writing, I overlook verb tenses due to the influence of Chinese.

As can be seen from Table 3c, students in the very proficient group are minimally influenced by their mother tongue in verb usage, word combinations, and tenses, whereas those in the proficient group are slightly affected. In contrast, the students in the less proficient group are significantly impacted in these areas, with rates of 50%, 25%, and 25%, respectively. This study aligns with the findings of Wen and Guo (1998) that students with lower English writing proficiency rely more on native language thinking in English composition.

Along the same line, the analysis also shows the native language influence on syntax during the writing process. This includes examining the construction of negative sentences, coordination of structures, clauses, and various sentence structures.

Table 3d: The Influence of Native Language during the while-writing stage (syntax)

Questions	Q14			Q15			Q16			Q17		
Responses	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL
A. Never	40%	17%	0%	70%	7%	0%	40%	12%	0%	20%	7%	0%
B. Rarely	50%	43%	0%	20%	30%	0%	40%	27%	25%	30%	22%	0%
C. Sometimes	10%	30%	25%	10%	47%	50%	20%	37%	25%	50%	37%	50%
D. Often	0%	8%	50%	0%	13%	25%	0%	22%	25%	0%	28%	25%
E. Always	0%	2%	25%	0%	3%	25%	0%	3%	25%	0%	7%	25%

*Q14. In English writing, I often organise negative sentences with Chinese thinking, neglecting the specific structure of negative sentences in English. For example: “I not like English.” / “I think he will not join us.”

Q15. In English writing, I make mistakes due to the inability to distinguish between compound sentences and complex sentences.

Q16. In English writing, I tend to organise sentences according to the word order in Chinese.

Q17. In English writing, my English sentence structure may have similarities to Chinese sentence structure.

Table 3d shows that 25% of less proficient students always use Chinese thinking to structure negative sentences in English writing, potentially overlooking English-specific characteristics. In comparison, only 2% of the proficient students and 10% of the very proficient students always do this. It is also found that the less proficient students are always confused with the coordinate and compound sentences in English writing compared to the proficient and very proficient groups (25%, 3% and 0% respectively). This suggests that with improved second language proficiency, errors in complex sentences influenced by their native language gradually decrease.

The analysis data also demonstrate that the students’ writing is also influenced by the native language in the aspect of discourse. This includes the use of transitional words, transitional sentences, sentence style, and article structure. However, as illustrated by Table 3e, this influence gradually decreases to varying degrees as their second language proficiency improves. In Wu’s study (2021) on language errors in high school students’ compositions caused by native language interference, it was found that discourse errors reached 27.69%. However, the study did not delve deeply into analysing the changes in discourse errors as English proficiency improves.

Table 3e: The Influence of Native Language during the while-writing stage (discourse)

Questions Responses	Q18			Q19			Q20		
	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL
A. Never	20%	8%	0%	20%	8%	0%	30%	12%	0%
B. Rarely	40%	33%	0%	70%	32%	0%	30%	25%	0%
C. Sometimes	40%	45%	50%	10%	40%	25%	30%	43%	50%
D. Often	0%	12%	25%	0%	20%	50%	10%	18%	0%
E. Always	0%	2%	25%	0%	0%	25%	0%	2%	50%

**Q18. In English writing, I tend to overlook the inappropriate use of transitional words or sentences between sentences due to the influence of Chinese.*

Q19. In English writing, I am influenced by the Chinese writing style, leading to the stacking and listing of simple sentences in my writing.

Q20. During the process of English writing, I tend to neglect the differences in writing structures between English and Chinese.

The analysis shows that nearly all the students in the less proficient group admitted that they neglect the use of transitional words or sentences between English sentences. This is because the use of transitional words in sentences is not common in their native language. On the other hand, the other groups rarely do so. In the same vein, almost all the students in the less proficient group adopt the Chinese sentence structure in their English writing. In contrast, only 60% of the students from the proficient group and 10% from the very proficient group do so.

The After-Writing Stage

The study also investigates the students' effort in improving their writing. This includes revising the content, grammar, and sentence construction in their compositions. The results are shown in Table 4.

The analysis points out that the majority of high school students use their native language to modify or correct the content they have written. The results suggest that the influence of their native language on content and grammar correction decreases as their proficiency in the second language improves. However, when it comes to constructing more complex sentence structures, the trend of relying on their native language increases with the improvement of their proficiency in the second language. A survey conducted by Liu (2020) revealed that 85.71% of individuals rely on Chinese to check the completeness of their English writing expressions, a proportion that closely aligns with the findings of this study. The results suggest that the influence of their native language on content and grammar correction decreases as their proficiency in the second language improves. However, when it comes to constructing more complex sentence structures,

the trend of relying on their native language increases with the improvement of their proficiency in the second language.

Table 4: The Influence of Native Language during the after-writing stage

Questions Responses	Q21			Q22			Q23		
	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL	VPL	PL	LPL
A. Never	60%	35%	25%	10%	7%	25%	0%	10%	25%
B. Rarely	20%	20%	0%	10%	18%	25%	10%	20%	25%
C. Sometimes	10%	35%	25%	10%	37%	50%	50%	45%	50%
D. Often	10%	8%	25%	50%	28%	0%	40%	20%	0%
E. Always	0%	2%	25%	20%	10%	0%	0%	5%	0%

*Q21. *After English writing, I usually translate the composition into Chinese for editing.*

Q22. *After English writing, I usually make revisions using the English grammar knowledge I have learned.*

Q23. *After English writing, I usually use Chinese to participate in sentence construction and transform simple sentences into complex sentences.*

Pedagogical Implications

The present study has provided some insights into the impact of mother tongue reliance in the EFL writing process where there is a consistent pattern of errors that can be attributed to LI interference across varying proficiency levels. However, the analysis points out that the extent of mother tongue reliance depends on the learners' proficiency. While the proficient learners use their L1 as a cognitive tool in the before and after writing stages, the less proficient counterparts rely heavily on the L1 throughout the writing process, often resulting in the syntactic and lexical errors due to the structural differences between the languages. Another significant finding is that, the influence of L1 transfer, particularly in lexis, syntax, and discourse is less evident as the learners' English proficiency improves, suggesting that language proficiency can act as a mediating factor in the learners' ability to write in English.

The findings, thus, have significant pedagogical implications on EFL education. First, differentiated instruction based on learners' proficiency should be employed in the classroom. Teachers may guide the lower-proficiency level students away from too much reliance on their mother tongue by providing support in the pre-writing stage. This can include activities such as brainstorming strategies, use of visual organizers, and sentence-level scaffolds. Teachers can also reduce the students' LI reliance by teaching them English-mediated thinking. This can be done by encouraging them to plan, write and revise in English. By having regular practice and providing consistent feedback that highlights and corrects L1-influenced errors, teachers

not only mitigate negative transfer from the mother tongue, but also enhance students' writing competence in English.

Conclusion

This study has investigated how native language transfer influences the English writing among Chinese high school students at varying language proficiency levels. It draws on language transfer theory, contrastive analysis theory, and error analysis theory, building on previous theoretical and empirical research. Employing a blend of qualitative and quantitative research methods, the study reveals some important findings that are worth noting.

Firstly, lexical errors remain the primary issue for students, with syntactical errors closely following. This indicates a need for both teachers and learners to focus more on lexis, which has traditionally been considered the easiest aspect of English learning. In terms of lexis transfer, the most prominent error is functional transfer, followed by semantic extensions, morphological transfer, and collocations, all with significant error rates. According to Nation (2010), "knowing a word" entails three distinct aspects: understanding the form, meaning, and usage of words. Therefore, both teachers and students should emphasise the comprehensive mastery of vocabulary in teaching and learning. Among the errors caused by syntactic transfer, tense and voice errors are the most prominent, followed by comma-splices, incomplete sentences, and issues with parallel structure. While discourse transfer errors are not as prevalent as lexical and syntactic errors, coherence and text cohesion errors are still noticeable in student texts. Therefore, in the teaching and learning process, it is also essential to emphasise the contrastive analysis of English and Chinese texts.

Secondly, students at all proficiency levels, whether very proficient, proficient or less proficient, to varying degrees, rely on their mother tongue throughout the entire process of English writing - before, during, and after writing. This reliance is particularly noticeable during the writing process, where students with different levels of proficiency heavily depend on their mother tongue, from lexis to syntax to discourse. Before writing, students in the very proficient group rely more on their mother tongue to organise the framework, outline, and content of the article, followed by students in the proficient group. In contrast, students in the less proficient group engage in less brainstorming before writing. As for after-writing, the proportion of students relying on their mother tongue to correct content and grammar decreases as their second language proficiency increases. Conversely, after writing in English, the proportion of students using Chinese to construct sentences and transform simple sentences into complex ones increases with their second language proficiency improvement. This phenomenon also indicates that students in the low-level group are significantly weaker in constructing complex sentences.

Finally, consistent results from text analysis and questionnaire surveys suggest that as second language proficiency improves, high school students are less influenced by native language transfer in lexis, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Vol. 9, No. 3, 2025

syntax, and discourse. Integrating the research findings with the teaching insights emphasises the crucial need for educators to prioritise vocabulary mastery, syntactic analysis, and discourse cohesion in English language teaching. Addressing common errors such as functional transfer, tense inaccuracies, and coherence issues is essential. By incorporating contrastive analysis of English and Chinese texts, instructors can assist students in overcoming challenges posed by language transfer. Tailoring instruction according to students' proficiency levels, promoting independent brainstorming in English, and reducing reliance on the mother tongue for corrections can significantly enhance students' writing skills. As proficiency levels increase, students exhibit reduced influence from their native language, underscoring the significance of targeted support to enhance overall language proficiency. Educators should adopt a balanced curriculum that combines explicit language instruction with authentic practice opportunities to cultivate students' ability to effectively navigate between languages, thereby improving their English writing proficiency.

In conclusion, this study extends the existing knowledge on error types due to native language transfer by offering understanding of how mother tongue reliance can operate throughout different stages of the writing process and across different levels of proficiency. While previous studies on negative transfer mostly focus on the final written product, this research employed a process-oriented approach, examining learners' use of their L1 during the pre-writing, while-writing, and post-writing stages. Ultimately, the study suggests the importance of instructional scaffolding based on learner proficiency, which can effectively bridge the error analysis and instructional design.

Author contributions

Gai, M. and Fang, Y. conceived, planned and wrote the manuscript. Ariffin, K. and Ahmad, B.E provided feedback and contributed in shaping the study, analysis and manuscript as well as contributed to the supervision of the study. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article.

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The Role of Subtitled Movies in Enhancing English Language Skills: Postgraduate Students' Perceptions and Motivation

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Abstract

Language acquisition has always been a challenging process for language learners, particularly adult learners, and thus educators are always looking for interesting and innovative ways to help them learn language effectively. Movies with subtitles have become popular as a resource for language acquisition because they are entertaining, provide visual-auditory input, and provide authentic context for the learners. The combination of audio-visual elements such as pictures, videos, sounds, and subtitles in movies contributes many inputs, from learning about history and culture to learning and acquiring the English language. Additionally, motivation plays a crucial role in acquiring a second language. Therefore, this study explores the effect of subtitled movies on English language acquisition among postgraduate students and their learning motivation. The research employed a qualitative method where semi-structured interviews were conducted by interviewing 12 participants, postgraduate students from a local university in Malaysia. The findings revealed that subtitled movies are effective in language learning to improve students' English language skills, particularly in vocabulary expansion and reading skills. Besides, the use of subtitled movies also promotes a positive learning experience where students feel motivated to learn when using subtitled movies. This study demonstrates the potential of subtitled movies as valuable learning material in language learning, suggesting their integration into the education curriculum. This study may contribute to the growing research on the use of subtitled movies in language learning, providing insightful understanding for educators and policymakers in the field of language education.

Keywords: *Postgraduate students, subtitled movies, language learning, learning motivation, perceptions*

Introduction

This paper explores the perceptions of using subtitled movies to improve English language acquisition and learning motivation among postgraduate students in one of the local universities in Malaysia. It is proposed that using subtitled movies helps improve English language learning and increase learning motivation.

Roslim et al. (2021) report that many scholars have addressed the increasing importance of using movies to enhance second language teaching and learning. This is because movies allow learners to engage, learn, acquire, experience, and improve their language skills. Additionally, movies can assist students in integrating the development of their speaking, listening, writing, and reading skills, enhancing their communicative competence (Bellalem et al., 2018). Movies enable teachers to introduce variety and reality to the classroom, and the discussions based on the movie content enable students to contribute their own experiences and background knowledge (Kusumawati, 2018). Furthermore, in this era of modern technology, almost everyone has access to watch their favorite movies unlimitedly, be it on television at home, at the

cinema, on the internet, or on the phone. A film, also known as a movie or a motion picture, is a collection of still images on film that are rapidly projected onto a screen using light (Andrew et al., 2023). Besides, the definition of a movie, is a story recorded as a set of moving pictures with sound to be shown at the cinema or on television (Anggraeni et al., 2018). The authors further explain that a movie can be concluded as one of the literary forms that include story, play, history, and culture that is recorded as a video and shown on television, cinema, or other broadcast media where entertainment is the main purpose. Thus, using movies offers a unique language-learning experience by combining audiovisual elements such as pictures, videos, and sounds compared to the traditional language-learning method.

Movies with subtitles refer to those movies that have captions or subtitles in a language that is different from the one used for the original audio track. According to Nurfauziah (2023), the definition of subtitles is the display of translated language in a movie in the form of titles, usually at the bottom of an image or shot on the screen. These subtitles serve as a written translation of the dialogue spoken and enable an accented language to become intelligible to any viewers (Kusumawati, 2018), even if they are not proficient in the language used in the movie. Therefore, it is easier for learners to learn and acquire a language when it is understood in the context of watching subtitled movies that reflect real-life situations. Movies with subtitles are proven to have a strong impact on learning a second language in general (Bellaleme et al., 2018). In fact, Kusumawati (2018) states that the use of subtitled movies is more effective in enhancing overall comprehension compared to non-subtitled movies. Moreover, movies with subtitles provide learners with a visual picture of spoken language, which aids in a deeper understanding of the language and improves language acquisition. However, several studies have also highlighted the disadvantages of using subtitled movies. To illustrate, a study by Shahril and Abdullah (2022) found that low-proficiency learners might face a problem where they cannot understand a word the first time, they hear it, and they require more time to do so. This finding is aligned with the result of the study by Napikul et al. (2018), where a student did not comprehend the subtitle even by observing the gestures and body language from the movie.

In addition, the effectiveness of movies with subtitles may differ based on individual learners' characteristics, such as language proficiency and learning motivation. Motivation is one of the most important keys in acquiring a second language (Nurhidayah, 2020; Seven, 2020). This is because the success of language learning is greatly dependent on learning motivation. It influences the amount of work that learners are willing to put in and the methods that they use to learn. Nonetheless, the relationship between the use of subtitled movies and learning motivation remains underexplored. The cultural and social context of Malaysia exacerbates this problem even more; many people lack the drive to improve their English because it is not ingrained in their everyday lives, even though they have a foundation in the language (Mohamed et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, although there are some flaws, without a doubt past research has demonstrated the benefits of using subtitled movies, where learners are more likely to learn and acquire the English language,

especially for postgraduate students who want to improve their English language acquisition. Postgraduate students can benefit most from using subtitled movies as a learning material to improve English language acquisition because of their various benefits, which include vocabulary development, language skills improvement, cultural awareness, and more (Alhai, 2023; Bostanci, 2022; Morse, 2022). Movies with subtitles offer contextual learning, motivation, and self-paced learning where students can choose movies that align with their interests and language proficiency levels. Subtitled movies provide a dynamic and interesting method of learning languages that is ideally suitable to postgraduate students' advanced academic and professional needs, considering that movies arouse viewers' curiosity (Karray & Debernitz, 2017). As a result, students can become more motivated and can even overcome some of their nervousness about not knowing the language by watching movies to learn the language (Nurfauziah et al., 2023). With the presence of subtitles, it helps students understand the conversation and the story of the movie. Therefore, this study aims to explore postgraduate students' perceptions of the use of subtitled movies in improving English language acquisition.

Additionally, English language acquisition has been a major challenge for many students throughout the years. Not every learner is keen on the traditional language learning methods, especially for adult learners, as they can be boring and lack interesting input in a lesson. The traditional methods that emphasize memorizing and repetition do not address the learning styles and strategies of all students (Bostanci, 2022). Hence, educators should incorporate learning strategies for the learners to diversify their language learning experience. We must acknowledge that students or learners now do not tolerate writing on paper as much, making teaching or learning a language a challenging task (Anas & Zakaria, 2019). Thus, it hinders them from learning and acquiring the language to the fullest. Certainly, this has attracted much interest among researchers, and many researchers have studied studies on the topic of movies and language learning until now (Alluri, 2018; Bjornsson & Andersson, 2019; Uzzaman & Roy, 2019; Roslim et al., 2021). However, the use of subtitled movies in improving English language acquisition remains an area of concern. As stated by Shahril and Abdullah (2022), this topic is still understudied in Malaysia, especially among young adult learners, who are postgraduate students. Anas and Zakaria (2019) reported that there are hundreds of studies conducted outside of Malaysia (Bellalem et al., 2018; Sadiku, 2018; Kusumawati, 2019; Ambele & Abam, 2020; Bostanci, 2022) that explored more on the effectiveness of having subtitles in audio-visual materials, their study has determined that it is best to have this extended, including to the Malaysian context. Ünal and Ekmekçi (2022) suggested that more research should employ qualitative methods to get a deeper understanding of learners' perceptions of the use of subtitles in language learning. In addition, Yaacob et al. (2021) even suggested that an interesting research topic that can be conducted is exploring whether English or Malay subtitles are more effective as learning media. Respectively, more reliable and credible research regarding the topic of subtitles and English language learning is needed in Malaysia. Hence, the two research

objectives of this study are to analyze postgraduate students' perceptions of using subtitled movies to improve their English language acquisition and to examine their learning motivation in improving English language.

Literature Review

For adult learners, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) represents a rewarding yet complex process that requires an effective and comprehensive approach. Their motivations, cognitive abilities, prior language knowledge, and language learning strategies significantly impact the course of their language acquisition. Hiver et al. (2021) identify several contributing factors to successful SLA, including age, motivation, intelligence, attitude, aptitude, personality, and cognitive style. Understanding these complexities is essential for educators, language programs, and institutions to create efficient and effective language learning experiences. While age-related challenges in language learning continue to be discussed, recent research by Noyan and Asik (2024) suggests that adult learners can excel through appropriate instructional approaches and targeted strategies. By implementing specific learning strategies in SLA, such as using subtitled movies, educators can enhance adult learners' potential and provide them with the necessary language learning materials to succeed. Consequently, through the application of these learning strategies, adult learners can acquire their second language to the fullest extent.

Moreover, learning a second language opens numerous doors by improving communication, providing exposure to different cultures, promoting intercultural understanding, and adding personal value. To facilitate second language acquisition, researchers have developed various SLA strategies. Applying these learning strategies is crucial for language learners to maximize their learning opportunities. Teng (2023) notes that second language learners benefit from individualized language learning strategies that address and manage their internal states. According to Teng (2022), strategies involve setting goals, deciding on actions to achieve those goals, and mobilizing resources to execute those actions. Eva et al. (2023) further define language learning strategies as specific actions and processes that language learners deploy to learn and use a language more effectively. Among these effective approaches is the contextual learning strategy. Recent studies by Jasper-Abowei et al. (2023) describe contextual learning (CL) as a system that links brain activity to create meaningful patterns by relating academic material to real-life contexts. In language learning specifically, CL involves understanding and acquiring language within authentic situations and contexts. This approach is vital because it enhances long-term memory storage, enabling learners to apply their acquired language skills in daily life. Additionally, CL allows educators to connect academic content with real-world situations that students regularly encounter, thereby inspiring language learners to use their language skills in authentic contexts. A prime example of contextual learning is the use of subtitled movies.

Over the years, subtitled movies have emerged as one of the most effective tools for language learners to enhance their English language acquisition, particularly for adult learners. Research by Ng (2024) provides compelling evidence, demonstrating significant improvement in the listening comprehension scores of adult English learners after they watched video content with subtitles. When language learners watch subtitled movies, they are exposed to natural language use across various social and cultural contexts. Khadawardi (2022) emphasize that movies can significantly enhance understanding of vocabulary usage in authentic contexts while providing realistic settings for vocabulary acquisition. This multisensory exposure offers learners valuable contextual cues alongside visual and auditory input, thereby facilitating both language acquisition and comprehension.

As previously highlighted, learning motivation plays a crucial role in second language acquisition (L2), and the theoretical frameworks used to understand language learning motivation have evolved substantially over time. Recent research by Al-Hoorie and MacIntyre (2020) has expanded our understanding of motivation in language acquisition by acknowledging its complex and dynamic nature. The concept of motivation in this context has been influenced by various theories and models, notably the socio-educational model developed by Gardner in 1985 (Lamb et al., 2023). These researchers explain that Gardner's model incorporates factors that impact language acquisition and reflect attitudes toward both the L2 cultural group and the learning environment. Csizér (2020) argues that Gardner's concept of goal orientation remains the most significant and controversial aspect of the model. These orientations function as antecedents or drivers of motivation, comprising both integrative and instrumental orientations. An integrative orientation represents a positive attitude toward the target language group and a desire to join or assimilate into that community, whereas an instrumental orientation refers to practical or external motivations for learning the language. Despite extensive research on instrumental and integrative motivation, Mendoza and Phung (2019) identify limitations to this approach, noting that it may not fully account for the diverse range of student motivations. They point out that distinguishing between integrative and instrumental motivation can be challenging because reasons for learning a second language often depend on complex social and psychological factors. Considering all these aspects, learning motivation remains a key factor in SLA, affecting numerous outcomes including goal achievement and skill improvement. Furthermore, teachers and educators play an essential role in enhancing learner motivation for acquiring or improving L2, such as through the strategic incorporation of subtitled movies into language instruction.

The theoretical framework underpinning this study is based on one of Krashen's SLA theories, the Affective Filter Hypothesis. This theory posits that a learner's emotional or affective state can significantly impact the success of language acquisition. The hypothesis explains that the affective filter functions as a psychological barrier that prevents comprehensible language input from reaching the mental Language Acquisition Device (LAD), thereby impeding language acquisition. Recent reexaminations of this theory by

Sajida and Vijaya (2023) continue to validate the notion that three primary factors influence this mental filter: motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. This filter can either facilitate or impede the process of acquiring a second language. Language learners who possess high motivation and self-confidence coupled with low anxiety can process more language input due to their low affective filter, whereas those with a high affective filter experience reduced language input processing. This hypothesis underscores the critical role of motivation, one of the key variables, in second language acquisition, particularly for postgraduate students who are categorized as adult learners.

In language learning, motivation serves as a crucial component in acquiring a second language. Papi et al. (2019) have developed comprehensive frameworks that build upon Gardner's motivation theory, identifying three key elements: 1) willingness (the desire to reach a goal), 2) eagerness (the resolution to learn), and 3) enjoyment of learning. Their research distinguishes between two primary goal motivations: instrumental and integrative. Individuals who study a language due to external stimulation demonstrate instrumental motivation, while those who learn a second language for personal development exhibit integrative motivation. Contemporary research by Shan (2024) demonstrates that integrative motivation more effectively provides language learners with sustained, long-term motivation and correlates significantly with successful second language acquisition. In the context of this research, postgraduate students' motivation primarily stems from the enjoyment of acquiring language through watching subtitled movies. These subtitled films can foster integrative motivation by providing valuable insights into the social and cultural contexts of L2 speakers. Through this medium, learners become motivated to understand not only linguistic elements but also the cultural nuances portrayed in the films.

Furthermore, recent studies by Rock (2021) emphasize the significant role of attitudes in language acquisition. Building upon Gardner's socio-educational model, current research indicates that students are more likely to persist in their language studies and achieve higher proficiency levels when they maintain positive attitudes toward the target language community and demonstrate a strong desire to integrate with that community. To gain deeper insights into the relationship between motivation and attitudes, it is essential to examine students' perceptions regarding the use of subtitled movies in enhancing language acquisition. Hashim and Aziz (2022) expands the concept of perception or self-perception, defining it as the process through which individuals learn about themselves via their own behavior and observation. This research emphasizes that self-perception significantly impacts how people develop self-knowledge, even when inconsistencies exist between prior beliefs and observed behavior. Understanding how individuals develop self-knowledge is crucial because this self-awareness forms the foundation upon which people build their attitudes, values, and preferences. Consequently, a significant connection exists between motivation and perceptions in this research study. As Seven (2020) observe, a student's motivation plays a pivotal role in shaping their attitudes, behaviors, and overall experience in the language learning process, substantially

influencing how they perceive and engage with language learning materials such as subtitled movies. Wang et al. (2024) explain this phenomenon by noting that motivation and emotion fundamentally determine how we perceive our world, organize our memories, and make important decisions.

Methodology

Research Design and Participants

This research employed a qualitative method, which includes conducting semi-structured interviews to find out the students' perceptions towards using subtitled movies in English language acquisition. The participants in this study consisted of 12 postgraduate students from an English language course at a local university in Malaysia, which is Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM). The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling. Considering the aim of this study is to identify postgraduate students' perceptions towards using subtitled movies to improve their English language acquisition, the participants chosen met these three criteria to be able to get the data for this research. The three criteria were:

- 1) A postgraduate student
- 2) Majoring in the English language course
- 3) Watch movies with subtitles

Instrumentation and Materials

The instrument that was utilized to collect the data from the respondents is interview questions with 14 open-ended questions that cannot just be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no'. The interview demands that the respondents answer in-depth and clarify their answers. The interview questions from Alolaywi (2023), Shahril and Abdullah (2022), and Wong (2011) all developed instruments that served as the basis for the interview questions of this study. However, for this study, there were some changes made to a few questions to fit the specific context and research objectives of the study. Table 1 displays the questions adapted for the interview.

Table 1: Interview Questions

Item	Question
1	Do you watch movies and how often do you watch them?
2	What language(s) do you usually watch the content in?
3	When watching English movies or any movies, do you use subtitles as well and in what language?
4	Do you think that watching movies with subtitles is effective for language acquisition and how?
5	What motivates you to improve your English language skills?
6	Do you think that motivation plays a crucial role in learning a second language? Why?

7	How do you feel about using subtitled movies as learning materials for language learning? Do you feel motivated when you watch subtitled movies?
8	Have you noticed any improvements in your language skills as a result of watching subtitled movies and in what way subtitled movies improve your language acquisition?
9	In your opinion, what are the advantages of using subtitled movies in improving English language acquisition?
10	What are the disadvantages of using subtitled movies in improving English language acquisition?
11	Do you have a preferred movie genre or type that you find most effective for language acquisition through subtitles?
12	What elements-other than language- have you learned from movies (e.g., culture)? And do you feel more connected to the language and culture through subtitled movies?
13	Do you find subtitled movies to be a comfortable and supportive learning materials?
14	Overall, would you suggest other students to watch movies with subtitles to improve their English language acquisition? Why?

Data Collection and Analysis

Once the participants were identified, the interviews were conducted online via the Microsoft Teams platform. The audio and the online interview with each respondent were recorded for documentation and ease of transcription. The audio of the interview was then transcribed manually with the help of Microsoft Team's transcription and put into separate files to be uploaded to the software NVIVO. Then, the data analysis was done using thematic analysis based on Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of thematic analysis method. Their thematic analysis method is a process that consists of six steps: 1) become familiar with the data; 2) generate codes; 3) generate themes; 4) review the themes; 5) define and name the themes; and 6) locate exemplars. Therefore, once the data was collected, it was analyzed using the thematic analysis method with the help of NVIVO software. The interview transcription files were uploaded to NVIVO for coding and categorization purposes to identify and generate the themes for this research. Hence, phrases, words, and paragraphs in the transcripts pertaining to the research objectives were coded and categorized. The analyzed data was then exported to an Excel sheet document in the form of a codebook to review the themes. After that, the data analysis was revised and compared to determine and name the precise themes that would answer the research questions of this study.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure the reliability and validity of the research and its results, this study adapted the interview questions from Alolaywi (2023), Shahril and Abdullah (2022) and Wong (2011). Then, member checking is conducted. Once done with the transcription, the transcriptions of the interview were shared with the respondents for them

to verify whether what they had said during the interview was accurately captured. Besides, to maintain transparency and ensure validity, a detailed audit trail is kept for all the research-related activities, such as the audio recordings, transcriptions, and coding book. Lastly, the interview questions that were used to collect the data for this study were checked by two qualified research supervisors, who are lecturers at UiTM, to validate the reliability and validity of the research.

Findings

A total of 12 respondents, consisting of postgraduate students, were interviewed in this research to find out their perceptions towards using subtitled movies to improve the English language and their learning motivation. From the data analyzed using NVIVO software, two main themes were found: 1) the effectiveness of subtitled movies; and 2) learning motivation. The themes found will then be discussed in depth to answer the research questions, with support from past research that has been done.

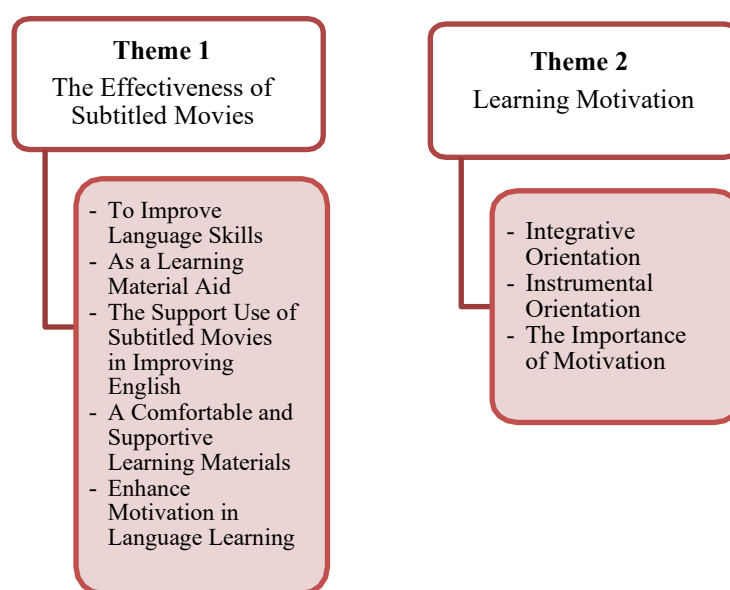


Figure 1: The Themes and Sub-themes Found in the Data Analysis

Based on Figure 1, there are several sub-themes of the effectiveness of subtitled movies and the learning motivation as suggested by the participants. The sub-themes of the effectiveness extracted were; To improve language skills, as a learning material aid, the support use of subtitled movies, a comfortable and supportive learning material, and enhance motivation in language learning. As for learning motivation, the sub-themes were; integrative orientation, instrumental orientation, and the importance of motivation.

Discussion

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of postgraduate students towards the use of subtitled movies in improving their English language?

The findings reveal that participants unanimously perceive subtitled movies as effective learning materials for language acquisition. This perception aligns with the contextual learning (CL) framework described by Jasper-Abowei et al. (2023), which emphasizes the importance of linking academic material to real-life contexts. Participants identified three primary benefits of subtitled movies: improvement of language skills, provision of comfortable and supportive learning environments, and enhancement of motivation in language learning. This multidimensional perception validates Ng (2024) assertions that the unique blend of auditory and visual language input offered by subtitled movies creates an optimal learning environment for language acquisition.

Improving Language Skills

The most significant language skill improvement reported by participants was vocabulary development. As Participant 8 articulated, *"watching movies with subtitles is effective for language acquisition in terms of the exposure to the various vocabulary expressed by the content. So, in a way, it introduces me to the words that I didn't even know."* This finding strongly corresponds with Khadawardi (2022) research, which demonstrates that movies significantly enhance understanding of vocabulary in authentic contexts. The repeated exposure to words in meaningful contexts allows learners to internalize vocabulary more effectively than through decontextualized learning.

The combination of audio and visual stimuli in subtitled movies provides multisensory input that reinforces language acquisition, as described in Sajida and Vijaya 's (2022) reexamination of Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis. Participant 4 noted, *"When you watch a movie, you can hear the pronunciation of the words. So, by looking at the subtitles you can see how the words are spelled."* This integration of pronunciation, spelling, and contextual usage creates a comprehensive learning experience that addresses multiple aspects of language proficiency simultaneously. The process exemplifies how subtitled movies facilitate what Hiver et al. (2021) identify as the interconnected nature of language acquisition factors, including cognitive abilities and learning strategies.

Comfortable and Supportive Learning Material

Half of the participants characterized subtitled movies as comfortable and supportive learning materials. This perception aligns with the principle of lowering the affective filter, as conceptualized by Sajida and Vijaya (2023). By creating a relaxed learning environment, subtitled movies reduce anxiety—one of the three factors that can raise the affective filter and impede language acquisition. Participant 7 highlighted this advantage:

"Especially those who have who do not have the privilege to learn the language... you won't feel overwhelmed watching the movie because I think subtitles provide little support, a bit of support for the viewers."

The *"comfortable"* nature of learning through subtitled movies directly correlates with the enjoyment factor identified by Papi et al. (2019) as one of the three key elements of motivation. As Participant 11 observed, *"Instead of learning because we don't realize the process happening... it feels natural. It doesn't feel like I'm being forced to watch the movies to learn."* This implicit learning process exemplifies what Wang et al. (2024) describe as the intricate relationship between emotional states and language acquisition, where positive emotional experiences facilitate more effective learning outcomes.

Moreover, the finding that subtitled movies support learners with hearing difficulties reinforces Seven (2020) emphasizes on the need for adaptive approaches to motivation in diverse learning contexts. By accommodating various learning needs, subtitled movies promote inclusive language acquisition opportunities, which can positively influence learners' self-perception—a critical factor in language learning motivation, as articulated by Hashim and Aziz (2022).

Limitations of Subtitled Movies as Learning Materials

Despite the positive perceptions, participants expressed important caveats regarding the role of subtitled movies in language learning. Several participants, including Participants 1, 5, and 12, emphasized that subtitled movies should function as supplementary rather than primary learning materials. This perspective reflects a nuanced understanding of language acquisition that aligns with Noyan and Asik's (2024) finding that adult learners benefit most from a combination of instructional approaches rather than a single method. The concern that learners might focus on content enjoyment rather than language acquisition highlights the importance of intentionality in the learning process, as emphasized by Eva et al. (2023) in their definition of language learning strategies. Without deliberate attention to language elements, the potential benefits of subtitled movies may not be fully realized. This limitation underscores Teng's (2022) assertion that effective language learning strategies require goal-setting and resource mobilization—processes that may need explicit guidance when using entertainment media for educational purposes.

The participants' emphasis on subtitle quality further demonstrates their sophisticated understanding of effective learning materials. As Participant 7 stated, *"it's also our responsibility to actually check the accuracy of this subtitle because sometimes it's not translated very accurately."* This concern echoes Teng's (2023) finding that second language learners benefit from individualized strategies that help them manage their learning environment—including the critical evaluation of learning resources.

Enhancement of Motivation in Language Learning

Eight participants reported that subtitled movies enhance motivation in language learning, a finding that directly connects to Al-Hoorie and MacIntyre's (2020) expanded understanding of motivation in language acquisition. The enjoyment factor of watching movies creates what Csizér (2020) would classify as integrative motivation—learning driven by personal interest rather than external requirements. As one participant noted, subtitled movies are inherently enjoyable, and *"people are usually motivated to do fun things."* This observation perfectly illustrates Busse's (2020) emphasis on positive attitudes as crucial elements in sustained language learning efforts.

Participant 2's comment about feeling *"relief...because I won't miss out on the movies"* demonstrates how subtitled movies can reduce anxiety—one of the three factors in Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis as reexamined by Sajida and Vijaya (2023). By lowering anxiety, subtitled movies create optimal conditions for language acquisition according to this theoretical framework. The combination of reduced anxiety and increased enjoyment exemplifies the ideal emotional state for language learning described by Wang et al. (2024), where positive emotions enhance memory organization and decision-making in the learning process.

Research Question 2: What factors influence the learning motivation of postgraduate students in improving their English language?

The findings reveal that postgraduate students' motivation for improving their English language proficiency stems from both integrative (intrinsic) and instrumental (extrinsic) orientations. This dual motivational framework challenges Gardner's (1985) assertion that integrative orientation is more strongly correlated with successful second language acquisition. Instead, the current findings align more closely with Mendoza and Phung's (2019) critique of the traditional integrative-instrumental dichotomy, suggesting that motivation for language learning is more complex and multifaceted than previously theorized.

The intrinsic motivations identified by participants—desire for confidence in English speaking, understanding complex topics, and genuine interest in the language—exemplify what Shan (2024) describe as integrative orientation. These motivations reflect personal development goals rather than external pressures. Conversely, extrinsic motivations—career requirements and peer pressure—represent the instrumental orientation discussed by Lamb et al. (2023) in their contemporary examination of Gardner's socio-educational model.

The finding that participants succeeded in language learning regardless of whether their primary motivation was integrative or instrumental supports Hashim and Aziz (2022) perspective on the importance of self-perception in language acquisition. When learners perceive themselves as capable and motivated—regardless of the source of that motivation—they engage more effectively with learning materials and strategies. This observation also aligns with Seven (2020) concept of adaptive motivation, which emphasizes

the importance of understanding motivational dynamics in specific learning contexts rather than applying rigid categorical frameworks.

As evidenced by statements from Participants 3, 9, and 12, academic and career requirements constitute significant motivational factors for these postgraduate students. Participant 12 explicitly noted, *"I got motivation to speak or to learn English more because because of the needs of education and also the needs of my career."* This motivational pattern reflects what Papi et al. (2019) identify as *"willingness"* and *"eagerness"*—two of the three key elements in their motivational framework. The necessity of English proficiency for academic and professional success creates both a desire to reach language goals (willingness) and a dedication to the learning process (eagerness).

Furthermore, participants' recognition that motivation is *"a force that pushes the learners to improve their English language"* echoes Busse's (2020) emphasis on the role of attitudes in language acquisition. When learners acknowledge the importance of motivation, they develop a meta-awareness of their learning process that can enhance their commitment to improvement. This awareness exemplifies the self-regulated learning approach advocated by Eva et al. (2023), where learners take responsibility for their progress rather than relying solely on external structures or requirements.

The participants' assertion that motivation is *"the key to acquiring a second language"* because *"acquiring a language can be hard"* demonstrates their understanding of the challenges inherent in adult language learning. This perspective aligns with Hiver et al.'s (2021) identification of motivation as a critical factor in successful SLA, particularly for adult learners who must overcome potential age-related challenges as discussed by Noyan and Asik (2024).

Hence, the findings regarding both research questions reveal a sophisticated understanding of language learning processes among postgraduate students. Their perceptions of subtitled movies as valuable but supplementary learning tools, combined with their recognition of diverse motivational factors, demonstrate an awareness of the complex interplay between learning strategies, motivation, and successful language acquisition. These insights offer valuable guidance for designing effective language learning experiences that leverage both technological resources like subtitled movies and the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that drive adult learners.

Conclusion

To conclude, the study has demonstrated that movies with subtitles can greatly improve the English language proficiency of postgraduate students and their learning motivation. Using subtitled movies as learning material provides an engaging and interactive medium for language learning, creating a more immersive and contextual learning environment. This study has successfully answered two research questions that were proposed in this study. The findings show that postgraduate students perceive subtitled movies to be effective as they provide

many advantages in improving their language skills, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, reading and writing skills, and overall comprehension of the English language. Additionally, it has been discovered that watching movies with subtitles increases students' motivation to learn a second language, making learning more enjoyable and less boring. This can be seen that using subtitled movies in language learning corresponds to Gardner's theory of motivation and positive attitudes leading to success in second language acquisition. Although subtitled movies can be valuable learning materials, it is important to note that they cannot replace the traditional learning method in the classroom. To become proficient in a language, learners will need to master all four language skills, which are reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Therefore, merely relying on subtitled movies can hinder the improvement of some language skills, especially listening skills which is crucial components of language learning (Lee & Park, 2017; Hasan, 2022).

Moreover, the implications of this study can influence both pedagogical methods and language education policy in the future by incorporating subtitled movies in language learning. Firstly, the positive perceptions of postgraduate students about using subtitled movies to improve English language and learning motivation highlight how important it is for educators to incorporate multimedia materials into their lesson plans. This not only diversifies the language learning materials but also accommodates the varied learning styles and preferences of students. Secondly, this paper emphasizes how using movies with subtitles can motivate students to learn a second language, which in turn promotes a more learner-centered approach. This may result in increased student engagement, higher retentiveness, and ultimately improved language learning inputs. Next, the findings of this study could influence curriculum designers and policymakers to integrate subtitled movies as one of the activities in the language learning curriculum. This will require the development of guidelines for the effective use of movies with subtitles in language classrooms, including the selection of appropriate movies for learning, the incorporation of subtitled movies with other learning activities, and the assessment of learning inputs gained from watching the subtitled movies. Finally, this study may create opportunities for further research. The effectiveness of subtitled movies can be explored in many different settings, such as using subtitled movies for different educational levels or with different or specific genres of subtitled movies. This would contribute to a more thorough understanding of the use of subtitled movies in language learning. All in all, this study underscores the potential of subtitled movies as useful learning material in language learning and promotes wider use of them in teaching practices. Therefore, further research regarding this is necessary to fully understand and optimize the benefits of subtitled movies.

Lastly, some recommendations from the study can be proposed based on the findings. As stated previously, it is strongly recommended that subtitled movies be incorporated into the language curriculum, as they offer vast advantages, from improving language skills to enhancing motivation for learners. In addition, it is suggested that educators be trained in how to use subtitled movies effectively as learning material so that they will be well-equipped and prepared to maximize the benefits of subtitled movies for language learning.

In terms of recommendations for future research, future research may use a different research design, especially a mixed method that includes both surveys and interviews, to obtain an in-depth comprehension of postgraduate students' perceptions of the use of subtitled movies and their learning motivation. Besides, future research may use larger samples for this study to collect sufficient and more precise data. In this way, the findings will be more accurate and adequate to analyze. Next, future research may focus on students who watch the same genres of subtitled movies to get accurate results on how the use of subtitled movies helps to improve language learning. Future research may also be conducted on how subtitled movies help in learning not just in language but also in other subjects like history, culture, or science, so that subtitled movies can also be implemented in other fields of education. Additionally, another recommendation is to use different contexts and settings for this study to add more findings and results as references. This could include studies focusing on different age groups, proficiency levels, and languages. For example, language students from undergraduate studies, language students from other universities, or language students from different courses. Last but not least, future research could also investigate the impact of different genres of subtitled movies on language learning and motivation. This research would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the role of subtitled movies in language areas.

Author contributions

Conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, and initial draft preparation by Raihannah Khairyn Kamaruddin; supervision, writing, review, and editing by Aini Faridah Azizul Hassan. All authors have reviewed and approved the manuscript for publication.

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Data availability statement

The data supporting this study's findings are available on request from the corresponding author.

Conflicts of interest

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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Vocabulary Teaching in Malaysian Primary Schools: A Study on Teacher Strategies and Practices

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Abstract

Vocabulary instruction plays a crucial role in English language learning, yet there is limited research on how Malaysian ESL primary school teachers approach vocabulary teaching. This study examines the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) used by Malaysian teachers, focusing on survey-based quantitative data. A total of 134 ESL primary school teachers participated in a structured survey assessing the frequency of different VLS based on Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy. Findings indicate that social and memory strategies are the most commonly used, while metacognitive strategies are the least adopted. The results highlight the need for targeted professional development to equip teachers with diverse, effective vocabulary instruction methods.

Keywords: *Vocabulary Learning Strategies, Vocabulary Instruction, Malaysian ESL Primary School, Vocabulary Approach*

Introduction

Researchers have been looking Vocabulary is a fundamental component of second language acquisition, playing a pivotal role in communication and comprehension. For ESL learners, a strong vocabulary foundation facilitates reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, ultimately contributing to academic and professional success. In Malaysia, English is taught as a second language, and vocabulary instruction is an essential aspect of language learning. However, many studies had highlighted that it has been underemphasized in Malaysian primary ESL classrooms. It is found that teachers often prioritize grammar, reading, writing and other language skills while direct vocabulary teaching is frequently overlooked (Lim et al., 2023, Seyapalan et. al., 2023). Lim et al. (2023) observed that teachers in rural primary school in East Malaysia prioritized communicative elements over explicit vocabulary instruction due to time constraints and lack of resources. Similarly, Seyapalan et. al. (2023) found that vocabulary is often treated incidentally rather than through deliberate methods.

The issue however lies in the fact that limited or incidental approach currently being practiced in many Malaysian primary ESL classrooms is insufficient for effective vocabulary acquisition. Schmitt (1997) argues that successful vocabulary instruction requires a combination of both explicit and incidental learning

approaches whereby each one serves a unique role in helping learners acquire, retain and use new words meaningfully. While explicit instruction helps with establishing initial word knowledge, incidental exposure helps to reinforce and deepen that knowledge over time or vice versa (Schmitt, 1997).

Schmitt defines explicit vocabulary instruction as the approach of direct teaching of word meanings, forms and usage through targeted activities such as word lists, definitions and sentence creation. It is an effective method in introducing high-frequency words and helping learners form strong initial connections between word form and meaning. In contrast, incidental learning is described as the process in which learners encounter new vocabulary naturally during language use such as through reading stories and listening to spoken English. However, Schmitt emphasizes that incidental must be paired as it often requires multiple exposures for it to be effective as a stand-alone strategy.

While there are many studies that examined vocabulary strategies that learners use to acquire new words such as memory techniques or contextual guessing (Chiew & Ismail, 2021), fewer have explored how teachers facilitate vocabulary growth in the classroom. This gap is evident especially when it comes to primary level in Malaysia where vocabulary teaching is under explored. As highlighted by Schmitt (1997), effective vocabulary teaching requires a balance of incidental exposure and explicit instruction hence, a study that focuses on understanding the approaches that teachers in Malaysian ESL primary classrooms take when it comes to vocabulary instruction is crucial.

Thus, this present study serves as an investigation that focuses on identifying teachers' classroom practices when it comes to teaching vocabulary to see whether teachers tend to favor incidental vocabulary exposure or explicit vocabulary instruction. By documenting how vocabulary is currently being taught, this study aims to highlight areas of strength and potential improvements in language teaching. In that regard, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the most commonly used Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) among Malaysian primary school ESL teachers?
2. What are the least used VLS among Malaysian primary school ESL teachers?

Literature Review

Vocabulary is widely regarded as a fundamental component in language acquisition as stated by Wilkins (1972), "without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed". Studies have repeatedly shown that there is a positive correlation between learner's vocabulary size and their overall language proficiency (Vu & Michel, 2021). However, acquiring vocabulary is a complex process as it is not just memorising a word meaning. It involves knowing the word form, pronunciation, its meaning and its association with other words (Ghalebi et al., 2020).

In second language acquisition research, Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) have been widely explored. Griffiths (2008) defines VLS as actions that learners deliberately select in order to manage their own language learning. Although vocabulary can be acquired incidentally through exposure, certain words require explicit instruction (Nation, 2001). Research suggests that effective vocabulary acquisition involves a combination of incidental and deliberate teaching (Schmitt, 2008; Nation, 2013). Repetition and frequent engagement with vocabulary have also been shown to enhance long-term retention. For example, Webb (2007) found that repeated interactions with new words significantly improved learners' ability to recall and use vocabulary proficiently. Nation (2013) similarly emphasized that auditory and repetitive exposure reinforces vocabulary learning, contributing to durable memory of lexical items. However, as classroom instruction alone cannot possibly cover the large number of words required for language proficiency, learners are expected to take responsibility for expanding their vocabulary independently (Nation, 2001).

Recent research has also demonstrated that Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) contribute significantly to various aspects of language learning including vocabulary size, reading comprehension and overall language proficiency. Alahmadi and Foltz (2020) found that learners with larger vocabulary sizes tend to employ VLS more frequently, particularly for students with smaller vocabulary sizes. Similarly, Ghalebi et al. (2021) emphasized the role of metacognitive and memory strategies in promoting vocabulary retention while Teng and Zhang (2021) further reported that effective use of VLS improves vocabulary learning as well as enhances learner's self-efficacy and motivation. In addition, Schmitt (2019) asserts that contextual learning deepens understanding and enhances learners' ability to use words appropriately across situations. Chamidah (2021) supports this view, noting that multimedia input such as songs and movies offers authentic contexts where vocabulary is reinforced naturally, promoting acquisition without reliance on structured instructional techniques. This highlights the importance of incorporating VLS into language instruction to support vocabulary acquisition.

This study focuses on Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) as categorised in Schmitt's Taxonomy of VLS (1997). Notably, Schmitt's Taxonomy was developed from the broader framework of language learning strategies introduced by Oxford in 1990. Oxford's taxonomy of language learning strategies, introduced in 1990, is widely recognized as a comprehensive framework for understanding the techniques learners use to acquire a second or foreign language. Oxford (1990) defined language learning strategies as the specific actions learners take to facilitate successful language acquisition.

Oxford's (1990) Taxonomy of Language Learning Strategies classifies strategies into two primary categories: Direct Strategies and Indirect Strategies. Each category comprises specific subcategories that address various aspects of language learning. According to Oxford, Direct Strategies are those that involve active engagement with the target language, enabling learners to interact directly with vocabulary, grammar, and other language components to improve their comprehension and communication skills. Oxford's Indi-

rect Strategies include memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies like the use of gestures.

On the other hand, Oxford defined Indirect Strategies as strategies that support the language learning process by creating a favorable environment and helping learners organize, manage, and enhance their learning experience. This category includes metacognitive strategies, affective strategies like self-reward and social strategies that focus on learning through interaction.

Building on Oxford's classification, Schmitt (1997) developed a more detailed taxonomy specifically for Vocabulary Learning Strategies. Schmitt divided Vocabulary Learning Strategies into two main types: Discovery Strategies and Consolidation Strategies. Discovery strategies are techniques learners use to uncover the meaning of a new word, such as determination and social strategies. For instance, learners may analyse word parts or context to deduce meaning independently or seek assistance from teachers or peers. Once learners encounter a word, consolidation strategies help them reinforce and retain its meaning through repetition, association, and use in different contexts. These include social, memory, cognitive, and metacognitive strategies. Figure 2.1 shows the overview of Schmitt's Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies.

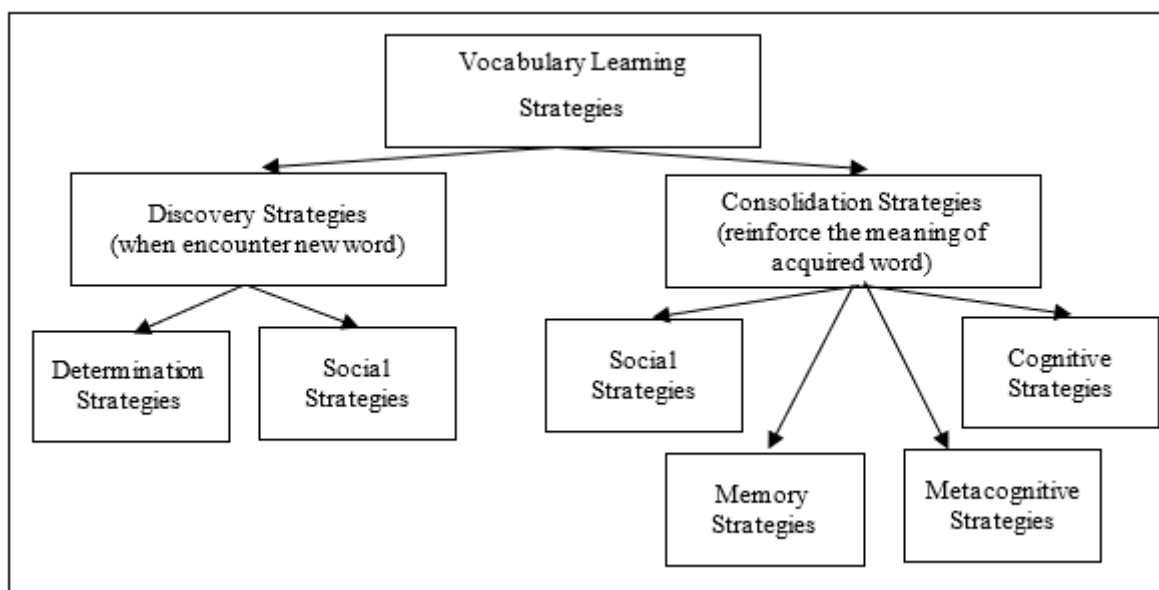


Figure 1: Overview of Schmitt's Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies

Schmitt (1997) outlined two strategies that he classified as discovery strategies which are Determination and Social Strategies. Determination Strategies are when learners figure out the meaning of a word without asking help from others. These include the use of dictionary, guessing through context as well as analysis of word parts. Social Strategies, on the other hand, involve the help from others when learners want to find the meaning for a certain word. These strategies include asking teachers or friends for L1 translation,

asking for a synonym or for a definition of a word through paraphrasing as well as how to use the new word in a sentence (Schmitt, 1997). Table 1 shows the sub-strategies that fall under Schmitt's Discovery Strategies.

Table 1: Schmitt's Discovery Strategies

Strategy	Description
Determination (DET)	Analyse part of speech
Determination (DET)	Analyse affixes and roots
Determination (DET)	Check L1 cognate
Determination (DET)	Analyse pictures / gestures
Determination (DET)	Guessing from context
Determination (DET)	Bilingual dictionary
Determination (DET)	Monolingual dictionary
Determination (DET)	Word list
Determination (DET)	Flashcard
Social (SOC)	Ask teacher for L1 translation
Social (SOC)	Ask teacher to paraphrase or provide synonym of new word
Social (SOC)	Ask teacher for sentence containing new word
Social (SOC)	Ask classmates for meaning
Social (SOC)	Discover meaning through group work activity

On the other hand, Schmitt divided Consolidation Strategies into four sub-categories which are Social, Memory, Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies. Social Strategies involve practicing vocabulary in group work or through interaction with other people. Memory Strategies is the use of mnemonics in retaining vocabulary. It can be relating the words with previously learned knowledge through imagery or grouping. Cognitive Strategies involve the use of mechanical means such as keeping vocabulary notebooks or learning vocabulary through repetition while Metacognitive Strategies refers to the learners making decision in planning and monitoring their own vocabulary learning including evaluating the best way to learn as well as testing themselves. Table 2 shows the sub-strategies that fall under Schmitt's Consolidation Strategies.

Table 2: Schmitt's Consolidation Strategies

Strategy	Description
Social (SOC)	Study and practice meaning in a group

Social (SOC)	Teacher checks students' flash cards or word lists for accuracy
Social (SOC)	Interact with native speakers
Memory (MEM)	Use keyword method
Memory (MEM)	Remember affixes and suffixes
Memory (MEM)	Remember part of speech
Memory (MEM)	Study word with a pictorial representation of its meaning
Memory (MEM)	Associate word meaning with picture
Memory (MEM)	Connect word to personal experience
Memory (MEM)	Associate the word to its coordinate
Memory (MEM)	Connect the word to its synonym or antonym
Memory (MEM)	Use semantic maps
Memory (MEM)	Use 'scales' for gradable adjectives
Memory (MEM)	Peg method
Memory (MEM)	Loci method
Memory (MEM)	Group words together to study them
Memory (MEM)	Group words together spatially on a page
Memory (MEM)	Use new word in sentence
Memory (MEM)	Group words together within a storyline
Memory (MEM)	Study the spelling of a word
Memory (MEM)	Study the sound of a word
Memory (MEM)	Say new word aloud when studying
Memory (MEM)	Image word form
Memory (MEM)	Underline initial letter of the word
Memory (MEM)	Configuration
Memory (MEM)	Paraphrase the word's meaning
Memory (MEM)	Use cognates in study
Memory (MEM)	Learn the words of an idiom together
Memory (MEM)	Use physical action when learning a word
Memory (MEM)	Use semantic feature grids
Cognitive (COG)	Verbal repetition
Cognitive (COG)	Written repetition
Cognitive (COG)	Word lists

Cognitive (COG)	Flash cards
Cognitive (COG)	Take notes in class
Cognitive (COG)	Use the vocabulary section in textbook
Cognitive (COG)	Listen to tape of word lists
Cognitive (COG)	Put English labels on physical objects
Cognitive (COG)	Keep a vocabulary notebook
Metacognitive (MET)	Use English language media
Metacognitive (MET)	Test oneself with word tests
Metacognitive (MET)	Use spaced word practice
Metacognitive (MET)	Skip or pass new word
Metacognitive (MET)	Continue to study word over time

Schmitt's taxonomy has been widely adopted and validated in various studies, demonstrating its relevance and utility within vocabulary learning. Numerous studies have applied Schmitt's (1997) taxonomy to investigate how learners use VLS across different contexts. Findings show that memory and cognitive strategies are among the most frequently used while metacognitive and social strategies are less commonly applied. For example, Asyiah (2017) found that Indonesian university students relied on repetition and word lists but rarely used metacognitive strategies such as regular vocabulary review. Alahmadi and Foltz (2020) also reported that their findings showed a strong preference for determination strategies such as the use of bilingual dictionaries while social strategies like asking peers or teachers were less favoured.

Research also suggests that metacognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring and evaluating own vocabulary learning are time consuming and demanding which may discourage teachers and learners from adopting them (Li & Yun, 2022). This is in line with Tang, Noordin and Ismail (2024) that found although metacognitive strategies significantly improved reading comprehension, its implementation demanded considerable effort and time. Similarly, Huang (2020) and Yusri et al. (2023) noted that the extensive demands of these strategies limit their practical application in everyday teaching contexts. As more deliberate strategies such as metacognitive strategies often require explicit modeling by the teachers, it can be said that without adequate instruction, learners may lack the awareness to employ these strategies independently. As a result, they tend to rely on simpler strategies such as rote memorisation (Asyiah, 2017).

In the Malaysian ESL context, vocabulary instruction is often delivered incidentally, where new words are introduced through reading texts, listening activities or classroom discussions without direct focus or strategic training (Meganathan et al., 2019). While incidental learning contributes to vocabulary development through repeated exposure in meaningful contexts (Nation, 2001), Schmitt (2000) emphasized that

combination of incidental and explicit vocabulary instruction is essential for effective vocabulary acquisition. He argued that while learners certainly can acquire vocabulary incidentally, explicit instruction is necessary for retaining complex or less frequent words.

Although learners play a central role in vocabulary development, it is important to acknowledge that teachers serve as the primary facilitators of vocabulary learning in the classroom. In Malaysia, research pertaining how teachers apply or promote VLS in their instructional practices are limited as majority of existing studies tend to focus on learner's strategy use and preferences (Jaikrishnan & Ismail, 2021). However, without explicit modeling by teachers, learners may struggle to adopt more effective strategies independently (Ueno & Takeuchi, 2023). Therefore, it is essential that we understand which strategies teachers prefer and actually employ in the Malaysian ESL primary school context to provide insight into the extent to which a strategy is used in vocabulary instruction and whether it aligns with practices that support vocabulary retention and learner autonomy.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) commonly and least frequently used by Malaysian ESL primary school teachers. Quantitative research enables systematic data collection and analysis through structured instruments, allowing for generalisable findings across a broader population (Carliner, 2011). By utilising a questionnaire-based survey, this study aimed to provide statistical insights into the prevalence of various VLS among Malaysian ESL primary school teachers.

Sampling Method

A purposive sampling method was employed to select participants who met predefined criteria relevant to the study objectives. As noted by Etikan et al. (2016), purposive sampling is especially useful when the aim is to obtain detailed insights from individuals who possess particular knowledge or experience pertinent to the study. In this research, the participants were English optionist teachers in Malaysian primary schools who had at least two years of teaching experience. These criteria were established to ensure that the selected participants had sufficient expertise to contribute meaningful perspectives on vocabulary teaching strategies.

Despite the suitability of purposive sampling, its limitation must be acknowledged. As a non-random method, the findings are not generalisable to all Malaysian primary school teachers. However, the selection of participants based on their relevance to study is hoped to provide rich data collection that is valuable in understanding vocabulary teaching practices among Malaysian ESL teachers.

Study Participants

The study targeted English teachers serving in public primary schools across Malaysia. Malaysia's primary education system comprises Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK) and Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (SJK), which include SJK(C) (Mandarin-medium schools) and SJK(T) (Tamil-medium schools). Both school types follow the national curriculum, with English being a core subject.

To recruit participants, they had to meet two inclusion criteria in which they must be English option teachers and must possess at least two years of teaching experience. Despite this approach, recruiting participants proved challenging. Thus, Telegram discussion platforms such as Teacherfiera.com and Ash the Teacher both of which have around 30,000 members were utilized. However, these groups consisted of educators from diverse backgrounds making it difficult to identify who were specifically English option teachers in primary schools. Considerable time and effort were required to filter potential participants who met the inclusion criteria. Nevertheless, these platforms remained a useful source to reach participants.

The sample size for this study was determined using a formula for estimating population proportions (Triola, 2022), given that the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB) Annual Report 2022 reported 18,876 English teachers at C1 level proficiency and above. The sample size calculation was as follows:

Given:

$E = 0.05$ (5% margin of error)

$Z = 1.96$ (for a 95% confidence level)

$P = 0.5$ (for maximum variability)

$N = 18,876$ (population size)

Using the formula:

$$E = Z \times nP(1-P)$$

$$N = P(1-P) \times Z^2 \times (N-1) / (E^2 \times N + P(1-P) \times Z^2)$$

$$n = (0.25 \times 3.8416 \times 18,875) / (0.0025 \times 18,876 + 0.9604)$$

$$n = 18294.6 / 48.1504$$

$$\mathbf{n = 380}$$

While the ideal sample size was calculated to be around 380 based on the overall number of English teachers who obtained C1 CEFR level, the number included both primary and secondary teachers. Due to the difficulty in identifying eligible respondents, the final sample comprised of 134 English option teachers who met all the inclusion criteria.

Research Instrument

A questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. It was developed based on Schmitt's (1997) Taxonomy of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) and consisted of two sections:

- Section A: Collected demographic data, including age range, school type, English-option status, teaching experience, and the grade levels taught.
- Section B: Contained 45 items related to VLS, categorised under Schmitt's taxonomy: Discovery (Determination and Social) and Consolidation (Social, Memory, Cognitive, and Metacognitive). The statements were adapted to reflect strategies used by teachers rather than learners. A five-point Likert scale (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Always) was used to gauge the frequency of each strategy's use.

The breakdown of VLS categories and the number of items in each category are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Number of items based on VLS categories

Strategy Category	Label	Number of Items
Discovery (Determination)	DIS-DET	5
Discovery (Social)	DIS-SOC	5
Consolidation (Social)	CON-SOC	2
Consolidation (Memory)	CON-MEM	17
Consolidation (Cognitive)	CON-COG	9
Consolidation (Metacognitive)	CON-MET	7

Pilot Study

Prior to data collection, a pilot study was conducted with 57 respondents to assess the questionnaire's clarity and reliability. Using SPSS version 26, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated for Section B, which measured the consistency of responses related to VLS. The reliability analysis yielded a high Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.92, indicating strong internal consistency. The pilot study confirmed that the questionnaire items were well-understood, allowing the study to proceed with broader data collection.

Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered via Google Forms and distributed through Telegram channels. Responses were automatically recorded and filtered based on Section A's demographic criteria to ensure alignment with the study's inclusion criteria. After filtering, 134 valid responses were retained for analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using SPSS version 26. To answer the research questions, descriptive statistical analyses were conducted. These included the use of frequency distributions to examine the prevalence of individual VLS as well as the calculation of mean and standard deviation values to assess the central tendency and variability in strategy use among respondents.

In addition, the strategies were categorised according to Schmitt's (1997) Taxonomy, allowing for comparative analysis across different strategy types. Through this, a broader understanding of the patterns of VLS usage among Malaysian ESL primary school teachers was obtained.

Findings

The purpose of this study was to find out the Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) most and least used by ESL primary school teachers in Malaysia through a quantitative approach. This study utilized Schmitt's (1997) Taxonomy which categorised VLS into two main categories; Discovery and Consolidation.

RQ1: What are the Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) least adopted by Malaysian primary school teachers?

Based on the data, the most used category of vocabulary teaching strategies is determined using Oxford's (1990), as cited in Mustapha & Hatta (2018) scoring system:

1.00-2.49 = Low strategy use

2.50-3.49 = Medium strategy use

3.50-5.00 = High strategy use

Table 4: Most Used Category of Vocabulary Teaching Strategies

Category	Strategy	Mean
Discovery	Determination	3.64
Discovery	Social	3.81
Consolidation	Social	3.40
Consolidation	Memory	3.81
Consolidation	Cognitive	3.75
Consolidation	Metacognitive	3.34

Two strategies appeared to be used at a high level which are the Social Strategies (Determination) and Memory Strategies (Consolidation) with both mean value of 3.81 as shown in Table 4.

Social strategies within the Discovery category include teachers translating the meaning of the word in their first language, providing synonym of the word, providing students a sentence containing the word, letting students asking their classmates for meaning and putting students in groups to discover meaning through groupwork. The Social strategies favoured by the teachers are further looked at in Table 5.

Table 5: Discovery-Social Vocabulary Learning Strategies Preferred by Teachers

Strategy	Statement	Mean
DIS-SOC	I translate the meaning of the word in L1	3.63
DIS-SOC	I provide a synonym of the word	3.88
DIS-SOC	I provide my students a sentence containing the new word.	4.09
DIS-SOC	I let my students ask their classmates for meaning	3.80
DIS-SOC	I put my students in groups and let them discover meaning through group work activity	3.66

All five strategies fall within the high strategy use range, with mean scores above 3.50. The highest mean score was "*I provide my students a sentence containing the new word*" indicating a strong preference for contextual learning (mean=4.09). Following closely is the strategy of providing a synonym (mean=3.88), which suggests that teachers tend to offer alternative expressions to help with understanding. Other strategies, such as letting students ask classmates for meaning (mean=3.80) and group work activities (mean=3.66), are also highly favoured, reflecting a collaborative approach to vocabulary learning. Translating the meaning of the word in L1 (mean=3.63) also shows significant use, indicating that teachers see value in using the students' first language to aid understanding.

It is found that Discovery was not the only popular category employed by the teachers. Memory strategies within Consolidation category reported to have the same mean score as Social strategies under Discovery category (mean=3.81). Thus, the sub-strategies under the Consolidation-Memory strategies are also further analysed in Table 6 to find out which specific Memory strategies teachers prefer to employ in their vocabulary teaching. Teachers were asked to rate their use of 17 different Vocabulary Learning Strategies under the Consolidation-Memory category.

Out of the 17 strategies, 12 strategies received mean score of greater than 3.50 which indicated high use of memory strategies in the classroom. The strategies with the highest mean scores, such as asking students to read a word out loud (mean=4.62), focusing on pronunciation (mean=4.45), and asking students to memorise the spelling (mean=4.31), indicate teachers' preference for auditory and repetitive methods in vocabulary acquisition.

Table 6: Consolidation-Memory Vocabulary Teaching Strategies Employed by Teachers

Strategy	Statement	Mean
CON-MEM	I ask my students to match the word with picture representing the word	4.10
CON-MEM	I ask my students to picture the word's meaning. For example, when learning the word kitchen, they picture their mom cooking	3.71
CON-MEM	I ask my students to relate a word to their personal experience. Example; when learning the word celebration, they think of their birthday party / festivals	4.17
CON-MEM	I ask my students to link the word to its related word. Example; banana, think of other fruits, apple	4.13
CON-MEM	I ask my students to pay attention to the word's synonyms or antonyms (Example: pretty / ugly)	3.96
CON-MEM	I ask my students to classify the words in category (Example: Categorize things into furniture)	3.82
CON-MEM	I ask my students to use the new word in a sentence.	3.90
CON-MEM	I ask my students to combine all the words to form a story.	3.15
CON-MEM	I ask my students to memorize the spelling of the word.	4.31
CON-MEM	I focus on teaching my students pronunciation of the new word.	4.45
CON-MEM	I ask my students to read out loud (say the new word aloud when studying)	4.62
CON-MEM	I ask my students to underline the initial letter of the word.	3.07
CON-MEM	I ask my students to remember the roots, prefixes and suffixes of the words.	3.15
CON-MEM	I ask my students to remember the part of speech of the words.	3.32
CON-MEM	I paraphrase the word to my students. Example; housekeeper - a person who looks after the house	3.92
CON-MEM	I teach my students the word in the form of idiom (Spill the bean - teach them the word spill & bean together)	2.90
CON-MEM	I use body movement when teaching my students a word and ask them to repeat the movement.	4.11

Other than that, strategies like linking words to related words (mean=4.13), using body movements (mean=4.11), matching words with pictures (mean=4.10), use new words in sentence (mean=3.90), using synonyms and antonyms (mean=3.96) and classifying words into categories (mean=3.82) may reflect teachers' comprehensive approach in teaching vocabulary in the classroom.

In contrast, strategies with lower mean scores, such as teaching words in idiomatic form (mean=2.90), asking students to underline the initial letter of the word (mean=3.07), and combining all words to form a story (mean=3.15), may be perceived as less direct or more complex.

RQ2: What are the Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) least adopted by Malaysian primary school teachers?

AAAAa. The data from the survey revealed the category of vocabulary teaching strategies least preferred by the respondents as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Least Used Category of Vocabulary Teaching Strategies

Category	Strategy	Mean
Discovery	Determination	3.64
Discovery	Social	3.81
Consolidation	Social	3.40
Consolidation	Memory	3.81
Consolidation	Cognitive	3.75
Consolidation	Metacognitive	3.34

The strategy least favoured by the teachers is the Metacognitive strategy, categorised under Consolidation (Consolidation-Metacognitive), with a mean score of 3.34. Metacognitive strategies involve planning activities such as setting specific goals for learning new vocabulary, identifying resources, and scheduling study time. The sub-strategies within the Metacognitive category assessed in the study are listed in Table 8.

Table 8: Consolidation-Metacognitive Vocabulary Teaching Strategies Employed by Teachers

Strategy	Statement	Mean
CON-MET	I ask my students to listen to English songs in my classroom or at home.	4.21
CON-MET	I ask my students to watch English movies at home.	4.07
CON-MET	I provide my students English story books / magazines to learn vocabulary.	3.6
CON-MET	I give my students tasks to read English novels, short stories at their own time.	3.3
CON-MET	I assign my students to read English newspapers in my classrooms / at home.	3.02
CON-MET	I have scheduled vocabulary tests online using application such as Quizizz and Word Wall to see if my students remember the new words learned.	2.88

CON-MET	I give online task for my students to review the vocabularies they learned using Google Form, Wordwall or any other online application.	2.77
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Among the seven Metacognitive strategies rated by the respondents, only two received mean scores above 4.0. Despite the overall lower preference for the Consolidation-Metacognitive category compared to other categories like Discovery-Social and Consolidation-Memory, some strategies such as listening to English songs (mean=4.21) and watching English movies (mean=4.07) are highly favoured. This reflects teachers' preference for immersive and engaging activities that incorporate multimedia.

In contrast, strategies with lower mean scores, particularly those involving online applications like Quizizz (mean=2.88) and Google Forms (mean=2.77), may indicate teachers' reluctance to adopt digital tools in vocabulary teaching. Similarly, assigning students to read English newspapers (mean=3.02) and novels (mean=3.3) shows a moderate to low level of adoption, potentially due to the challenges in ensuring student compliance and the time-consuming nature of these tasks.

Discussion

The quantitative analysis of Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) employed by teachers in vocabulary instruction revealed three key patterns: a strong reliance on social and memory strategies, a preference for contextual and repetitive learning techniques, and a lower adoption of metacognitive strategies.

Teachers demonstrated a clear preference for social strategies within the Discovery category and memory strategies within the Consolidation category, reflecting a strong inclination toward interactive and associative learning approaches.

Among the social strategies, incorporating new words into example sentences was the most frequently utilized (mean=4.09). The relatively high scores for other social strategies, such as allowing students to seek word meanings from peers (mean=3.80), suggest that collaborative learning is a fundamental part of vocabulary instruction.

Additionally, memory-based techniques also ranked highly, particularly strategies such as reading words aloud (mean=4.62) and focusing on pronunciation (mean=4.45). These findings highlight the role of auditory and repetitive exposure in vocabulary retention, aligning with research indicating that repeated engagement with new vocabulary enhances long-term recall (Nation, 2013).

Findings further indicate a strong tendency toward contextual and repetitive learning. Teachers placed significant emphasis on presenting new vocabulary within meaningful contexts, as seen in the high rating for using example sentences (mean=4.09). This aligns with Schmitt (2019), who asserts that learning words in context strengthens understanding and facilitates appropriate usage in different scenarios.

Similarly, the preference for repetition-based memory strategies such as requiring students to read words aloud and memorise spellings highlight teachers' belief in reinforcement as a means to solidify vocabulary knowledge. Webb (2007) supports this approach, emphasising that frequent exposure to vocabulary significantly enhances recall and long-term retention. His study found that repeated interactions with new words improve learners' ability to use them proficiently.

Unlike social and memory strategies, metacognitive strategies were employed less frequently (mean=3.34) for the Consolidation-Metacognitive category. These strategies, which involve structured learning processes such as planning, organising, and self-monitoring, are often considered time-intensive and complex to implement (Li & Yuan, 2022). Research indicates that while metacognitive strategies promote self-regulated learning, their extensive instructional demands may explain why they are not as widely adopted in vocabulary instruction (Tang, Noordin & Ismail, 2024; Huang, 2020; Yusri et al., 2023).

Teachers showed particularly low engagement with metacognitive tools such as Quizizz (mean=2.88) and Google Forms (mean=2.77), suggesting limited integration of digital platforms for vocabulary learning. This hesitancy may stem from the additional time required to familiarise students with these tools and incorporate them effectively into lesson plans. Tang, Noordin and Ismail (2024) found that although metacognitive strategies significantly enhanced reading comprehension, their implementation required considerable effort and instructional time.

However, not all metacognitive strategies were underutilized. Two strategies which are listening to English songs (mean= 4.21) and watching English movies (mean= 4.07) were highly favored. This preference likely stems from their contextual nature, making them more accessible and engaging for students. Chamidah (2021) notes that songs and movies expose learners to authentic language use, reinforcing vocabulary through real-life contexts rather than structured instructional activities.

Overall, the findings from this study suggest that teachers in Malaysian primary ESL classrooms tend to prefer strategies that are less time-consuming and more traditional in nature such as reading words aloud and incorporating vocabulary into example sentences. These practices which fall under Schmitt's (1997) Discovery Strategies are typically employed when learners first encounter new words. They reflect an emphasis on incidental learning where vocabulary is acquired through contextual exposure rather than through structured instructional processes.

In contrast, strategies categorised under Schmitt's (1997) Consolidation Strategies particularly metacognitive strategies were less frequently used. These include techniques such as planning, self-monitoring and evaluating learning which are actions that support vocabulary retention by encouraging learners to take ownership of their progress. While these strategies are known to promote long-term retention and learner autonomy, their implementation is often perceived as demanding in terms of time and instructional effort (Li &

Yuan, 2022; Tang, Noordin & Ismail, 2024)). This perception may explain why teachers tend to avoid integrating them into their classroom instruction.

Schmitt (2008) emphasized that a combination of incidental and explicit instruction is essential for effective vocabulary acquisition. In his framework, Discovery Strategies correspond more closely to incidental learning whereas Consolidation Strategies align with explicit instruction aimed at reinforcing vocabulary through deliberate practice. However, the findings from this study show a stronger teacher preference for incidental approaches with limited integration of explicit strategies. This imbalance highlights a potential shortcoming in current classroom practices, particularly in equipping learners with the tools for long-term vocabulary development.

Conclusion

This study which set out to explore the Vocabulary Learning Strategies (VLS) employed by Malaysian ESL primary school teachers revealed a predominant reliance on social and memory strategies that involved repetition and peer interaction. These strategies, classified under Schmitt's Discovery category indicate a strong inclination towards incidental learning approaches where vocabulary is introduced through contextual exposure and repeated practice. However, strategies that involve deliberate instruction and learner autonomy namely metacognitive strategies grouped under Schmitt's Consolidation category were notably underutilized despite their recognized benefits for vocabulary retention and long-term mastery.

Schmitt (2008) emphasized the need for a balance between incidental learning and explicit instruction. While teachers in this study clearly favor the former, the findings suggest an insufficient emphasis on explicit instruction. This imbalance may hinder students' ability to retain and independently manage new vocabulary which is crucial for achieving language proficiency over time.

It also raises a question whether the minimal use of Consolidation Strategies reflect teachers' lack of adequacy and preparedness to teach and model these more demanding strategies. If yes, then this points to a clear need for targeted professional development. By equipping teachers with knowledge and tools to implement explicit strategies such as metacognitive strategies, vocabulary instruction can evolve beyond surface-level exposure. Only then can learners be supported in developing autonomy over their vocabulary learning. In light of these findings, it is recommended that teacher training and professional development initiatives incorporate modules that focus on strategy-based vocabulary instruction.

Author contributions

Conceptualisation, S. N. B. M. T. and N. F. M. R.; methodology, S. N. B. M. T.; writing—original draft preparation, S. N. B. M. T.; writing—review and editing, N. F. M. R and M. R. M.; All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data availability statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available upon request from the corresponding author.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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