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Contents

DIFFICULTIES IN THE ACQUISITION AND USE OF ENGLISH ARTICLES AMONG ADULT PASHTO LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The acquisition of the English articles is one of the most difficult areas for the second language learners particularly when there are no articles in the first language of the learners. The purpose of this study is to investigate the difficulties in acquisition and use of the English articles. The study aims at identifying the errors the EFL learners make in using the English articles. Two theoretical approaches regarding noun classification for articles choice were adopted in this study. The data were collected in the form of a gap-fill task from 75 adult Pashto learners of English. The results showed the students used the definite article 'the' and the indefinite article 'a/an' more often than the zero article Ø. In noun types, a few subjects made errors in using articles before count nouns. In the noun phrase environments, the lowest error rate was in referential indefinite while the highest error rate was in generics. The reasons for difficulties in acquiring and using the English articles were found to be mainly the identification of noun types, NPs environments, and language transfer.

Keywords: Pashto language, articles, nouns, noun types, noun phrase, noun phrase environments.

Introduction

It has been generally established that it does not matter whether it is English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) environment, it has been observed that the English articles are very difficult even for the ESL or EFL learners to acquire and use. The acquisition and the use of the English articles become even more arduous task especially when there are no articles in the first languages (L1) of the learners (Hasbún, 2009). The English article system is a sort of a touch stone and provides a window into the native speakers' competence. Due to the expertise and automaticity with which the native speakers use articles, they are usually unaware of the difficulties in the English article system. Hewson (2017) has termed the English article system a "psycho-mechanism" (p. 132). According to which the native speakers use articles accurately but actually they are unaware of the use. They do not apply any formal rules for the articles. They automatically use them without being conscious as to how they are being used.

Even though the system of the English articles is difficult to learn but formal teaching of the English articles can positively influence on the acquisition of the English articles (Master, 1997). Therefore, many teachers try their best to provide and teach rules for the use of articles.

The English Articles

The English article system consists of three articles: (1) the definite article, i.e. 'The', (2) the indefinite article, i.e. 'a/an', and (3) the zero article, i.e. Φ. The definite article 'the' is used to show definite aspect of an NP. According to Bickerton (1981), an entity is definite provided if the hearer knows about it, unique in a given context or in the universe or usually known as a class that exists in the real world. The function of 'the' is to denote or to show that both the speaker and the hearer know and identify the entity referred to.

As stipulated by Master (1997), the indefinite article 'a' makes an entity countable. Hence, it often comes before singular count nouns. In addition, it is used to signal a generic noun, when it represents a class. It also precedes mass nouns in a special context. The indefinite article is realized as a before words beginning with consonantal sounds and as 'an' used before words beginning with vowel sounds.

Zero article means when there is a void or no article in front of a noun phrase. All kinds of nouns take the definite article the with the exception of singular proper noun, but the indefinite articles (a/an) and the zero articles (Φ) are bound by nominal features: (1) countability (whether a noun is count or non-count) and (2) number(whether a noun is singular or plural).

It is important to note that the decision of what nouns are countable and what nouns are not countable is by no means universal. For example, in Pashto, if someone advises you several times, you say, "He gave me advices." The confusion occurs due to cross-linguistic variation in countability of nouns. In Pashto, 'advice' (*Naseehat)* is count noun and it has its plural form (*Naseehatuna)* which corresponds to 'advices'. But in English, you can't say, "advices", but rather you would say, "He gave me advice."

Theoretical Background

The study of the acquisition and the use of the English articles by non-native speakers has been conducted from the perspective of noun classification (Celce-Murcia & Larsen-Freeman, 1999; Hawkins, 2001; Master, 1990), and noun phrase environments (Bickerton, 1981; Huebner, 1983; Ionin, Ko, & Wexler, 2004), and L1 transfer (Bataineh, 2005; Crompton, 2011).

Bickerton's (1981) semantic wheel approach for the reference of noun phrase makes the first appearance which is distinguished by the semantic features, [±Specific Referent (±SR)] and [±Assumed Known to the Hearer (±HK)]. His semantic model has been used by the later studies (Huebner, 1983; Master, 1987; Parrish 1987; Tarone & Parrish, 1988; Thomas, 1989; Young 1996).

Noun phrase (NP) environments approach.

The research about the acquisition of articles and the identification of the environments for placing the article before an NP go together. In this regard Huebner's (1983) categorization has been a richer source for the discussion of English noun phrase environments. Huebner's model was itself based on Bickerton (1981). Huebner categorized noun phrase (NP) environments into four types which facilitated the decisions as to which article should be used in which environment:

1. Generic or non-referential definite [1][-SR, +HK]: An NP which refers to a class or a category or a noun phrase (NP) that points to a non-specific entity which the hearer knows, e.g. <u>The cat</u> is a feline animal.
2. Referential definite [+SR, +HK]: A noun phrase that points to an entity which is not only specific but also the hearer knows about it, e.g. He is <u>the president</u> of <u>the committee.</u>
3 .Referential indefinite [+SR, -HK]: A noun phrase that points to a specific entity, which the hearer does not know, e.g. My son brought <u>a rabbit</u>.
4. Non-referential indefinite [-SR, -HK]: An NP that refers to a referent which is neither specific nor known to the hearer, e.g. We need to write an essay.

Besides, these four contexts idiomatic expressions were classified by Butler (2002) and Thomas (1989) as context 5.

Noun classification approach.

Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) considered the categorization of the nouns as an important factor for choosing the accurate article. The appropriate article decisions before nouns are dependent on classifications of common versus proper, count versus non-count, and singular versus plural. The concept of noun classification and noun phrase environments presents a special difficulty for the learners for whom English is a second language.

[1] The abbreviations in the notations are +SR=Specific Reference, -SR=Non-specific Reference, +HK=Known to the Hearer, -HK=Unknown to the Hearer. They are found in different combinations according to the contexts.

The Study

There is a large number of research studies conducted on the acquisition of English articles by the learners of English. However, very limited study has been conducted about acquisition and use of the English articles by the Pashto (L1) learners of English (L2). Although the Pashto language does not have an articles system like that of English, yet definiteness and indefiniteness to some extent are conveyed through the linguistic markers such as demonstratives or indefinite numerals. The Pashto language has no article system. The articles are assumed either to be in-built in the noun phrase or is represented by indefinite numeral such as /yow/ (one), or by the demonstrative pronouns" (Raverty, 1860).

In Pashto, the demonstratives such as /da/ (this), hagha (that), /dwi/ (these) and haghwi (those) are used for referring to someone or something about which the speaker and the listener know. Therefore, the demonstratives are used for the features [+referential, +definite]; while the numeral indefinite /yaw/ (one) is used for [+referential, -indefinite], i.e. generic nouns. Demonstratives, in Pashto, may be equated in function to the definite article (the) in English. The study, therefore, investigates acquisition and use of the English articles based on noun types on one hand, and the different noun phrase environments. On the other hand, in order to address the issue and provide greater insight on use of the English articles by adult Pashto (L1) learners.

It is anticipated that this study will provide a more complete account on acquisition and use of English articles in the scenario of the actual difficulties in article choice for the Pashto learners (L1) of English (L2) and other comparable EFL learners. The study looks into the matter and identifies the types and the loci (in noun types or in noun phrase environments) of errors made by the adult Pashto (L1) speakers of English (L2) in using the English articles. The main research question of this study is "What, where and why do the adult Pashto learners of English make errors while using English articles in the contexts of noun types and noun phrase environments?".

For the research question, it is predicted that in noun types, the learners will make few errors in the count nouns, but they are liable to make errors in using the articles before the non-count nouns, abstract nouns and proper nouns because of their L1 transfer effect. The count nouns are marked in Pashto for their definiteness and indefiniteness with demonstratives and indefinite numerals. Therefore, where the demonstratives and indefinite numerals in Pashto match with the English articles, then the decision of using articles is easy for them. In cases of non-count, abstract and proper nouns, the problem lies with the identification of a noun as to whether it is singular or plural or whether it is definite or indefinite. This mismatch between the nature of nouns in English and Pashto is being made a base for the prediction that the adult Pashto learners of English will make errors in the choice of articles before the nouns concerned.

As far as the noun phrases environments are concerned, it is anticipated that the learners will make few errors in using articles in referential definite contexts [+SR, +HK] because the rules for these contexts are usually taught in schools. In remaining four contexts, i.e. generic contexts [-SR, +HK], referential indefinites [+SR,

-HK], non-referential indefinites [-SR, -HK] and Idiomatic expressions, they are liable to make errors by taking one context for another.

Methodology

The design of the study was a cross-sectional one and it utilized quantitative method to examine the acquisition and use of English articles by the adult Pashto (L1) speakers. The data were collected from a sample of 75 randomly selected adult regular students. The subjects were adult native speakers of Yousafzai dialect of Pashto (L1) from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province (KPK) of Pakistan. They ranged in age from 13 to 24 and none of them had ever been to English speaking country. They were the students of college (Higher Secondary) and University (Tertiary Education). They had been learning English formally in schools since they were five years old. They did not have the opportunity for learning English outside the classrooms. The rationale behind opting for the adult learners is that the linguistic and semantic differences between Pashto and English make a demand on Pashto learners to make a new association between articles (or other linguistic devices) and (in)definiteness. It is in line with the idea of Ellis (2005) that children learn languages implicitly, whereas adults must consciously use explicit strategies to learn a second language.

Data were collected in the form of a 'Gap-fill task'. It was adopted from Master (1994). Master's test is considered a genuine tool for the study for two reasons. Firstly, the test seems to cover almost the entire range of English articles use. Secondly, it is designed to test the English articles use for the non-native speakers of English. Thus, it is also appropriate for the adult Pashto (L1) learners of English (L2). The test (task) consisted of five sections. Each section represented an environment for the noun phrases (NPs) on one hand and the noun types on other hand. A test of the same format (Elicitation task) was designed by Benjamin White (2009) in which there were three noun types (count, non-count and abstract) and six semantic environments for NPs. Master's Gap-fill-task was preferred in the study because it covered all the noun types including proper nouns and all noun phrase environments. Moreover, it was designed for the adult non-native speakers, so it was most suitable for the current study.

This test (gap-fill task) consisted of four noun types (count, non-count, abstract and proper nouns) and five noun phrase environments (contexts), i.e. 1. Generic [-SR, +HK], 2. Definite [+SR, +HK], 3.Indefinite [+SR, -HK], 4.Non-referential [-SR, -HK] and 5.Idiomatic expressions. A total of 23 gaps were in the task to be filled with the appropriate choice from among the articles (a, an, the, and Ø) before a noun phrase (NP). The task was administered in a single seating and the duration of filling the gaps was 45 minutes.

Data Analysis Procedures

In the test, a numeral label was given to each optional article in the following way:

i.	a	=	1	ii.	an	=	2
ii.	the	=	3	iv.	Ø	=	4

The data from the gap-fill task were written on a separate sheet of paper. 23 blank squares were drawn against each participant. Each blank square represented one gap consecutively. Then the numeral label of each option was put in the relevant square. Thus, 23 squares were for the options. The numeral labels for the 23 article choices of 75 subjects were put into Microsoft Excel 2010. The Excel score was fed into Statistical Analysis Software 9.2 (SAS-9.2) for the calculation of results.

Results and Discussion

The results are discussed according to the theoretical backgrounds explained earlier. At first, the results are discussed in accordance with the aim of the study, i.e. the identification of errors and their types made by the adult Pashto learners of English both in noun phrase environments and noun types. Secondly, the research question is assessed in the light of the results obtained as to whether it has been answered or not.

Identification of Errors

The errors made by the students in the test were identified and classified into three kinds: Errors of omission, errors of oversuppliance or commission, and errors of confusion or fluctuation. The names of the categories of errors were adopted from Wang (2010). The scrutiny of the scores of errors in Table 1 is done based on the categories of errors.

Table 1
Classification of errors in use of the English articles

Types of errors	Number of errors	Percentage of errors
Errors of omission	293	16.99
Errors of oversuppliance	128	7.41
Errors of confusion	88	5.1
Total number of errors	**509**	**29.5**

Errors of omission.

When a gap before an NP is filled with Ø, where the indefinite article 'a/an' or the definite article 'the' is the actual candidate. This error is called the error of omission. The number of errors of omission is 293 with 16.99 % which is the highest as compared to the other errors. However, one point should be noticed. It is impossible to tell whether the students thought 'Ø' was the correct answer for a certain blank according to their knowledge or they just haphazardly filled in 'Ø' without knowing why, since in both situations, they filled Ø in that blank.

Errors of oversuppliance or overuse.

The errors of oversuppliance occur when a gap before an NP is filled with the indefinite article 'a/an' or the definite article 'the' whereas, the zero article 'Ø' is the actual candidate. The number of errors of oversuppliance is shown in Table.1 above. The number of errors of oversuppliance is 128, i.e. 7.41%.

Types of oversuppliance.

The oversuppliance of articles can be categorized into two categories in order to see which kind of article is incorrectly used more often in the context which actually requires the zero article Ø: first, overusing the indefinite article (a/an) to replace zero article (Ø); second, overusing the definite article (the) to replace zero article (Ø). The numbers for these two types of errors are listed in the following Table 2.

Table 2
The number of errors based on the types of oversuppliance

Types of oversuppliance	Oversuppliance of a, an	Oversuppliance of the	Total no of oversuppliance
Number	5	123	128
%	3.9	96.1	

Based on the results in Table.2, it can be discovered that most students overuse the definite article (the) rather than the indefinite article (a/an) when the gap actually needs the zero article (Ø).

Moreover, the number of errors of overusing 'the' is unbelievably higher than a/an. This forms a striking contrast between the two types of oversuppliance errors. This is possibly because of the effect of transfer of training. As the indefinite article a/an sometimes can be equated to the number "one" in the Pashto language while the definite article has absolutely no equivalent in Pashto, teachers tend to put more emphasis on the definite articles 'the' than the indefinite article when teaching the articles. Therefore, students correspondingly pay more attention to learning the definite article and more often use the definite article 'the.'

The overusing of the definite article 'the' may show two points. First, the students might know some rules about the use of 'the' in different kinds of contexts, but they may still not know all the rules. This goes against the proposal of Yamada and Matsuura (1982) that the learners use articles almost randomly. Second, the Pashto learners of English may choose the definite article when they are not sure which article is the correct one. This may be because of overgeneralization of the use of the definite article and transfer of training. On one hand, they may overgeneralize the use of 'the' in some contexts, which actually need the other two kinds of articles. And this overgeneralization may be the cause of two types of errors. They may overgeneralize the use of 'the' in some contexts, which actually need the other two kinds of articles.

Errors of confusion or fluctuation.

Errors of confusion or fluctuation refer to the errors when the interlocutors get confused whether to use the definite article *the* or the indefinite article *a/an* or vice versa in a gap before an NP. Their indecisiveness put them on the wrong choice and as a result they use a wrong article. They are also called commission errors (Huebner 1983). The errors of confusion are listed in the following Table 3.

Table 3
The number of confusion errors

Types of errors of confusion	**Use of *a/an* instead of *the***	**Use of *the* instead of *a/an***	**Total number of errors of confusion**
Number	50	38	88
%	56.9	43.1	

The results show that the students do not clearly know the line of separation for when 'a/an' or 'the' should be used. It was suggested by Tania Ionin et al. (2004) that the native speakers of article-less languages may fluctuate between selecting the English articles based on definiteness and specificity. This was termed the Fluctuation Hypothesis. As a result of fluctuation, they may use the wrong article.

Errors of confusion are categorized into two kinds in order to see which type of confusion happens mostly. The numbers of errors of different types of confusion are listed in Table.3 above.

From the data, it is evident that the number of misused 'a/an' to replace 'the' is greater (50) than that of misused 'the' when the gap actually requires 'a/an' (38). The students make more errors in using' a/an' in place of 'the' which may be a sign that students use 'a/an' in contexts, which require 'the'.

Errors in noun phrase (NP) environments.

The results showed the frequency of errors which the adult native speakers of Pashto made in using the English articles in five different NP environments are given in the following Table 4.

Table 4
The frequency of errors in different noun phrase environments

Serial number	**NP Environments**	**Frequency of errors**	**%**
1	(Generic NPs) [-SR, +HK]	79	35.11
2	(Referential Definite NPs) [+SR, +HK]	250	33.33
3	(Referential indefinite NPs) [+SR, -HK]	72	24
4	(Non-referential NPs)[-SR, -HK]	72	32
5	(Idioms)	76	33.78

Context-1 is for generic NPs [-SR, +HK], context-2 is for referential definite NPs [+SR, +HK], context-3 is for referential indefinite NPs [+SR, -HK], context-4 is for non-referential NPs [-SR, -HK] and contest-5 is for idiomatic expressions.

Context-1 comprised three (3) gaps for the English articles, in which around 35 percent of the learners misused the articles; context-2 had ten (10) obligatory gaps for the articles in which about 33 percent of the subjects misused articles; context-3 had four (4) gaps for articles in which 24 percent of the subjects made errors; context-4 consisted of three (3) gaps for articles in which 32 percent of the participants made errors; whereas context-5 also consisted of three (3) gaps in which more than 33 percent of the subjects made errors.

Looking at the statistics in the above five contexts, the results went against the predictions made by the researcher for the research question. The subjects made most errors in using articles in generic context [-SR, +HK], i.e. 35.11% contrary to the prediction of the researcher. The lowest error rate is in the referential indefinite context [+SR, -HK], i.e. 24%.

The data suggests that context 1 (Generics) and context 5 (Idioms) require a highest level of sophistication in article use, as they both called for a skilful placement of ‘a’, ‘the’ or ‘zero article’. The results for both contexts are inconsistent, and the learners’ choices appeared to be at random. The findings directly support Thomas (1989) hypothesis on the generic use of articles, and Liu and Gleason’s (2002) conclusion about what they termed ‘the cultural use’ of articles as being the most difficult to acquire. There is justification for the conclusion: generics are generally rare in the input available to the learners, and idioms must be learned as a whole.

Errors in noun types.

Different types of nouns need different ways for their use. For example, count nouns have plural forms and need determiners, and non-count nouns have no plural forms and usually do not need determiners before them. As the English article is one kind of determiners, choosing which kind of article to use is sometimes greatly affected by the noun attached to that the article. The adult Pashto learners were assessed in putting the English articles in the gaps before four types of nouns, i.e. count, non-count, abstract and proper. The results for the frequency of errors of each type are given in Table 5.

Table 5

Frequency of errors in the use of articles before different types of nouns

Serial number	Noun Type	Frequency of errors	%
1	Count nouns	102	22.67
2	Non-count nouns	140	31.11
3	Abstract nouns	158	35.11
4	Proper nouns	73	48.67

In Table 5 above, there are four noun types, i.e. count nouns, non-count nouns, abstract nouns and proper nouns. In the six (6) gaps for the articles before the count nouns, 22.67 percent out of 75 participants made errors in using the English articles. In the six (6) gaps before non-count nouns, 31.11 percent learners made errors. In six (6) gaps before the abstract nouns, 35.11 percent students made errors. Whereas in the two (2) gaps before proper nouns, 48.67 percent students misused the articles. It was confirmed by the evidence in the study that learners do not use articles "randomly", as was contrarily suggested by Yamada and Matsuura (1982).

For the part of research question regarding the nature and reasons of errors in the context of noun types, it was hypothesized that in noun types, the learners would make few errors as far as the count nouns are concerned, but they were likely to make errors in using the articles before the non-count nouns, abstract nouns and proper nouns. The results came out to be in line with the hypothesis which is evident from Table.5. Only 22.67% of 75 learners made errors in count nouns which is the least among other noun types. The reason for this could be ascribed to L1 transfer effect. The count nouns are marked in Pashto for their definiteness and indefiniteness with demonstratives and indefinite numerals. Where the demonstratives and indefinite numerals in Pashto matched with the English articles, then it was easy for them which article to use. In case of non-count, abstract and proper nouns, the problem lies with the identification of a noun as to whether it is singular or plural or whether it is definite or indefinite. This mismatch between the nature of nouns in English and Pashto was made a base for the prediction that the learners would make errors in the choice of articles before the nouns concerned. A similar study was conducted by Snape (2005) in which the Japanese learners of English made the maximum number of errors in using the English articles before non-count nouns. Snape ascribed these errors to L1 interference because the Japanese language does not distinguish between count and non-count nouns.

The highest error rate in using articles before noun type's perspective was that of proper nouns, i.e. 48.67%. There could be several reasons for this. This could be ascribed to the format of the gap-fill task because there were only two candidate gaps in front of the proper nouns, i.e. gap no 13 and gap no 17 which made the error rate comparatively higher. Other reasons could be the transfer of training, L1 transfer effect and overgeneralization. Transfer of training has an impact on use of English articles. "The transfer of training is 'the influences that arise from the way a student is taught (Odlin 1989:18)". In English classes, the students are usually taught that proper noun is written with capital letter and does not take an article. Most of the students made error in the gap 13 which says: ______________Hardys are having a party. The students made omission error and did not fill the gap with the definite article 'the', because they have been taught not to put article before the proper noun or they have overgeneralized the singular proper noun for the plural proper noun. The error order from high to low in the noun types was found to be proper (48.67%) › abstract (35.11%) › non-count (31.11%) › count (22.67%).

Conclusion

The study focused on the difficulties in acquisition and use of English articles by the adult Pashto learners and explored the types, nature, and the loci of errors which influenced their choices of using articles. The subjects were given a Gap-fill task prepared from the perspectives of noun types on one hand and noun phrase environment on another hand. The errors made by the subjects were categorized into three types: omission of articles, oversuppliance of articles and confusion of articles.

Then the errors were analyzed from two perspectives, i.e. noun types and the noun phrase environments to identify where they had difficulties.
In noun types, a few subjects made errors in using articles before count nouns (22.67%), but most of them made errors in case of proper nouns (48.67%). In noun phrase environments, the subjects made less errors in referential indefinite NPs (24%) and more errors in generic NPs (35.11%). An interesting finding was the patterning of noun types. That is, both abstract nouns and non-count nouns disfavored 'a' and favored 'Ø'. The participants had it right for the non-count nouns, but they had it wrong for the abstract nouns. Instead of choosing 'a' for singular abstract nouns in indefinite contexts, participants were inclined to choose zero article. Once a noun has been known as to whether it is count noun or non-count, or whether it referential, generic or non-referential, then the learner decides whether an article is essential or not.

In the light of the current study, the researcher suggests a change in learning and teaching styles regarding the use of the English articles in EFL contexts. For the EFL learners, it is necessary to learn and practice both aspects of English nouns, i.e. countability (singular/plural, count/non-count) and definiteness (definite/indefinite). Once the learners learn these both aspects of noun phrases (NPs), the teachers are suggested to teach them different noun phrase environments; to introduce activities that could guide the learners to identify the use of suitable article before the same noun in different environment, e.g. *It is a wonderful life VS. Life is beautiful* (White 2009).

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DOES ANONYMITY MATTER? A DISCOURSAL STUDY OF GENDER RECOGNITON ON ARABIC FACEBOOK COMMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This study considered the recognition of persons' gender through the differences of the discoursal features and stylistic choices of their Arabic Facebook comments. Three hundred comments on different topics were collected from same-/cross-sex interactions of friends, acquaintances and relatives having similar educational and social backgrounds and with an age range 20- 50. Some research questions were raised as to whether males and females differed in terms of the discoursal features of their comments as well as the ability to recognize the person's gender on the basis of these features. Accordingly, some hypotheses were formulated, viz. males' and females' comments involved distinguished gendered discoursal features and styles, females behaved in line with maintenance roles while males behaved in line with task- oriented roles, and the persons' gender could be predicted through applying the gendered features they had. The study came up with various conclusions that, to some extent, confirmed the hypotheses stated.

Keywords: *Discourse analysis, gender recognition, gender differences, facebook, arabic comments, anonymity*

Introduction

Gender is a primary category for understanding the world around us when we enter into any conversation. Based on visible cues, we recognize that each participant we are interacting with is a man or a woman. Immediately, then stereotypes come into play which affect the impression we form (Weatherall, 2005). However, Arize (1996:20) argues that gender is much more complex than the acquisition of internalized stable patterns of behavior. We must, he adds, account for the confusion of gender with social roles and status and for the fact that in particular contexts a man or a woman may display either feminine or masculine behavior. People do not behave consistently in different situations. Hence, there are multiple aspects to the self, and people display them differently depending on the participants in an interaction or the demands of the situational context (ibid, 1996:20). Gender, then, is not simply a matter of sex but also its consequences affect the social, practical and political life in the community.

Research Problem

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) systems become commonplace in our society, and researchers are increasingly investigating how these technologies impact our lives. Among the numerous research topics, one interesting issue concerns the recognition of gender.

This research discusses the differences in styles of participation that exist between males and females which can, in turn, give information about the person's gender and identity since the differences between males and females may lead sometimes to misunderstanding and cause a problem especially with no physical cues or body language available.

Thus, the study aims at understanding how gender interacts with communicative style to affect participation, by identifying the differences in the gender discoursal features of males' and females' Iraqi Arabic comments on Facebook, and by figuring out the gender of the user through the identified discoursal features.

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it is an addition to the studies about gender differences in Internet language interaction. Users on the Internet can figure out the gender of the anonymous person chatting with through certain discoursal and stylistic features that one gender uses more than the other.

Literature Review

Research studies have noted the relationship between gender and language in computer-mediated-communication. Smith and Balka (as cited in Herring, 2000) found that participation by both males and females is almost equal in an anonymous computer system. This has made Hraway (as cited in Fischer, 2011, p. 53) believe that sexual inequalities would dissolve on the Internet. This resulted in the claim raised by Postmes and Spears (as cited in Berchmeir et al., 2011) that communication, with the lack of physical cues and equal status and opportunities on the Internet, would be free from sex stereotypes. A fact that was confirmed by Herring (2000) who argues that the absence of physical cues, as to message sender's identity, removes all the information of gender, race social class, etc. (Crowston & Kammerer, 2010) for equalitarian gendered features.

However, Herring (as cited in Savicki et al., 2006) points out that differences between genders existed and can to a large extent be the same as differences in face-to-face communication. She also noticed that there are some obvious differences in email messages to the extent that one can judge whether the sender is a female or a male. In a study, Bruckman (as cited in Herring, 2003) found that females tend to receive more responses to their messages than males.

Moreover, a case study analyzed employees` attitudes toward, and experiences with, an organizational electronic mail system. Results revealed that females perceived e-mail to be easier to use, more efficient (active), and more effective than males. (Savicki et al., 2006).

Another study revealed some relationships between gender and satisfaction with CMC. As a result, females viewed CMC more favorably than males. Despite that, studies related to gender differences have shown different results (Ahmad & Ahmad, 2018; Herring & Stoerger, 2013; Kapidzic & Herring, 2011; Li & Kirkup, 2018; Lin & Wang, 2019; Miller & Durndell, 2004; Sambasivan, 2019; Sussman & Tyson, 2000)

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In this study, the following research questions are addressed:

1. To what extent do males and females differ in terms of the discoursal and stylistic features of their comments on Facebook?
2. Can the person's gender and identity be identified on the basis of analyzing these features?

The study hypothesizes that:

1. Males and Females' comments involve distinguished gender discoursal features and styles.
2. The persons' gender and identity are predicted through the gender features they experience in their interaction (comments) with others.

Methodology

The data were collected during the year 2016- 2017 from friends', acquaintances' and relatives' comments on Facebook. Three hundred comments on different topics were collected from three sorts of interaction with each sort having an equal quantity of comments, 100. These three sorts of interactions include same-sex, i.e. male-male and female-female, and cross-sex interaction, namely male-female interaction. The comments had been taken from participants having similar educational and social background with an age range 20-50.

The analysis methods are:

i. Extracting certain linguistic and discoursal features from the data. These features include the type of vocabulary or lexical words used, the type of syntactic structures and the stylistic and rhetorical features.
ii. Comparing the three sorts of interaction as far as the previous linguistic and discoursal features are concerned to figure out the gender differences and

identify the person's gender and identity on the basis of these features, as a result.

iii. Presenting tables for the frequencies of adopting each feature by males or females through the three sorts of interaction

iv. Designing a test for recognizing gender anonymity. The test involves asking some researcher's friends to send some comments from Facebook to the researcher without showing the gender in advance so as to keep the gender of the persons writing the comments unknown. Depending on the cues discovered in the study conclusions, these comments have been analyzed to test whether or not we can differentiate the gender of the person.

v. Asking back, then, these researcher's friends to reveal the gender to know whether or not we have been accurate in determining the gender of the persons responsible for these comments.

Results and Discussion

The first part of the results is related to lexical differences based on several key patterns of use.

Lexical Differences

Colour Words

Some different colour vocabularies between females and males were observed. Let us consider the following excerpt between two males talking about the colour of the tie they chose to wear at their graduation party. Speaker A is asking to make sure that they chose the purple colour. B answers him with a positive approval:

A: / raħ nilbas ribæ:t <u>banafsadʒi:</u> ʃabæ:b/
(Are we going to wear a <u>purple</u> tie, guys?)
B: / ʔe: banafsadʒi: ʔittafaqnæ:/
(Yes, purple. It’s a deal)

Later, a girl interacts commenting:

C: /læ: daradʒat hæ:ða illɔ:n ʔismɔ: <u>kaʃmi:r</u> mɔ: banafsadʒi:/
(No, the shade of this colour is <u>cashmere</u> not purple)

The male friends agreed immediately on the colour while the female friend considered it to be another shade of the colour and gave it a specific name. The previous extract, then, indicates that females have a more specific sense for colours than males do.

Empty (Neutral) Adjective

Empty adjectives are used to soften sentences by adding a more intimate and friendly sense to them. In a female-female interaction, a female posted a picture of her daughter and got the following comments as a result:

B: / ʃgad ħilwa ʔalla jiħfadha/
(How beautiful she is! God bless her)
C: / kulliʃ kju:t ħabi:bti/
(So cute my love)

A group of empty adjectives were restricted to females only, viz. /kju:t/ (cute), /ræ:ʔiʕa/ (elegant), /dʒami:l/ (handsome), /qadi:ra/ (good) and /ræ:qi:/ (elegant) while /mubdiʕ/ (creative), /mutamjjiz/ (distinct), /rahi:b/ (incredible), /ʕadi:m/ (great), and /rawʕa/ (amazing) were restricted to males, though the adjectives/ ʕazi:za/ (precious), /dʒami:la/ (beautiful) and/ħilwa/ (nice) were used by both males and females.

Intensifiers

Another lexical difference between males and females is the frequent use of intensifiers by females. That is why, in the data we could hardly find examples where males use intensifiers in their comments. Let us look at the following example:

A: / ʃinu: raʔjukum bhæ:ða iʃʃaxis /
(What is your opinion about this person?)
B: /ʔistiʕræ:di: hwæ:ja/
(He is showing off too much)

Through the above- example, the first-person, A, is asking about a specific newly known doctor. He attached his question with a photo of the person. In reaction, B comments on the post giving his opinion about that person by saying that he shows off too much (in the sense that instead of saying useful things in his lecture, the doctor just shows off). Thus, the person uses the intensifier /hwæ:ja/ (too much) to show how much the person is showing off.

Hedges

The use of this strategy involves the use of mitigating words by the speaker to indicate that he/she is uncertain about what to say. On the other hand, the speaker can be certain about what he is about to say but he/she uses hedges so as not to impose the truth (e.g. he is kinda short). Sometimes it is used as a strategy for showing politeness.

Let us look at the following example between two females talking about a photo of them taken together and one of them is asking whether or not they remember the day it was taken:

A: / titðakkaru:n hæ:ða iljɔ:m/
(Do you remember this day?)
B: /ʔaʕtiqid bhæ:ða iljɔ:m inqataʕ ħiðæ:ʔ mi:na/
(I think it is the day when Mena's shoes cut off).

The second speaker is not sure of the day. That is why she starts with /ʔaʕtiqid/ (I think) as a guess by her.

Vulgar Words

In their comments through the data collected, males resort to vulgar words. The use of vulgar words is expressed in calling people by animal names which can be rude if the person actually has the intention of offending the person talking to. This is clearly shown in the following excerpt:

A: /miʃtæ:qulkum ħabæ:jib galbi ʔitmanne:tkum wijjæ:ja/
(I miss you whole-hearted guys**. I** wish you are with me).
B: / miʃtæ:qlak tʃalib/
(I miss you, dog)

In the above excerpt, a male posts about his trip abroad writing to his friends that he missed them and wishing they are with him. Commenting back, B writes that he misses him too calling him /tʃalib/ (dog). Vulgar words can be offensive when reading comments on public pages. However, males don't realize that they use a lot of inappropriate words in their comments especially when talking with their same-sex partners.

In contrast, females in their cross-interaction hardly use this type of words due to the fact that they are judged by the society more than males. They need to know what they are typing and what the consequences of it; they can't write or type anything that can judge a female by her comments. However, females use these words more frequently with females than with males though it also depends on how close their relationship is.

Emphatic Expressions

An emphatic expression is one that is said to indicate the importance of the idea being introduced or having strong feelings towards what is said. Let us consider the following excerpt:

A: / minu: jidʒi: nru:ħ maʕrad ilkutub/
(Who wants to come to the book fair?)
B: /ʔaki:d ʔadʒi:/
(I will for sure (definitely) come)
C: /ʔaki:d nʃæ:rik/
(I will for sure (definitely) participate)

Both B and C are willing to participate in the book fair and they assure their answers with the emphatic expression /ʔaki:d/ (for sure (definitely)). In addition, one can notice that they are supportive to their friends through using these emphatic expressions.

In fact, females use emphatic expressions most of the time to show their feelings as well as to express agreement with the person being talked to. They do not argue a lot as males do, so they are of supportive nature. Some examples of the emphatic expressions include /fiʕlan/ (really), /ʔe: walla/ (I swear).

Emphatic expressions are also so clear with cross-sex dyads. This is clearly shown in the following excerpt where A, a male, is talking about his trip to Malaysia especially when he tried parachuting. One of his female friends, B, who was with him during his trip, posts her comment to emphasize what he said and express her same feeling about the experience:

A: /ʔittadʒriba ħulwa wʃuʕu:r ittajaræ:n kæ:n jixabbil/

(The experience was nice, and the feeling of flying was incredible)

B: /fiʕlan ʃuʕu:r ittajaræ:n jixabbil/

(It was really an incredible feeling)

Syntactic Structures

Males and females use some different syntactic structures in posting their comments:

Tag and Direct Questions

Holmes (2006) points out that in using tag questions, the speaker assets something and asks for the listener's response. It is used to get confirmation about certain information; tag questions may also express uncertainty, or they may function as facilitative or positive politeness devices.

Let us consider the following excerpt between a male and a female friend:

A: /mnawri:n ʔiħna bissu:ra/

(We look nice in the photo).

B: /ʔaʃu: ʔæ:ni: mæ:ku: bas læ: ʔæ:ni: dæ:ʔasħab issu:ra mu: (?)/

(I am not shown in the photo, was I the one who took it, aren't I?)

In the first comment, A is talking about a photo they took together in the past. The girl, B, is asking about herself in the photo wondering if she was the one who was in the photo. She was young at that time so she can't remember and is not sure. That is why she uses a tag question to ask for affirmation by anyone against her claim.

Furthermore, females may share their opinion by raising direct questions. This is due to the fact that sometimes they do not have the courage to say what they want directly or they want to save each other's face by hiding what is required with a question. This is shown in the following excerpt where a male posts a picture with his friends at the college including B, his female friend, and gets a direct question by his B friend as a result:

B: / le:ʃ mnazzil hæ:j issu:ra (?) ʔæ:ni: matæ:lʕa ħilwa/

(Why did you post this photo? I don't look beautiful)

Since she doesn't look beautiful in the photo, B, asks a question about the reason behind posting the photo by her friend, instead of saying directly "You shouldn't post the photo" (otherwise she would be considered impolite).

Imperative

Imperative is one of the grammatical structures that is used by males more frequently. This is due to the fact that males are more direct in their speech, while females feel that they do not have the right to tell others what to do. So, they try to soften their speech when they want someone to do something.

Let us consider the following extract between three males staying in a dorm:

A: /ʔilħajæ:t dɔ:dʒa/

(Life is boring).

B: /ʔiqra lilʔimtiħæ:n ʔaħsan mæ:titfalsaf/

(Read for your exam instead of wasting your time)

C: /dʒi:bli: ʔakil wjæ:k min tidʒi:/

(Bring me some food with you, when you come)

In the above-mentioned extract, the first-person complains about how boring life is. Instead of being supportive emotionally like females, his male friends just ignore his claim and start telling him what to do (since he is out while his friends are in the dorm studying for the exam). Hence, B asks him to start reading instead of complaining while C asks him to bring with him some food while he is on his way to the dorm.

Rhetorical Features

Sarcasm

In sarcasm not only using harsh words that counts but most of the time mock and making fun of others or saying things that are the opposite to what is actually happening also count (cf. Herring, S. (1995)).

This is shown in the following example between two males talking about marriage where no bad or taboo words used:

A: / raħ ʔatzawwadʒ/

(I am getting married)

B: / jidʒʕalhæ: xæ:timat ilʔaħzæ:n ʔaxu:ja/

(My condolences to you, my brother)

A, the first speaker, posts that he is getting married and it is not like 100% true. This is clear through the comment he gets from B who is giving him condolences, which is, in turn, a kind of sarcasm since getting married is part of having happy news.

Flaming

Flaming is another term that can be, to some extent, similar to sarcasm but it is more direct and offensive. Some linguists describe it as ''abuse'' which is special for **the** online world. Males are less concerned about other's positive face; so, for them it is more about saying what they want directly whether it is harsh or offensive (Herring, 1996: 126).

Since the data concern comments from friends, acquaintances and relatives, flaming is not widespread. Let us look at the following example taken from a male-female interaction where A, the female is talking about a childhood picture:

A: / ʃu:f ræ:s ʔaħmad ʃaʕra mkaffiʃ hhhhh/

(Look at **Ahmad's** head. **His** hair looks so thick hhhhh)

The girl is making fun of one of the boys in an old photo of his childhood. The guy is one of her relatives and through the photo, one realizes that she is older than him which makes it possible to write such a comment. She talks about his hair, but still one can consider the comment to be a joke between relatives especially when she adds the laugh at the end of the sentence to soften the meaning of the sentence from flaming into a joke. We realize that the guy also takes it as a joke when he replies with:

B: / ʔaħla min ʃaʕritʃ /

(My hair is more beautiful than yours)

He takes it as it is, a joke from a relative, and he does not flame back or say any bad word.

Repetition of Letters

As the title indicates, this strategy includes repeating a certain letter in a word several times to emphasize its intended meaning. It could refer to positive things; it comes sometimes as an exaggeration to emphasize feelings and a wish for something.

Let us look at the following example between two females talking about their own photo eating out:

B: / jʃahi ħe:e:e:e:l/

(It's sooo delicious)

C: / twannasnæ: wʔakalna kɔ:ɔ:ɔ:ma/

(We had so much fun and ate alooot)

D: / ʔæ:ni ham ʔari:i:i:d/

(I waaant that too)

The girls are talking about their meeting out and eating in a restaurant. B is one of the girls talking about how delicious the food is using /ħe:e:e:e:l/ (sooo). Speaker C as well repeats some letters of the word /kɔ:ɔ:ɔ:ma/ (alooot) to indicate that they ate more than any time. As a response, speaker D replies with /ʔari:i:i:d/ (I waaant) to express her desire to be with them and probably also eat a lot of food since she wasn't with them.

Exaggeration

Exaggeration is a rhetorical device used to magnify things or to make them more important. It is also used to refer to people to make people seem better or worse than what they really are in reality. This is clearly shown in the following extract:

A: / talaba min matæ:ʕim ittabarruʕ lilʕmæ:l biwadʒbæ:t ʔakil
fakæ:n irrad min kubra matæ:ʕim tastadʒi:b litalabihi/

(He asked restaurants to donate some meals for workers and
he got donation from the biggest restaurants in the area)

B: / ʃgad ħilu: jamna ʔalif sana ilwæ:ħid jiħtʃi: wmaħħad jistadʒi:b/

(That's beautiful; in our country if you talk thousands of years, no
one will respond)

The first female, A, posts about a male who asks restaurant owners to donate for helping workers and how big restaurant interacted with him to afford meals for the workers. In response, female B, reflects that this would be impossible in her country, people will talk for thousands of years and still no one would answer. She uses /?alif sana/ (thousands of years) as an exaggerated expression of showing how the situation is bad in her country, since no one actually responds during thousands of years.

Despite the common belief that the Internet will produce greater egalitarian communication, this research has proved that this is commonly not the case. The findings generally have indicated that on Arabic Facebook comments, people cannot liberate themselves from their gendered identities. The study reveals that a number of gender differences, expressed in the discoursal and stylistic features, are found. The results also reflects the characteristics of the informal context.

The findings suggest that sometimes participants gender- switch online. There has been some insight into the sort of people who gender- switch which suggests that they are predominantly males. The possible explanations for gender-switch is that males can experience some of the power that comes from being a man; they have a great deal of control; the absence of the physical body (the anonymous nature of the Internet) makes it possible for males to gender- switch.

The overal findings at in this study were tabulated and shown in the following tables:

Table 1
Frequency of lexical differences of males and females

Lexical Differences	**Male-Male**	**Female-Female**	**Male-Female**
Colour words	0	0	2
Empty (Neutral) Adjective	12	10	10
Intensifiers	2	6	6
Hedges	0	4	6
Vulgar words	5	1	1
Emphatic expressions	2	10	13

Table 2
Frequency of Syntactic Differences of Males and Females

Syntactic Structures	**Male-male**	**Female-Female**	**Male-Female**
Tag & Direct Questions	0	5	5
Imperative	6	3	3

Table 3
Frequency of Rhetorical Differences of Males and Females

Rhetorical Features	Male-Male	Female-Female	Male-Female
Sarcasm	10	0	4
Flaming	12	2	5
Repetition of Letters	2	12	5
Exaggeration	3	13	3

By looking at the strategies explored, the tables show that males and females differ in the way they communicate and the way they attempt to influence others. Females tend to have more expressive, cooperative, and polite communication characteristics, while males show more aggressive, assertive, direct, and powerful communication traits. Hence, as far as communication styles are concerned, the tables reflect that while males are more goal and task-oriented, females tend to be more people and relationship-oriented. It is no coincidence that these behaviors and values are also present in everyday discourse.

As in face-to-face communication, the findings indicate that females tend to use language that is powerless. For instance, it is found that females are least likely to argue. Their communication is more supportive. So, they act in reactive rather than proactive ways. Furthermore, females engage in interactivity and rely on the opinion of others to help construct their own knowledge, in the sense that females' messages are more emphatic, mention themselves and their families. They show more personal orientation in their language.

In contrast, males are found to be authoritatively oriented and this orientation is evidenced through language expressions. Comments by males were found to be more confrontational, autonomous, certain, arrogant and controlled. Males use coarser, somehow more abusive language and strong assertions. Males' postings, more than females, use humour and/or sarcasm; they seem to be attempting to establish dominance. They call out more answers during their interaction.

For recognizing gender anonymity, we asked the people, after finishing the whole designed test, who sent us the comments of the test to reveal the gender of the persons commenting; as a result, out of 30 comments, twenty-five ones were perfectly predicted, a point which shows a good confirmation of our study findings in relation to gender differences in Facebook interaction. Let us look at some truly and some wrongly predicted gendered comments.

A. Truly predicted gendered comments:

1. /tara mati:n sawwa tæ:k ʔilnæ: ʕalamu:d jgillinna ʔanu: huwwa ɣabi: mu: ʔiħnæ:/
   (Mateen tagged us to tell us he is stupid not we)

It is assumed that it is a male comment. This is due to the fact that the comment involves the word /ɣabi:/ (stupid), a cursing word which is used more frequently by males; Besides, the person uses flaming against one of his friends when he calls him /ɣabi: / (stupid).

2. /<u>ʔabadaaaa</u> mu: ʔiħnæ: iljɔ:m bas ʔaktibilkum kummintæ:t liʔan iljɔ:m binnisba ʔilijja ʕutla/
   (Those are not we at all, today I will just write you comments, it's like a holiday for me)

The assumption is that it is a female's comment. This is due to the fact that the person uses repetition of letters with the word <u>/ʔabadaaaa/</u> (never).

3. / hhhhhh <u>lati:f</u> ilmuræ:qib ilwæ:gif ʕale:na iljɔ:m baʕid wakit mu: hassa ʔawazziʕ ilʔasʔila/
   (The invigilator today was <u>cute</u>. He was saying I won't give the questions).

It is female's comment. This is so because the person uses /lati:f/ (cute), an empty adjective used by females more frequently, as well as using the repetition of letters between each of the two sentences.

4. / ʔiðæ: matuʕruf we:n wbʔaj mantaqa ʕale:ʃ tinʃuru:n haʃʃikil xabar wtilʕabu:n bʔaʕsæ:b innæ:s/
   (If you don't know where and in what place, why do you post it, you are playing with people's feelings)

The person in this comment is directly flaming the other in relation to some news he posted. He is adopting the strategy of asking a direct question, which is a strategy used by male speakers.

B. Wrongly predicted gendered comments:

1. / ʔawæ:dim iljæ:bæ:n fi: kul ʃeiʔ (..) balad wʃaʕib jistaħiq ilħajæ:t (..) wlæ:zim nqaddir hæ:ða iʃʃi:/
   (Japan is different in everything…a country with its people deserve life… we need to appreciate that)

The sentence does have dots between each sentence (part of repeating letters strategy), that's why it is assumed to be a female comment.
However it has been found that it is a male comment.

2. / <u>jaʕni:</u> hæ:j wadʒba kæ:mla (?) lɔ: muqabbilæ:t qabl ilɣada (?) !/
   (<u>I mean</u>, is this the main course or starters before lunch?!)

The sentence contains a question with options for the answer. In addition, it involves the addition of / jaʕni:/ (I mean) at the beginning. All these made us assume it's a female comment.
However it is a male comment.

3. / wæ:diħ ʔinnahum juri:du:n qatlahu (,) <u>jimkin</u> ilvidju: fi: ʔafri:qja ilwusta/

(It's clear they wanted to kill him, I think this video is in middle Africa)

Using the hedge / jimkin/ (I think) makes it look like a female comment. However, it is a male comment.

Conclusions

The study has come up with several conclusions which confirm the hypotheses raised. It has been found that females have more stock of words for colours than males. Besides, they use a smaller range of empty adjectives than males. Males use specific adjectives, viz. / ħilwa/ (sweet), /dʒami:la/ (beautiful) especially when describing people**.** Some of the adjectives are restricted to females only, viz. /kju:t/ (cute), /ræ:ʔiʕa/ (elegant), /dʒami:l/ (handsome), /qadi:ra/ (good), and / ræ:qi:/ (elegant), though /ħilwa/ (sweet), /ʕazi:za/ (precious) and /dʒami:la/ (beautiful) are used by both males and females.

Moreover, the cross-interaction between males and females also involves some empty adjectives. This can be shown through adjectives like: /mubdiʕ/ (creative), /mutamajjiz/ (distinct), /rahi:b/ (incredible), /ʕadi:m/ (great), and /rawʕa/ (amazing). In addition, the frequent use of intensifiers was shown to be used by females. Males usually use intensifiers with negative adjectives as /ʔistiʕræ:di:/ (show off) commenting on other people whether these people are from their community or being regional, while females use it with positive adjective like /ħilwu:/ (sweet) and /dʒami:l/ (beautiful). Besides, in female- female interaction, the intensifier /kulliʃ/ (so) has been found more frequently.

Furthermore, hedges are frequently manipulated by females while vulgar words have been used by females less frequently in all the types of interactions (it is adopted just when interacting with another female) . This is due to the fact they are judged by the society more than males. Besides, when vulgar words are used with another female, all that depends on how close their relationship is.

As for emphatic expressions, they have been used less frequently by males. This is due to the fact that females usually agree and support others' opinion. Some examples of the emphatic expressions include /fiʕlan/ "really '' and /ʔe: walla/ (I swear). The word /ʔaki:d/ (for sure (definitely)) was the only lexical item used by males as an emphatic expression.

Tag and direct questions have been realized with females' comments for the purpose of (in the case of tag questions) asking for affirmation, and (in the case of direct questions) not having courage to say what they want directly or for saving others' face by hiding what is required with a question.

Moreover, imperative has been more frequent with males in their interaction with other male friends than females. When using imperative, females either use it in a funny sarcastic way or they add some intimate words to let the order have a more polite and not harsh or direct effect on others.

Sarcasm has a high proportion with male same-sex interaction. Besides, females are found to be more concerned about others' faces that is why flaming has been manipulated less frequently by females than males and the number goes down when females interact with other females. Females are also more open to criticize others indirectly.

In contrast to females who are more conservatives, males are more open and feel free to express their opinions on Facebook. As far as politeness is concerned, it is more common with females; they thank, apologize and show appreciation. In contrast, males appear to be less concerned with politeness, using criticism and tend to be more concerned about threatening the freedom of expression. Repetition of letters has been adopted extensively by females in contrast to males while exaggeration has scored the most frequent with females but interestingly little realization has been found in male- female interaction.

Depending on the finding, a test has been designed to find out whether or not applying the discoursal features discovered would let us recognize or predict the person's gender and identity through their comments on Facebook. Through the test, it has been discovered that females' comments (language) are more distinguished (prominent) than males'. The discoursal features that females use in their comments enable us to recognize their comments easier than that of males.

The wrong assumptions in the test were related to males' comments. That is, males can hide their gender with having some feminine language features (norms) such as using hedges which is a feature used more frequently by females. As a result, one may conclude that identifying or predicting the person's gender and identity out of the comments is not 100% accurate, though suggestive through the findings arrived at in this study.

Recommendations

The focus of gender differences over the past years has been on daily life conversation to the exclusion of the Internet. Hence, more studies can address this issue from a different perspective. Gender differences on the Internet can be added to the materials of the linguistic studies besides gender differences of everyday language.

The psychological gender differences in communication styles and influence tactics create stereotypical roles for males and females in conversation. These roles have implications for differences in, for instance leadership styles between males and females. Gender differences in Internet language will cause misunderstanding or pragmatic failure between males and females. This can be another topic for future studies. Moreover, social media programs have been realized in our life more than others; some of these programs are taking the place of Television like You Tube; the content of these videos plus the comments may be a perspective field.

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Appendix

Test of Recognizing Gender Anonymity
A. Truly predicted gendered comments:

1. / ʔildʒæ:nib ilʔinsæ:ni: mu: maʕnæ:ha jiʃtiɣil ʔilak ibbalæ:ʃ (.) jitʕab wjinʃak ħalga biliqræ:ja 6 sni:n wxafæ:ræ:t wlaʕabæ:n nafis wbas mari:d jsi:r bi: ʃi: jikʕudu:n ʕaʃæ:ʔirijjan wɣe:rha min ilmaʃæ:kil ʔilli jitʕarrad ʔilha ittabi:b wmistakθiri:n ʕale:h jæ:xið flu:s ʕala ittaʕab illi ʃæ:fa/

(The humanitarian aspect it is not about working for free. After all these years of studying and hardworking and if something happens to the patient, instead of resorting to the law, they follow tribal ways and humiliate doctors; for all these reasons and you say doctors don't deserve the money they take!)

It's a male comment since he is again flaming the one who posted a statue against the doctor; the person, in reaction, is defending doctors.

2. / rabbi: jiħfadki ʔilnæ: jæ:warda ʔinti: (..) ħabi:bi xalɔ: (..) wnniʕim minki:/

(God bless you … my love my uncle …. Good for you)

It is assumed that it is a female comment. This is because the person left a space through dots between phrases, one of the ways of repeating letters strategy where females have been found to use it more frequently than males.

3. / lam jakun hæ:ða su?æ:l ðu: ?ahammijja biqadar issabab waræ:?ahu ittahakkum ʕala diju:fihi biʕibæ:ræ:t samidʒa muħæ:wilan ?ihæ:natahum (..) bira?ji: taʕli:qæ:tihi hæ:ðihi wataqdi:m diju:fihi bihæ:ðihi ttari:qa huwa ?aqsa dʒiddan min almawæ:qif issaxi:fa illi: jadaʕuhum fi:hæ: (...) hæ:kaða ra?eit/
(This was not an important question as much as the reason behind this taunt against his guests trying to humiliate them…in my opinion, his comments and the way he talks to his guests is harder than the situation he posts them in).

It is supposed that the comment is posted by a female. The person uses space between sentences, one way of repeating letters strategy; she also uses intensifiers /dʒiddan/ (so) with the adjective /?aqsa/ (harder) which females use more frequently than males.

In this comment, one notices the use of /bira?ji:/ (in my opinion) and /hæ:kaða ra?eit/ (I think); these are part of hedges strategy which females usually adopt in order not to impose their opinion on others.

4. / hæ:ða ħariq mu: (?)/
(This is burn, isn't it?)

Here a tag question is adopted then it is a female comment.

5. / lahdʒitak kulliʃ ħulwa kul il?iħtiræ:m wattaqdi:r ilħadirtak (,) ?insæ:n tajjib wmuθaqqaf wmuħtaram wmutawæ:diʕ basi:t li?abʕad ilħudu:d rabbi: rabbi: jiħfadah/
(Your dialect is so beautiful, all the respect for you, you are kind, educated, respectful, humble and simple, God bless you)

The person uses the word /kulliʃ/ (so) as an intensifier. The person also uses more than one empty adjective. Then the comment is definitely posted by a female.

6. / ?e: saħ xɔ:ʃ qaræ:r (..) jaʕni: ittullæ:b illi mæ:ku ilqisim bmuħæ:fadæ:thum jikdaru:n hassa jħaslu:n makæ:n bil?aqsæ:m/
(That is a good decision, I mean there will be a space in the dorm for those who attended departments not in their cities)

In this extract, it is so clear the use of dots between the sentences (part of repeating letters strategy) as well as using hedges /jaʕni:/ (I mean) then the person is surely a female.

7. / ?itðakkarit ħtʃæ:jatna ?iħna ħabbæ:bi:n maniħtʃi: ʕale:hum/
(I remember our talk, we are lovely people, we don't gossip about them)

It is assumed that a female is commenting since she is using the empty adjective /ħabbæ:bi:n/ (lovely), though she is using the words about herself and her friends but females in general use this word more frequently than males.

8. / ?e: walla læ:nigdar niqra qabl ilftu:r wlæ: baʕda/
(Yes, right (I swear), we can't read before or after Iftar)

Using affirmative expression /?e: walla/ (I swear) showing agreement with the statues being posted, it is an outstanding feature of females' posts. So, it is a female comment.

9. / mumkin muqtaraħ le:ʃ mæ:tiʕrid ħæ:læ:t mu: saʕba wmuʕaqqada min wæ:qiʕ ilħajæ:t ilʕamalijja mu: ?amræ:d

næ:dira wɣari:ba (..) winta ʔaʕlam ʔaki:d/
(May I suggest something, why don't you post common cases instead of rare ones and diseases? And for sure you know better)

The person is requesting to present a suggestion, where he adds at the end /winta ʔaʕlam/ (up to you) leaving the options open for the other; besides using affirmative /ʔaki:d/ (for sure). Then it's a female comment

10. / kul niʕil ʔawwal sana twassalit bi:hum maqiblu:ni bæ:bil hassa tri:dni ʔardʒaʕilhum/
(Shut up , I begged them at Babil to accept me but they didn't, you want me to go back now)

The sentence has a cursing expression /kul niʕil/, it is used between males which literary means (eat shoes) or we can say (shut up), then it's a male comment.

11. / bawʕu: fidwa lʕe:na ʃgad jiħtʃi: ħilu: ʕiræ:qi:/
(Look how precious he is, he is talking with a nice Iraqi accent)

Using an intimate word which females say it more frequently /fidwa/ and an empty adjective /ħilu:/ (sweet), then it is a female post.

12. / walla lu:ti: jiħtʃi: hi:tʃ ħatta bæ:tʃir jintixbu:na/
(He is such a deceitful person, talking like this to persuade people to vote for him)

Using the word /lu:ti:/ (deceitful) which is a cursing word plus it is flaming but not against the person directly then we expect it's a male comment.

13. /ʔawe:li: ʕale:hum xattijja ʔalla jsæ:ʕidhum/
(I feel sorry for them, may Allah help them)

Since females are more supportive and concerned, they show their feelings and sympathy through their comments more than males. It's a female comment.

14. / dʒami:l dʒiddan ʔatðakkara bilʕurus mæ:l ʕammi: ʔalla jriħma tʃæ:nu mʃaɣli: bissajjæ:ra mæ:lta ʔalla jriħma wjirħam ildʒmi:ʕ jæ:rab/
(This is so beautiful, I remember this was in my uncle's wedding; they played it in the car, May God have mercy on him).

The use of the intensifier /dʒiddan/ (so) with the adjective /dʒami:l/ (beautiful) as well as kinship term /ʕammi:/ (my uncle), then it is a female comment.

15. / wintu: θawrutkun ilfikrijja maʕam tiqdar titdʒæ:waz iddi:n qæ:ʕdi:n wara ilfeis le:l nahæ:r ru:ħ ʔiʕmal ʃi: jinfaʕak wjinfaʕ ilnæ:s mu: ʔaħsan min halħatʃi:/
(What about your intellectual revolution, you are just talking about religion, sitting behind your laptops all the time without doing anything to help others).

The sentence is a direct flame, blaming others which is more of a male style.

16. / walla hijja kæ:lat ʔilli ʔari:d ʔaku:la ħalqa sajjiʔa fiʕlan/
(Yes I swear, she said what I wanted to say, the episode was really bad).

The person uses an affirmative expression /walla/ (yes, I swear), also using an empty adjective /fiʕlan/ (really) which make us assume that it's a female comment.

17. /ʔalħamdulillæ:h ʕassalæ:ma ħajæ:ti: wminu: hæ:ða ilfanæ:n wlæ:suɣran bi: (?)/
(Thanks God you are safe my life, can I ask who is this actor if you don't mind?)

The person uses /ħajæ:ti:/ (my life), an intimate word used more frequently by females. The person also uses a request to ask about an actor. Then it is a female comment.

18. / ʔinti: iððɔ:q kulla jæ:raɣɣu:da saħ ilsæ:nik ħabi:bti:/

(You are very respectful Raghooda and you are right my love)

The person here is complimenting a girl, using the intimate word /ħabi:bti:/ (my love) which is used by females with nickname for the girl as well, so it is a female comment.

19. / ʔiðan fassir li: keifa nufarriq beina lmalmas innæ:ʕim walxaʃin walmudabbab waɣeiruhu/

(Explain for me how can we distinguish between a soft and rough surface)

In the previous sentence an imperative is used which reflects that it a male comment.

20. / ʃwakit tiftaħu:n fariʕ bibaɣdæ:d (?)/

(When will you open a branch in Baghdad?)

A direct question is used more frequently by males. Thus, it is a male comment.

21. / ʔudxul ʕarræ:bit ilfɔ:g ʃu:f ʔixtisæ:sak mawdʒu:d/

(Check the link above and see if your specialization is there)

The sentence has an imperative structure, then it is a male comment.

B. Wrongly predicted gendered comments:

1. / radʒæ:ʔan bas ʔari:d ʔaʕruf ʔiðæ: ittaqdi:m baʕid maftu:ħ (?)/

(Please, I just want to know if application is still available?)

The sentence contains a request form as well as the use of the word /radʒæ:ʔan/ (please), then it should be a female comment. However it was against our assumption.

2. / le:ʃ mitwattir mitʕassib ʔitħammal raʔji lʔæ:xar miΘlamæ: jiħtirimak/

(Why you are nervous , respect other's opinion just as they respect yours).

The sentence contains a direct question with flaming the person replying to through using an imperative structure. This assumes that it is the style of a male comment. However, it was posted by a female person.

EXPLORING INTONATIONS IN SESAME STREET'S PUPPET SHOWS: A PHONOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Intonation is a primary aspect in phonology, particularly in the supra-segmental area. Intonation carries meaning and changing the intonation of an utterance can quickly change the meaning of that utterance. This research aims to discover the patterns of intonation used in Sesame Street's puppet show and identify how interpersonal meaning is constructed on the show. This research was conducted from a phonology perspective and using the qualitative method. This research concentrates on phonology, mainly the supra-segmental area that is intonation. The focus of this study was on the relation between intonation patterns (tonality, tonicity, and tone) and interpersonal meaning. The website of Sesame Street was the source of Primary data for this study, as well as the puppet show's episode "Alphabet Race" (from Season 38). This research involved the researchers as its major instrument for analysing the data. In the process of collecting data, the researchers did documentation. This analysis finds the different division of the information between the systemic functional grammar level and the intonation level, which is shown from the clauses and tone units found in the show. The findings of this research provide teachers and EFL learners with further insight into how utterances deal with their intonation.

Keywords: intonation patterns, interpersonal meaning, phonology, supra-segmental, systemic functional linguistics

Introduction

Teachers of spoken language, in classroom activities, may also have other aims. The teachers may not use their time only to teach speaking in the classroom, but also examine other aspects that support the study of speaking itself. As such, tasks that related to speaking may help students expand their awareness or practice facets of linguistic knowledge, develop productive skills (such as rhythm and intonation), or raise awareness of specific socio-linguistic or pragmatic considerations (Hughes, 2011). Spoken discourse not only uses rhythm as a source of productive skills in speaking but also intonation (Tench, 2011). There are six functions of English intonation: informational, grammatical, illocutionary, attitudinal, textual/discourse, and indexical (Couper-Kuhlen as cited in Chun, 2002). Ironically, intonation is often an overlooked aspect of speaking, and it is impossible to teach (Chun, 1998).

In EFL classrooms, intonation is often perceived as challenging to teach. Intonation is a particularly demanding aspect of L2 speech learning (Puga et al., 2017). Although teachers rarely notice the study and use of intonation, difficulties learning English can be overcome through EFL learners (Ali & Yunus, 2014). Intonation patterns have a close relation to the interpersonal metafunction or meaning. The interpersonal meaning is one of the functions of tone (Tench, 2013). Interpersonal meaning expresses the feeling of the speakers and the reaction of the addressee. Interpersonal meaning has a close relation to the speaker's interaction in a conversation or the speech. Halliday (1994) argues that we enact our personal and social relationship with the other people around us when we inform or ask a question, give an order or make an offer, and express our appraisal of an attitude towards whoever we are addressing and what we are talking about. Thus, people always talk with interpersonal meaning to interact with other people. The interpersonal meaning can be seen from the intonational choices of the speakers when they speak.

This research focuses on the intonation that is the element of suprasegmental area of phonology. In conducting the research, the researchers need to provide some previous study to avoid the same or repeated study and also to recognize the position of this research. There is four previous research that is related to this present research: Liu (2008), Oladipupo (2010), Tuan (2012), and Onsuwan et al. (2014).

Liu (2008) investigated the different effects of two forms of focused instructional techniques on EFL learners' learning of English intonation. This research employs an experimental method and the place for doing the research was in University of Science and Technology, Beijing. The research results highlight the central role of instruction on intonation learning; the way of the teacher gives the instruction while learning intonation is also more efficient in intonation learning.

Oladipupo (2010) examined the English intonation patterns employed by Nigerian speakers of English for noun phrase in the subject's position and clause modifying adverbials, using forty Nigerian television reporters as research subjects. The analysis took data from reports broadcast on air and found an 89.3% tonal rise on noun phrase in the subject's position and 87.9% tonal rise in clause modifying adverbials.

Tuan (2012) examined the reasons for intonation being ignored in pronunciation teaching at Ho Chi Minh City University for Natural Resources and Environment (HCMUNRE) and corroborated that teaching intonation in Yes/No questions and WH-questions to learners has a positive influence on their English-speaking skills. The results found that a good number of teacher and students know that intonation is an essential aspect of communication. Unfortunately, they have no motivation to teach or learn intonation because it is not included in final exams.

Onsuwan et al. (2014) investigated Thai children's production and perception of tones acquired from a puppet show. Using the experimental method, they found that there seemed to be a negligible difference in the production of children pronunciation. The study encouraged the researchers to have the more in-depth research on the intonation of puppet show and the relation between the intonation and interpersonal meaning of the puppet show. Jamin (2003) found that puppeteers will be assessed on the speaking voices with regards to express ideas in an entertaining or informative manner, how loudly or softly they speak, how they express things in words (language use/word choice), and how they use intonation (the rise and fall in pitch of the voice in speech). Despite the importance of content accuracy and speaking voices of the puppeteers, few researchers have analyzed the pattern of those speaking voices. The intonation pattern is a crucial part of speech, as, from intonation, we can assume meaning and perception. Intonation also works on the feelings a person deals with. The research question addressed in this study was what pattern of intonation is used in Sesame Street's puppet show and how the intonational choices constructed interpersonal meaning in the show. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the intonation patterns used in Sesame Street's puppet show and to identify how intonational choices in the show construct interpersonal meaning.

Literature Review

Intonation Patterns

In everyday life, when people speak or write, they produce text. The word 'text' refers to any instance of language, in any medium, that makes sense to someone who knows the language (cf. Halliday and Hasan, 1997: Chapter 1, as cited in Halliday, 2004). To seek a comprehensive view of English grammar, the phonological aspects have to be explored. This is because some grammatical systems are realized by prosodic means (Halliday, 2004).

There will always be various ways of intoning an utterance when a text is presented in writing, each of which will carry a different meaning, but only a small number of possible intonation patterns will appear more natural (Halliday, 2004). Intonation has three primary systems: tonality, tonicity, and tone (Tench, 2011). Tonality is the partition of spoken discourse into discrete units of intonation, each of which carries a piece of information (Tench, 2011). This can easily be demonstrated by listening to the same sentence spoken with different tonalities. As such, we convey much information in chunks, also called tone units. When an utterance has two focus of information, the stressed syllable will be two. The structure of the tone units will ease speakers as they speak. Critically, tonality can minimize ambiguities as the audience receives spoken messages from the written word.

The second intonation system is tonicity, the focus of information related to the placement of the nucleus or tonic syllable, or the structure of the tone unit. While tonality shows the speaker's division of the message into separate pieces of information, tonicity identifies the focus of each piece of information through the placement of the stressed syllable, or it can be called as the nucleus (Tench, 2011). Tonicity is divided into two categories: marked tonicity and unmarked tonicity. In marked tonicity, the tonic can be found anywhere in a clause, while in unmarked tonicity the tonic is positioned at the end of the clause. The researchers did the research using clause because the clause is central processing unit in the lexico-grammar. Different kinds of meanings are mapped into an integrated grammatical structure by clause (Halliday, 2004). Tonicity is the determiner whether or not the information given is new. It is related to the theme-rheme system of textual meaning. Every word that is stressed is called a rheme, and each word with a nucleus is the focus of information that is obtained as new information or rheme.

The tone, also a pitch movement, is the status of information. Tone provides the speaker with choices about the state of each piece of information (Tench, 1996). If we are given a text in writing, there will be various possible ways of intoning it. Chun (2002) divides intonation characteristics into several types, the two main ones being that which reflects the speaker's attitude or feelings and that which the speaker expects the hearer to perceive.

Interpersonal Meaning

According to Halliday (as cited in Bumela, 2012) there are three types of meaning; ideational meaning, interpersonal meaning, and textual meaning. Halliday, meanwhile, developed four metafunctions, three of which are shown in the clause column (Halliday & Matthiessen as cited in Nur, 2015).

Table 1

Metafunctions and their reflection in grammar

Metafunction	**Kind of Meaning**	**Corresponding Status of Clause**	**Favored Type of Structure**
Experiential	Constructing a model of experience	Clause as a representation	Segmental (based on constituency)
Interpersonal	Enacting social relationship	Clause as an exchange	Prosodic
Textual	Creating relevance to the context	Clause as a message	Culminative
Logical	Constructing a logical creation	-	Iterative

Related to Table 1, the interpersonal meaning is used in this study because it has the closest meaning to intonation, as the structure of interpersonal meaning is formed in the prosodic structure that is interrelated to the intonation. Interpersonal meaning represents the speaker's emotions through the tone in intonation patterns, as well as the addressee's reaction. Interpersonal meaning is closely related to the speaker's interactions in conversation or speech. Although interpersonal meaning is often understood as interacting with other people, in phonology interpersonal meaning is a function of tone (Tench, 2013). It means that interpersonal meaning can be seen from the intonational choices of speakers when they speak.

Methodology

A qualitative method, more specifically, content analysis, was selected as the design of this research. The content analysis enables researchers to understand human behavior in an indirect way (Fraenkel, 2012). Content analysis was used here because its research object is Sesame Street's puppet show*,* a television program for children from the United States of America that combines education and entertainment (edutainment). Sesame Street is well known for its puppet characters, created and originally portrayed by Jim Henson and his workshop.

The video of Sesame Street's puppet show season 38 entitled "Alphabet Race" was the primary object in this study and was examined by using the content analysis method. As cited in Ary et al. (2012), content analysis is a research method used to analyze the characteristics of written or visual materials. One episode of Sesame Street's puppet show, entitled "Alphabet Race," was used in this research. The episode was chosen since the episode had no singing and the scenes full with dialogue. The data taken tells about the narrative story in the form of dialogue. The original data air date was on September 28th, 2007. This Episode is part of season 38 of Sesame Street's puppet show. The researchers took one episode that represented many characters in one frame who talked to each other, where each character might have their own episodes. This show has an educational goal that is literacy for children. Children typically have the possibility to copy what they have heard. Thus, the educational television program like *Sesame Street* puppet show has responsibility to make the show qualified, in this case related to intonation. This show plays in 13 minutes and 30 seconds and contained seven scenes in total. The characters involved in "Alphabet Race" episodes were Elmo, El, Sally, Louis, Postman, Scram, Abby, the Woman, Clerk, and Mackena.

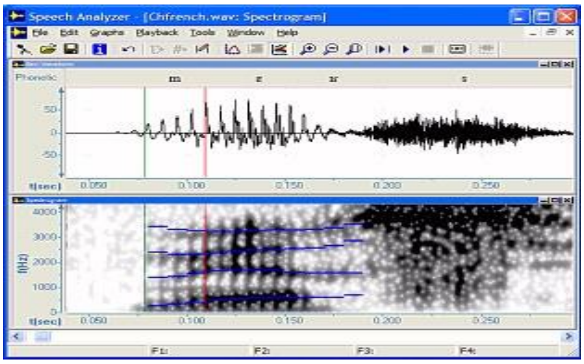
The show told that Elmo knows his ABC's so well that he has been chosen to play "The Amazing Alphabet Race," a game show hosted by Amazing El. In order to play, Elmo has to find all the letters of the alphabet before chicken tap dances his way to a gong! Elmo discovers that there are letters all around him! He finds an "A" in "*Sesame Street*," a "B" in "*Bus Stop*" and a "C" in "*Scram*." He heads to Hooper's to look for a "D," "E," and "F," but it's not open. This isn't a problem since Elmo finds some letters he needs in the "*Closed*" sign on the door. Sally joins in, and they find three "Fs" in "*Free Coffee*," a "G" on Sally's pogo stick, and an "H" in "*Hooper's*." Next, they find "J," "K," and "L" in Abby's "*Jack and Jill*" book. Elmo and Sally continue working against the clock, finding letters in signs around the street. It is not until they need "W," "X," "Y," and "Z" that Elmo and Sally notice the ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ delivery man's package which has all the letters they need. They point to the remaining letters just in time and win the game!

The form of the show is the narrative story. Thus there are generic structures of narrative that included in this analysis. The general structures of the narrative are orientation, complication, resolution, and re-orientation. The orientation is located in the first scene that started in 00.00-02.06 minutes. The complication takes place in more than one scene in the show those are from the second scene to the fifth scene. The total duration of complication is from 02.06 minutes to 11.39 minutes. The nest part of the narrative is a resolution. This showplace the resolution in the sixth scene started from a minute of 11.39 to 12.36. Then the last scene is for re-orientation, from 12.36 minutes until the end of the show.

The researchers decided to use the code in this research. The code was taken from the data transcription that the researchers have made. In this research, the researchers provide the code that was adapted from Tench (2011),

(a) |: Intonation unit boundary
(b) Underlining: Tonic syllable
(c) \: Falling tone
(d) / : Rising tone
(e) \/ : Falling-rising tone
(f) /\ : Rising-falling tone
(g) (xx) : Indecipherable

The researchers used two kinds of software in doing this research; there are InqScribe and Speech Analyzer. InqScribe helps the researchers in doing transcription. Since the researchers transcribed the video by themselves, InqScribe supported with feature such to play videos and type the transcripts in the same window. Then explorations of three systems of intonation; tonality, tonicity, and tone use speech analyzer software. This is software to analyze the speaker's pitch movement because it is difficult for the researchers to analyze the speaker's patterns of intonation without this system. Some researchers used another software to analyze patterns of intonation, that is PRAAT system, but the researchers decided to use speech analyzer because it is easier, clearer, and faster than the PRAAT system. Chun (2002:119) agreed that computer software could be used to provide precise visualization of intonation patterns. However, before patterns were analyzed, the video was converted into WAV format. The speech analyzer software used can be freely downloaded from http://www-01.sil.org/computing/sa/sa_download.htm.



The researchers used version 3.1 of speech analyzer that is the latest version of speech analyzer. There are some minimum system requirements before installing this software *(see SIL website for further information).* The website also provides a clear explanation about how to use the software. Speech Analyzer is a computer program for acoustic analysis of speech sounds. Speech Analyzer can help to do the following tasks:

1) Perform fundamental frequency, spectrographic, and spectral analysis, and duration measurements.
2) Add phonemic, orthographic, tone, and gloss transcriptions to phonetic transcriptions in an interlinear format.
3) Perform ethnomusicological analysis of music recordings.
4) Use slowed playback, repeat loops, and overlays to assist with perception and mimicry of sounds for language learning.

Results and Discussion

Intonation Patterns in Sesame Street's Puppet Show

The intonation patterns used by speakers named Elmo, El, Sally, Louis, Postman, Scram, Abby, the Woman, Clerk, and Mackena on the Sesame Street's puppet show were examined in each scene of the show. This analysis considered several elements related to intonation patterns; namely tonality, tonicity, and tone. According to Tench (2011), these three systems operate in English and are necessary choices in speech. The discussion in this chapter will begin with the tonality, then tonicity, and the last is tone. Tench (2011) revealed that those three elements of intonation have to investigate systematically in the right order, because the investigation of tonicity cannot be done before the investigation of tonality is done, then the investigation of tone cannot be done before investigating the tonicity.

Tonality system.

The exploration around tonality was started through the clause. The researchers analyze the information by clauses. The clauses divided into two kinds of clauses those are independent clause and a dependent clause. The clause was involved in this research because the clause is the central processing unit in lexicogrammar (Halliday, 2004). There is a close relation between intonation and clause. Tench (n.d.), said that intonation operates around the clause because clause and intonation always work alongside it.

Although tonality boundaries typically coincide with clause boundaries, Tench (2011) argued that they do not always do so. This was connected to the markedness of tonality in the show. The markedness tonality divided into neutral and marked. Marked tonality occurs when one clause boundary has more than one unit of information while the neutral tonality means a clause boundary has one unit of information. The number of clauses found in this research was 424 clauses with 169 independent clauses and 255 dependent clauses. In relation to the markedness tonality, the table below shows the neutral and marked tonality found in the show.

Table 2
Markedness of Tonality

No	Scene	Neutral	Percentage	Marked	Percentage
1	Scene 1	35	9%	17	42%
2	Scene 2	63	16%	2	5%
3	Scene 3	80	21%	10	24%
4	Scene 4	88	23%	2	5%
5	Scene 5	78	20%	2	5%
6	Scene 6	15	4%	3	7%
7	Scene 7	24	7%	5	12%
	Total	383	100%	41	100%

From the results, the first scene, the orientation included a small fraction of neutral tonality and almost half of the marked tonality. The complication is located in four scenes of the show (the second, third, fourth, and fifth). The second scene shows less than a fifth neutral tonality, as well as a small fraction of marked tonality. Meanwhile, the third scene shows 21% neutral tonality and a small fraction of marked tonality. The fourth scene shows 20% neutral tonality and only a small fraction of marked tonality. The fifth scene shows a fifth neutral tonality and less than a fifth marked tonality. The next part of the show is the resolution, located in the sixth scene. This scene has a small fraction of neutral tonality as well a small fraction of marked tonality. The last scene represents the re-orientation and includes a small fraction of neutral tonality and less than a fifth marked tonality.

In terms of marked tonality, the most are found in the first scene. Marked tonality represents 42%—almost half—of clauses in the show. The first scene is the opening of the show. Here, marked tonalities are found in the clauses of the opening session. Marked tonality is evidence that more than one unit of information is in a clause. This means that the speaker uses pause and pitch movement to stress more than one piece of information in a clause.

Tonicity system.

Tonicity plays a significant role in intonation. Tonicity shows where the prominent syllable is (Tench, 2011). When tonality serves to separate information, tonicity points out the focus of each report carried. The following table shows how the markedness of tonicity was used in the show. The markedness of tonicity is different with the markedness of tonality. The markedness of tonicity deals with the position of the focus of information that is signaled by tonic syllable. The neutral tonicity refers to the tone unit that the tonic is occurred in the final lexical item, whereas the marked tonicity refers to those tone units have tonic that heard in the non-final lexical item.

Table 3
Markedness of Tonicity

No.	Scene	Neutral	Percentage	Marked	Percentage
1	Scene 1	35	13%	33	42%
2	Scene 2	42	16%	25	5%
3	Scene 3	53	21%	48	24%
4	Scene 4	52	20%	40	5%
5	Scene 5	50	18%	32	5%
6	Scene 6	12	5%	11	7%
7	Scene 7	22	7%	13	12%
	Total	266	100%	202	100%

The tonic syllable or tonicity is found in the last lexical item of an intonation/tone unit. Tone refers to the pitch movement within an intonation unit. Where tonality indicates the unit of information, tonicity indicates the focus of information; the tone shows the status of the information. The findings indicate that the highest neutral tonicity is found in the third scene, part of the complication section of the narrative. This scene has 21% neutral tonicity. The lowest neutral tonicity is in the sixth scene, part of the resolution of the show. That means that the broad focus of information is located in the complication of the show. The broad focus refers to all the information in an intonation unit being new, whereas narrow focus refers to only part of the information being new.

Tone System.

Tone refers to pitch movement within an intonation unit. Where a tonality is a unit of information, tonicity indicates the focus of information; as such, tone indicates the status of information. Tench (2011) reveals that tone is the degrees and movement of pitch that occur within the intonation unit. There are four primary systems in tone choices. According to Tench (2011), the fundamental choices of tone are fall (\), rise (/), fall-rise (\/) and rise-fall (/\). The following table shows the types of tone commonly used by speakers on Sesame Street's puppet show.

Table 4
Types of Tone

No.	Scene	Rise	Percentage	Fall	Percentage	Rise-Fall	Percentage	Fall-Rise	Percentage
1	Scene 1	25	32%	8	12%	30	12%	5	6%
2	Scene 2	8	10%	7	11%	45	18%	7	9%
3	Scene 3	21	27%	19	29%	46	19%	15	19%
4	Scene 4	20	26%	18	28%	36	15%	18	23%
5	Scene 5	3	4%	13	20%	50	20%	16	20%
6	Scene 6	0	0%	0	0%	13	6%	10	13%
7	Scene 7	1	1%	0	0%	25	10%	9	10%
Total		78	100%	65	100%	245	100%	80	100%

The rise-fall tone was used much more commonly than other types of tone; this tone was used in 52% of cases, more than half of all units of intonation. Rise and fall-rise tones showed the same percentage of use, representing less than a fifth of all tone usage. The falling tone was the most commonly used tone, representing only 14% of tone usage.

The rising tone was most prominent in the first scene. Although the rising tone represented less than a third of the 78 intonation units, it was not found in the sixth scene. One in ten rising tones were found in the second scene, while more than a quarter of rising tones were found in the third scene. The fourth scene showed more than a quarter of rising tone usage, while the last scene only had a small fraction of rising tones. The figure and table show that no rising tones were used in the sixth scene.

The falling tone, as the majority, was used in different locations. The falling tone was prominent in the third scene, more than a quarter of all tone units, although no falling tones were found in the last two scenes. In the first scene, there was one in ten falling tones; less than one-fifth of falling tones were in the second scene. The fourth scene showed more than a quarter of falling tones, while the fifth scene showed one fifth falling tones.

The rising-falling tone was most prominent in the fifth scene, which contained 50 of the 244 rising-falling tones in all scenes. The first scene had less than a fifth of this type of tone, while the second scene showed less than one-fifth rising-falling tones. Next, almost a fifth of rising-falling tones were found in the third scene, while less than one fifth was located in the fourth scene. The sixth scene only had a small fraction of rising-falling tones. The seventh scene showed one in ten rising-falling tones.

The last type of tone here is the falling-rising tone. The highest percentage—roughly a quarter—was found in the fourth scene. The first scene only showed a small fraction of falling-rising tones, the lowest of the type. The second scene shows a small fraction of this type of tone, while the third scene indicates almost a fifth of falling-rising tones. One-fifth of falling-rising tones were located in the fifth scene. Meanwhile, exactly 13% of falling-rising tones were found in the sixth scene. The last scene contributed one in ten falling-rising tones.

The Construction of Interpersonal Meaning from Intonational Choices in Sesame Street's Puppet Show

Tench (2011) argues that the primary tone system functions in two dimensions: the speaker's organization of information and the speaker's role in interpersonal meaning. According to McMahon (2002), speakers can use stress and intonation to signal their attitude regarding what they are saying. Furthermore, Cheng et al. (2008) argue that intonation systems are motivated by real-time, specific situations, and decided by speakers to add extra layers of interpersonal meaning to words as they are spoken. Intonation, thus, is closely related to interpersonal meaning.

Here, the researchers presented the data related to the generic structure of a narrative story and highlight some clauses and intonation units to be explained in their relation to interpersonal meaning. The clauses and intonation units here are presented with all three systems in one line. As the show is a narrative in the form of dialogue, the exploration will begin with an orientation, complication, resolution, and re-orientation.

Orientation.

The orientation of the story "alphabet race" in Sesame Street's puppet show season 38 occurred in the first scene that is the minute 00.00 – 02.06. The characters that were involved in the first scene were Clerk and Mackena, Elmo, El, and the Chicken. In this scene, Elmo, Clerk, and Mackena have known each other, but El was a new person for them. El came to give Elmo a game that was the alphabet race game. Several clauses have been used here to analyze interpersonal meaning in orientation part (*see Appendix).* The researchers looked at the beginning of the first scene, the orientation of the story. The researchers also examined the tone units that represented four types of tones used by speakers. Elmo, in this scene, speaks with El in eight clauses but uses nine intonation units. In clause two and three, Elmo says greeting to Mackena, using a rising tone. The rising tone of the greeting indicates that Elmo is being friendly and considering the addressees' feelings. According to Tench (2011), Dominance in social interaction is the expression of the speaker's feelings and is signaled by a fall while deference is a consideration of the addressee's feelings and is signaled by a rise. In clauses 9, 10, and 11, Elmo uses the rising tone that marks a general question. In clause 12, Elmo seems surprised with the coming of El and uses the rise-fall tone. El then talks to Elmo, as in the sixth clause. This is a command because El led the game, and El uses the rise-fall intonation; the interpersonal meaning that can be drawn by that intonation pattern is that El will not allow the other person to decide whether or not to act. The impression is that El is compelling Elmo to get ready and learn the alphabet. In clause 13, El is being impressed by Elmo, expressed through the fall-rise tone. However, in the next clause, El takes a falling tone, which communicates that he is uttering a final statement.

Complication.

The complication of this story occurred in four scenes: the second, third, fourth, and fifth scenes. The third scene was in the 02.06-03.37 minutes. The third scene occurred in the 03.37-06.13 minutes. Then the fourth scene was in the 06.13-09.24 minutes. And then the fifth scene was in the 09.24-11.39 minutes. The complication here presents the conflict within the story. The researchers provide further information about the interpersonal meaning used by the speakers from the second scene (*see Appendix).* In the second scene, Elmo speaks with Louis, his neighbour, and asks him about a game he is playing. In clause 54, there is one intonation unit, using marked tonicity and rise-fall tone. Here Elmo speaks with the hope of finding the letters of the alphabet, which is seen from the social interaction of Elmo and Louis. Louis comes and greets Elmo, using the rise-fall tone. In this case, the rise-fall tone in the greeting means that the speaker's feelings dominate and that the talks are formal. It also means that Louis is impressed by Elmo. Elmo asks Louis using a fall-rise tone, meaning that Elmo wants to know the information and wants Louis to tell him. Elmo repeats the question with a rise-fall tone in clause 64, which indicates Elmo's desire to ensure that his question is clear and that Louis understands his question. Dominant in this scene is the rise-fall tone, which conveys "impression".

Resolution.

The resolution of the narrative is from the sixth scene, precisely in 11.39-12.36 minutes, in which Elmo and Sally find all letters of the alphabet before the chicken hits the gong. Here, Elmo and Sally appear very happy, with no apparent anger. The expression of excitement is seen from the intonational choices (*see Appendix).* In the resolution part, precisely in the sixth scene, the researchers take the conversation between Elmo and Sally. There, Elmo delivered five units of intonation with the various markedness of tonicity. Elmo provided command and statements in his talks. The command is seen in clause 390, but in the rising tone, the command usually uses falling-rising tone, thus clause 390 categorized into a warning. Elmo still allows the addressee to decide to go or stay with him. Then, Elmo continued his talk with a statement with both fall - rise and rise-fall tone. Elmo knew something, and he wanted other people (Sally) to know what he knows. Sally's responds with a rising tone indicate that he is happy to hear the information from Elmo, and he is so excited.

Re-Orientation.

The last discussion is in the re-orientation part that occurred in the seventh scene. It was in the minutes 12.26-13.50. In the orientation part of the story and El gives a prize to Elmo and Sally for winning the game. Intonation patterns found in the intonation units of the clauses in the re-orientation express various interpersonal meanings. El states his message with intonation using a falling tone, which indicates that the speaker knows and wants to say something. The tone could be noticed by seeing the interaction as well. In this case, El knows that Elmo has won the game and tries to explain to Elmo that he has the right to receive the prize. Elmo shows a feeling of surprised, marked by the rise-fall tone in clause 410 (*see Appendix)*.

Conclusions

Based on the results and discussion above, a total of 424 clauses are used by speakers for the episode. Of these 424 clauses, the speaker conveys more than that, because one clause can have more than one unit of information (tone unit); a total of 468 tone units were found, as several clauses have more than one tone unit. Of these, the researchers identified both neutral and marked tonalities, with 383 of the former and 41 of the latter. Speakers focused on two types of information—broad focus information and narrow focus information—as seen from the location of the nucleus or stressed syllable. The focus of information is seen in every single tone unit that is separated from clauses in tonality. The broad and narrow focus of information determines the markedness of tonicity. In this episode, the researchers found 267 neutral tonicities and 201 marked tonicities. Neutral tonicity was thus more substantial in number than marked tonicity; this means that the speakers focused primarily on broad focus information.

The tone system can be analyzed when tonality and tonicity are considered. From the location of the nucleus or position of prominence in the clause, the tone is the matter how the speaker stresses the distinction. Four types of tone were found in the show: rise, fall, fall-rise, and rise-fall. The highest percentage was rise-fall tones, representing 245 tone units or 52% of all tone units. The most uncommon type of tone was the falling tone, representing 65 tone units or only 14% of all tone units in the episode.

Interpersonal meaning expresses the speaker's emotions and is also related to the speaker's attitude. Interpersonal meaning in this research was identified from a strict phonology perspective, as seen from speakers' intonational choices. The researchers considered the interpersonal meaning of each speaker when choosing specific intonation patterns. It can be concluded that the speakers' intonation patterns were interrelated with the three primary systems of intonation. When people talk, they have the information that they wanted to convey, the focus of information, and the status of information. Thus, people always speak using three primary systems of intonation that draw intonation patterns.

On the other hand, intonation patterns also undoubtedly convey the interpersonal meaning of the speaker. The paper has beneficial implications for language teaching and learning and can provide a good model for students and teachers to study intonation. *Sesame Street* puppet show drew clear example for children to utter the conversation with interpersonal meaning in each dialogue. With this, they can notice how an utterance deals with intonation. As such, it will be very beneficial for them to study intonation. Teachers will be more readily able to teach intonation to their students.

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Appendix

Representation of Tone for Interpersonal Meaning

Orientation

Elmo:	Clause 2:	|/Hi Clerk|
	Clause 3:	|/Hi Mackena|
	Clause 4:	|uh \/Hi|
	Clause 5:	|Welcome to \/Sesame | /\Street |
El:	Clause 6:	|/\You should know | your /\ABC's|
	Clause 7:	|That's /\you Elmo |
	Clause 8:	|/\You have been chosen to play | the /\amazing alphabet race|
Elmo:	Clause 9:	|/Huh?|
	Clause 10:	|/What? |
	Clause 11:	|The ama/zing what? |
	Clause 12:	|And who are /\you? |
El:	Clause 13:	| /\I'm amazing | \ El|
	Clause 14:	| and \this is the amazing alphabet race|

Complication

Elmo:	Clause 54:	|Wish /**Elmo** could find the letter A|
Louis:	Clause 55:	|/**Hi** Elmo|
Elmo:	Clause 56:	|Oh oh-oh \/**Hi** Louis |
	Clause 57:	|Has Louis \/**seen** any letters?|
Louis:	Clause 58:	|/**Letters?**|
Elmo:	Clause 59:	|/**Yeah**|
	Clause 60:	|/**Yeah**|
	Clause 61:	|/**Yeah**|
	Clause 62:	|Yeah, **the /\alphabet** letters |
	Clause 63:	|/**yeah**|

Resolution

Elmo:	Clause 390:	|wait a **\/minute**|
	Clause 391:	|Elmo is just **\/knowing** something | with the **\/package** | the **/\shirt** | the **/\hat** |
Sally:	Clause 392:	|It's all the letters of the alphabet right **\/there**|

Re-orientation

El:	Clause 409:	|Elmo, **/\here** is your prize|
Elmo:	Clause 410:	|uh **/\really?**|
El:	Clause 411:	|uh **\/huh**|
Elmo:	Clause 412:	|wow what a big **/\prize|**
	Clause 413:	|wow look at **/\that**|

EXPLORING SELF-MENTION IN THE YEMENI EFL ARGUMENTATIVE PARAGRAPHS ACROSS THREE PROFICIENCY LEVELS

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ABSTRACT

Self-mention used by university-level Yemeni writers is regarded as a challenging task. The overuse use of this feature is often considered as less formal and objective in academic writing. Despite the significance of this feature in academic writing, previous studies were mostly conducted in the Western cultural context. Research on self-mention produced by EFL learners of Arabic cultural background seems to be overlooked. Therefore, this study aimed to explore and compare the use of the first-person pronouns across three proficiency levels in an argumentative paragraph written by 80 third-year undergraduate students. Data were collected, assessed by ELT specialists, and then quantitatively analyzed. The results revealed that Yemeni EFL learners make extensive use of the first-person pronouns in their argumentative paragraphs. Differences were found in the occurrences of the first-person pronouns across three proficiency levels. The results also indicated that learners with a high proficiency level tend to use the first-person pronouns less than learners at low and intermediate proficiency levels. Since low-proficient learners rely more on the use of the first-person pronouns than those at higher levels, learners need to be exposed to a variety of strategies of how they can project their voice appropriately in their written texts.

Keywords: Self-mention, first-person pronouns, argumentative Paragraph, EFL proficiency level

Introduction

The concept of self-mention is described by Hyland (2005) as the use of the first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives to provide interpersonal information. The rules governing the personal pronouns are easy to learn, but the rules that regulate their use appear to be challenging for non-native speakers of English (Natsukari, 2012). Exploring self-mention in relation to the proficiency levels has received little attention (Choung & Oh, 2017; Lee & Oh, 2018; McCrostie, 2008; Oh & Kang, 2013). This issue has been reported by several scholars that written texts by non-native speakers have been characterized by having greater subjectivity (Gilquin & Paquot, 2008; Herriman & Aronsson, 2009; Hinkel, 1999; Ishikawa, 2008; Luzon, 2009; Natsukari, 2012; Petch-Tyson, 1998). The use of the first-personal pronouns makes academic writing less formal, and objective (Biber, Johansson, Leech, Conrad & Finnegan, 1999; Chafe, 1982; Fowler & Aaron, 2010; Korhonen & Kusch, 1989; Kuo, 1999; Smith, 1986). As Milton (1999) states, personal pronouns used by non-native English speakers are associated with conversation. While there has been research into the use of the first-person pronouns in academic writing, few studies have been reported in L2 writing, particularly the essays produced by learners with lower proficiency levels (Chang, 2015; McCrostie, 2008). Therefore, the aim of this study is to contribute to the research on the learners' use of the first-person pronouns used by Yemeni EFL learners of Arabic cultural background through comparing the occurrences and distribution of these features across three proficiency levels (i.e. low, intermediate, advanced). This comparison attempts to provide an insight into how Yemeni EFL learners of English project their voice in their argumentative writing.

Review of Literature

Self-Mention and Proficiency Level

The concept of 'self-mention' is defined as those features which refer to the use of first-person pronouns and possessive adjectives by speakers/writers (Hyland, 2001). These features can play an important role in the text as writers decide to project their voice to portray themselves as reliable members in community. It was believed that self-mention is contrary to the requirements of objectivity and formality in academic writing (MacIntyre, 2017). Yet, through appropriate use of self-mention, writers can establish a positive self-representation and shape strong writer-reader relationship (Mur Duenas, 2007) and attain their credibility (Hyland, 2001). It has been observed that the use of self-mention can be a challenging task for native speakers and much more so for non-native speakers (Atkinson, 2004). In regard to the proficiency level, previous results revealed that low achieved learners tend to use more self-mentions than their counterparts at higher levels (Choung & Oh, 2017; McCrostie, 2008; Neff et al., 2004).

Argumentative Writing

The genre of argumentative writing is defined as a kind of writing which attempts to persuade someone of something (Intraprawat, 2000). Research into the genre of argumentative essay reports that students experience difficulty in assembling written arguments in their college years (Overbay 2003). According to Tanko and Tamasi (2008), research on argumentative texts of university students has become a major concern for people in tertiary educational institutions. Along the same line, Henry and Roseberry (1997) emphasized that the most common place for the genre of argumentative writing is in the higher educational setting. However, due to its nature, it was considered as the most difficult type of writing (McCann, 1989). The present study focused on argumentation because this genre has been identified in several studies as a central component of university writing (Reid, 2001).

Related Studies

In the last two decades, self-mention in English as a second and foreign language has been investigated (e.g. Chávez Muñoz, 2013; Fortanet, 2004; Hyland, 2002; Kim, 2009; Luzón, 2009; MacIntyre, 2017; Matsuda, 2001; Martínez, 2005; Mur Dueñas, 2007; Natsukari, 2012; Tang & John, 1999). However, investigation into the actual use of self-mention has been almost on Western context (e.g. Chávez Muñoz, 2013; Luzon, 2009; MacIntyre, 2017). As Hyland and Jiang (2017) confirm, research into self-mention used by non-native speakers of English seems to be overlooked and incomplete. In the following section, more recent studies on self-mention are discussed.

While several studies have investigated self-mention on research articles of different disciplines, few studies have focused on second language writing (Chang, 2015; Hyland & Jiang, 2017). For instance, Riyanti (2015) explored the voice and how it was established in second language writing. The findings of the study revealed that the concept of voice can broadly refer to many things which can be confusing to second language writers who are trying to position themselves to the expectations of the audience. Furthermore, the second language writers struggle to make their voice strong which are triggered by many factors.

Some other studies have focused on examining the use of first-person pronouns in the argumentative genre. For example, Chang (2015) analyzed and compared the use first singular pronoun 'I' between native speaker of English and Korean writers using argumentative writing. The findings revealed that the frequent use of the pronoun was relatively higher in the Korean learners' corpus than that in the native speakers' corpus. In the same line with Chang (2015), Lee and Deakin (2016) investigated the use of the first-person singular pronoun in argumentative writing. The use of *I* was compared within different proficiency levels in personal writing. The results revealed that learners used less pronouns of personal nature in their argumentative essays which is used mostly to convey opinions in formulaic expressions.

Apart from the second language writing, recently a significant number of studies have investigated self-mention through the use of the first-person pronouns in research papers. For example, Abdi (2015) attempted to compare the use of self-mention features within interdisciplinary research between L1 and L2 of Applied linguistics, Mechanic and Engineering, and Medicine. The purpose of his study was to highlight both interdisciplinary and intercultural differences. The findings of his study indicated that the use of first-person pronouns appears to be more in Applied Linguistics than the other two disciplines. Additionally, the findings revealed that L2 writers tend to underuse the first-person pronouns in Applied linguistics and overuse a higher level of authorial identity than L1 writers in the other disciplines.

In the same line of investigation, Shelton (2015) compared the use of first-person pronouns in three major categories i.e. social sciences, arts, and humanities. The findings revealed that writing in the first-person pronouns with active voice in more direct and understandable text is preferred.

Similarly, Leadham (2016) compared the use of self-mention features in three corpora: biology, Economics, and Engineering written by English native speakers and Chinese students. The findings displayed that Chinese writers tend to overuse first-person plural pronouns 'we' while native speakers tend to use first singular pronoun 'I'.

In their corpus-based study, Dobakhti and Hassen (2017) examined the degree of authorial presence through the use of first-person pronouns in 150 research articles of Applied Linguistics. The findings revealed that a greater use of self-mention by qualitative research writers compared with their quantitative counterparts. These findings suggest that the degree of personal involvement is determined by the research design.

In a more recent study, Lau (2018) conducted study on how professional writers in the contrasting discipline of literature, a field which is interpretive, and computer science, an empirical field, use first-person pronouns. The findings of the study suggest that the dichotomy between hard and soft sciences may not apply in all cases. The pronoun 'we' was most frequent in both sub-corpora.

Isler (2018) compared the use of first-person pronouns and their underlying functions in 20 master's theses written in English by Turkish authors and 20 research articles written in English by non-native Turkish authors. Results revealed a remarkable difference in the use of the first-person pronouns and the functions they have. Unlike non-Turkish writers who use these pronouns more frequently, Turkish writers tend to use these pronouns rarely.

In a more recently published study, Ismail (2019) analyzed the Malaysian Muslim tertiary level students' written English in expressing Islamic related matters. The analysis focused on the use of personal pronouns in communicating their religious teachings. The findings revealed that the plural first-person 'we' and 'us' were most used in writing to strengthen their Islamic relationship and views within Muslim community.

From the review of the previous studies, it is clear that existing studies on self-mention have largely been on comparison of the use of self-mention between native and non-native speaking writers of research articles of different disciplines while these features appear to be overlooked in second language writing, particularly by learners of Arabic cultural background. Research into self-mention received quite little attention in L2 writing and learner corpus research (Chang, 2015; Hyland & Jiang, 2017). Therefore, this study aims to explore and compare how self-mention was manifested in English as a second and foreign language across three proficiency levels.

Methodology

The study invovled 80 undergraduate third-level university students enrolled in the English program, Faculty of Languages, Sana'a University. All participants were non-native speakers of English and their ages range between 20 and 23. All the participants were informed of the general purpose of the study and they willingly agreed to take part in this study. In the process of data collection, the participants were informed of the procedures that would be used to collect the data, and assured that there were no potential costs or risks. Participants were classified according to their proficiency levels. The participants with a lower proficiency level were n=36 and the participants with an intermediate proficiency level were n= 27 while participants with a higher proficiency level were n=17.

Instrument

The instrument of this study is an argumentative paragraph as an appropriate instrument to collect such type of data (Hyland & Milton, 1997; Oller, 1983; Plakans, 2008). The students were asked to write an argumentative paragraph of not more than 250 words during the lecture of their writing class. The writing task reads: “Write an argumentative paragraph in less than 250 words in which you support your view that Internet has more advantages than disadvantages. You should organize, demonstrate, and express your ideas in a persuasive manner that others will agree with you”.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected from 80 scripts written by third-year undergraduate students. The scripts were then marked by two raters using EFL composition profile Jacobs, Zinkgraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel and Hughey (1981). Then, each subject's score was averaged to create a single score. The group scored between 65 and 79 is the low-level group and the group scored between 80 and 89 is the intermediate level group while the group scored between 90-100 is the high-level group (See Table 1). Having three proficiency levels were established, three rounds of reading were made: device identification, frequency computation, and comparative demonstration. In the first round, the researcher carefully read the text word by word highlighting the features related to self-mention in the text through using green color. The second round was to establish the frequency computation. In the third round, Post-hoc of One-way ANOVA was used to show where the differences among the three proficiency levels occur.

Table 1
Test scores across three proficiency levels

Proficiency Level	Number of Participants	Score
Low	36	65-79
Intermediate	27	80-89
Advanced	17	90-100

Results and Discussion

The results of the statistical analysis of the first-person pronouns were provided in Table 2 and Figure 1 below using the Post hoc of One-way ANOVA. The results are shown in three columns which indicate that there are significant differences between the three levels. As Table 2 indicates, the overall frequency of the first-person pronouns used by the low proficient learners is higher than those at intermediate and advanced level (39, 25, 17) respectively.

Table 2
Distribution of occurrences of first-person pronouns across three proficiency levels

Level	N	Subset for alpha=.05		
		1	2	3
Low	36			**39**
Int.	27		**25**	
Adv.	17	**17**		
Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000

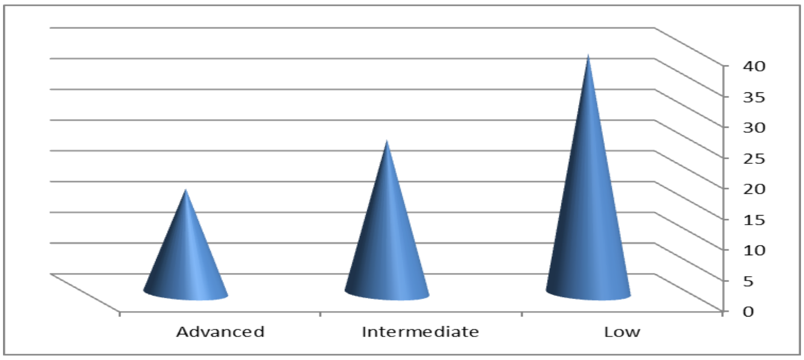

Figure 1. Frequency of the First-person Pronouns across three Proficiency Levels

The findings indicate that students of high proficiency level tend to use the first-person pronouns less frequently than students at intermediate and low proficiency levels. The frequency of the first-person pronouns drops as the proficiency level increases. In other words, the higher the proficiency the students have the fewer number of the first-person pronouns are used. These findings are similar to earlier studies in relation to the quantity of the first-person pronouns used by learners at different proficiency levels of EFL learners (e.g. Lee & Deakin, 2016; Oh, 2007; Storch, 2009). The extracts below demonstrate the learners' use of the first-person pronouns across three proficiency levels:

Low.

Ex1: "Internet is an important thing in **our** life. **We** can get a lot of benefits from internet. Actually, internet is a great thing if **we** use properly. It helps **us** in many time, especially in **my** education and **my** study. **I** use it every day to see the news in English. Internet gave **us** all what **we** have and more and more that it has made **our** big world as a small village. It could be dangerous if **we** misuse it as there are so many sexual websites."

Ex2: "Internet became important for **our** needs in different stages of **our** age. It helps **us** in many aspects, and also it affects **us** in many other aspects like **our** eyes, backs and waste **our** time. internet are very important for everyone in **our** world today. **We** need internet to do **our** jobs easily. **I** think **we** cannot do all work in a short time."

Ex3: "**We** must mention that internet will save **our** history in an electronic form, which will be probably very easy for **us** to retrieve and display. The internet gave **us** freedom of ideas and information. **we** can play games, chat and do many other aspects. Internet invention changed the face of **our** earth."

Intermediate.

Ex 4: "Internet is one the most important service for **us**. It is used in the companies, universities all over the world. It brought **us** together to share knowledge, love, and many other things.

Ex 5: "Internet is now a part of **our** regular life. It can keep people from different countries to be connected with each other. Moreover, by internet, **we** can easily find any kind of information that **we** are looking for."

Ex. 6: Internet can be used for almost everything. For example, **we** can find anything in the world. Also through email, **we** can solve many problems and provide solutions for any issue **we** are having."

Advanced.

Ex 7: "In **our** daily life, Internet is used in different fields such as chatting, shopping, medicine, and business. All companies around the world use internet to make their work done better. It can help **us** do many job effectively. Although Internet has advantages, there are some other disadvantages. For example, people who remain in front of computers for a long time will have problems with their eyes and backs."

Ex 8: "Internet can be harmful. For example, **we** just by one click can easily find unethical sites. So, **we** should be careful when they find such bad sites and find ways of getting them blocked."

Ex 9: "Internet has a wide range of uses and play an important role within **our** society as it can perform all kinds of work. For example, **we** can forecast the weather, do business reports, and carry out a scientific research."

The extracts above show that first-person pronouns appear to be more frequently used by low proficient learners than those at intermediate and advanced levels. One possible reason may be attributable to the learners' weakness in L2 is the learners' lack of vocabulary. As Hinkel (2005) argues, EFL writers often repeat the same idea which is probably due to the lack command of L2 vocabulary.

It was noticed that a high number of occurrences of '**I**' collocated with the cognitive verb **'think**' was frequently used in the argumentative paragraphs This finding confirms what previous studies claim that the phrase ***I think** is* excessively used in the EFL writing essays (Ishikawa, 2008; Natsukari, 2012). Below are some extracts in which the expressions of '*I **think'*** is used.

> Ex. 10: **"I think** that the internet is a very useful tool if it is only used well. Otherwise, mistreatment of the internet would lead to disastrous consequences."
>
> Ex. 11: "**I think** that we can use it in our life to make our life easy to go like the other country. For example, we can use it for something that **we** need for life."
>
> Ex. 12: "At last **I think** that internet is a weapon that has two edges. So we can use it in right way, and it will benefit us or use it in wrong way and it will confuse us."
>
> Ex. 13: "To conclude, the internet has many advantages and disadvantages, but **I think** the advantages are more than disadvantages."

Other expressions such as '***in my opinion'*** and ***'in my point of view'*** were also found to be common. These expressions indicate that the writers' claims are based on their opinions and that the readers may or may not have the same opinions with the writers (Martin-Martin, 2008; Salager-Meyer, 1994). This finding was also confirmed in previous studies that NNSs students are far more likely to rely on particular expressions when they convey their personal opinions (Petch-Tyson, 1998; Yoon & Polio, 2017). The extracts below demonstrate the learners' use of the expressions of personal opinions.

> Ex 14:"**In my opinion**, I find internet is very important for wise people. It is really important if we used it properly."

> Ex 15: "**In my point of view**, if we use internet, it can help us in many ways in our life. If we only understand the benefits of the internet, then no one will use it wrongly."

On the other hand, the use of the first-person plural pronouns (we, our, us) appear to be used more frequently than the first the singular pronouns (I, my, me). This is possibly due to the writers' unwillingness to promote for their individual identity or being involved in the personal claim (Hyland, 2002; Kuo, 1999). Another possible reason is that Yemeni Arab learners belong to a collectivistic culture (Hofstede, 1991) in which writers tend to adopt a holistic way of thinking (Hannover & Kühnen, 2005). As Naj and Choi (2009) argue, participants who are collectivistic oriented prefer to use first-person plural possessive pronouns. The findings also support the believe that self-mention may differ according to the writers' cultural background. (Carter-Thomas & Chambers, 2012).

Conclusion

The present study aimed to explore and compare the use of the self-mention features in the Yemeni EFL undergraduate argumentative paragraphs across three Proficiency levels. The findings revealed that low proficient writers tend to use more first-person pronouns than those at intermediate and advanced writers. One of the possible explanations for low-proficient students' overuse of the first-person pronouns may be they lack vocabulary and knowledge unlike students at higher proficiency levels who seem to have awareness of the appropriate use of the first-person pronouns. Since the writers of the current study belong to what is called a 'collectivistic culture', they tend to adopt a holistic way of thinking by relying more on the first plural pronoun 'we' than 'I' in their paragraphs. The overuse of expressions such as 'I think' and 'in my opinion/point of view' were also common in the paragraphs as writers' arguments are based on their opinions. Regarding the findings and implications, the present study was limited to explore self-mentions only in the argumentative genre. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalizable to other genres. Further research should take into account the comparison of the use of first-person pronouns in two different genres. Owing to the multiple functions of the first-person pronouns, future study should also examine the functions of the first-person pronouns from pragmatic perspective.

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ABSTRAK

Penubuhan Radio Malaya pada tahun 1946 di Singapura merupakan titik penting dalam perkembangan Sebutan Johor-Riau (SJR) sebagai sebutan standard bahasa Melayu di Malaysia dan Singapura. Pada tahun 1993, selaras dengan usaha pembakuan sebutan bahasa Melayu di Nusantara, pemerintah Singapura mengisytiharkan Sebutan Baku (SB) sebagai sebutan standard, menggantikan SJR, untuk digunakan di sekolah-sekolah, stesen-stesen penyiaran dan di upacara rasmi. Tidak seperti Malaysia yang kembali kepada SJR pada tahun 2000, Singapura mengekalkan SB. Makalah ini menyorot evolusi sebutan standard bahasa Melayu dalam konteks sosio-sejarah orang Melayu Singapura dan Malaysia dan turut menilai semula kebakuan SB. Lima gagasan penting telah dikenal pasti: 1) SJR (atau kelainan /ə/) dan kelainan /a/ merupakan dua model sebutan standard bahasa Melayu yang tumbuh secara tabii (SJR di selatan Semenanjung dan kelainan /a/ di utara); 2) Peristiwa-peristiwa penting yang berlaku secara kebetulan dalam jaringan ketersebaran SJR menjadikannya sebutan standard yang lebih berpengaruh daripada kelainan /a/; 3) Identiti bahasa orang Melayu Singapura terkait rapat dengan SJR. 4) SB adalah model sebutan yang dibuat-buat berpandukan prinsip ‘sebut sebagaimana dieja’ dan tidak dapat dipakai untuk bahasa Melayu selagi ejaan tidak menepati sebutan; 5) SB yang dituturkan di Singapura muncul sebagai sebutan hibrid – campuran SB dan SJR. Makalah ini turut membincangkan implikasi daripada penerusan dasar SB di Singapura.

Kata kunci: Sebutan Baku, Sebutan Johor-Riau, Bahasa Melayu Standard; Identiti bahasa

SEBUTAN JOHOR-RIAU AND _SEBUTAN BAKU_ IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SINGAPORE MALAY IDENTITY

ABSTRACT

The establishment of Radio Malaya in 1946 in Singapore was an important milestone in the development of Sebutan Johor-Riau (SJR) as the standard pronunciation in Malay in Malaysia and Singapore. In 1993, in line with efforts to standardise Malay pronunciation in the archipelago, the Singapore government introduced Sebutan Baku (SB) as the standard pronunciation, replacing SJR, for use in schools, broadcasting stations and during official ceremonies. Unlike Malaysia, which returned to SJR in 2000, Singapore retained SB. This paper reviews the literature on standard pronunciation in Malay in the context of the socio-history of the Malays in Singapore and Malaysia and re-evaluates SB as a standard pronunciation. The following points emerged: 1) SJR (or /ə/ variety) and /a/ variety are two models of standard pronunciation in Malay that evolved naturally (SJR in the south, and the /a/ variety in the north, of the Malay Peninsula); 2) significant events that occurred within SJR's distributed network made it a standard pronunciation that is more influential than the /a/ variety; 3) the Singapore Malay language identity is closely related to SJR. 4) SB is a created model of pronunciation based on the principle 'words are pronounced as they are spelled' and cannot be applied to Malay for as long as the words are not spelled as they are pronunced; 5) SB as spoken in Singapore emerges as a hybrid – a mix of SB and SJR. This paper also discusses the implications from the continuation of the SB policy in Singapore.

Keywords: *Sebutan Baku, Sebutan Johor-Riau, Standard Malay; Language Identity*

Pengenalan

Pada tahun 1993, selaras dengan usaha penyeragaman bahasa Melayu antara Indonesia, Malaysia dan Singapura yang bermula sejak tahun 50-an, pemerintah Singapura mengangkat Sebutan Baku sebagai sebutan yang standard atau baku menggantikan sebutan standard yang sedia ada pada waktu itu, iaitu sebutan berasaskan loghat Johor-Riau (Asmah Haji Omar, 1988; 1992a). Sebutan Baku diperkenalkan di sekolah-sekolah dan di stesen-stesen penyiaran dan turut disyorkan penggunaannya di acara-acara rasmi yang berbahasa Melayu (CPDD, 1990). Sepanjang pelaksanaan Sebutan Baku, banyak tengkarah yang timbul dalam kalangan masyarakat dengan ada yang menyokong dasar tersebut dan ada yang tidak (BH, 2011a; BM, 2018; ST, 2013). Kini, lebih 25 tahun kanak-kanak Melayu di Singapura terdidik dengan Sebutan Baku bagi mata pelajaran bahasa Melayu di sekolah. Masyarakat umum juga disajikan dengan berita di radio dan di televisyen yang disampaikan menggunakan Sebutan Baku.

Banyak yang telah ditulis mengenai Sebutan Baku, antaranya oleh Asmah (1992b), Asraf (1984), Awang Sariyan (2000), Mohamed Pitchay Gani (2004) dan Suratman Markasan (1989). Rata-rata, semua sarjana ini kecuali Asmah (1992b) memberi sokongan penuh kepada dasar Sebutan Baku. Awang (2000) malah menganggap mereka yang menolak Sebutan Baku sebagai kumpulan yang kurang faham akan konsep pembakuan bahasa termasuk sistem sebutan. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menyumbang kepada wacana tentang Sebutan Baku dengan meneliti konsep sebutan baku itu sendiri sambil menyorot sejarah perkembangan bahasa Melayu standard serta keterikatan sebutan yang berasaskan Johor-Riau dengan identiti bahasa orang Melayu Singapura. Makalah ini turut membincangkan implikasi daripada penerusan dasar Sebutan Baku.

Bahasa Melayu di Nusantara

Bahasa Melayu adalah bahasa asli di Singapura dan kawasan-kawasan di sekelilingnya termasuk Semenanjung Malaysia dan selatan Thailand, bahagian tengah dan timur Sumatera, Kepulauan Riau hinggalah ke pantai barat pulau Borneo (Asmah, 2005). Di luar kawasan teras ini – dari Sumatra ke Papua Barat – kawasan yang diberi nama Nusantara atau Kepulauan Melayu – bahasa Melayu merupakan *lingua franca* dalam kalangan komuniti-komuniti yang mempunyai bahasa asli mereka sendiri. Bahasa Melayu juga berfungsi sebagai bahasa perdagangan dan bahasa perhubungan antara kerajaan. Hal ini disebabkan oleh pengaruh kerajaan-kerajaan Melayu pada waktu dahulu, bermula dengan Kerajaan Srivijaya di Palembang, Sumatra, dari abad ke-7 dan kemudian kesultanan Melaka dari abad ke-15 (Collins, 1998).

Kejatuhan Kesultanan Melaka kepada Portugis pada tahun 1511 diikuti dengan kemunculan kesultanan-kesultanan lain di kawasan asli Melayu termasuk kesultanan Johor-Riau (abad ke-17 hingga ke-19). Dialek Johor-Riau menjadi dialek tempatan di wilayah-wilayah kesultanan Johor-Riau. Kawasan dialek ini mencakupi daerah-daerah di Sumatra timur termasuk Kepulauan Riau, Singapura, Johor, Pahang dan Selangor. Dialek ini juga mempunyai banyak persamaan dengan dialek yang penyebarannya sampai ke Ipoh di Perak (Asmah, 1992a).

Dunia Melayu terbahagi secara politik buat kali pertama dalam sejarahnya pada tahun 1824 dengan Perjanjian British-Belanda. Di bawah perjanjian itu, Britain menguasai Singapura dan Semenanjung Tanah Melayu serta sepertiga Borneo (kini Malaysia) manakala Belanda menguasai kawasan selebihnya (kini Indonesia). Di kawasan-kawasan yang dikuasai Belanda, penutur asli bahasa Melayu membentuk kumpulan minoriti di samping penutur asli ratusan bahasa lain termasuk bahasa Jawa yang amat berpengaruh. Maka berputiklah kelainan bahasa Melayu di wilayah Belanda yang berpusat di Jawa yang menerima pengaruh pelbagai bahasa khususnya bahasa Belanda dan Jawa selain bahasa-bahasa asli yang lain. Kelainan ini kian berbeza daripada bahasa Melayu yang dituturkan di kawasan teras Melayu, khususnya Singapura dan Semenanjung Tanah Melayu (Alisjahbana, 1976; Asmah, 1993; Collins, 1998). Menjelang kemerdekaan Indonesia, kelainan ini diisytiharkan sebagai bahasa kebangsaan Indonesia dan dinamakan Bahasa Indonesia.

Dialek Johor-Riau dalam Pembentukan Bahasa Melayu Standard

Bahasa Melayu di Singapura dan Malaysia berkembang secara bersama untuk tempoh yang agak lama. Kedua-dua negara mengongsi sejarah penjajahan yang sama. Selain itu, negeri Johor dan Singapura terletak dalam daerah dialek Melayu yang sama, iaitu dialek Johor-Riau (Asmah, 1988; Winstedt, 1992). Menurut para sarjana bahasa (Asmah, 1988; Asraf, 1984), dialek inilah yang menjadi asas kepada Bahasa Melayu Standard yang digunakan di kedua-dua buah negara walaupun terdapat beberapa dialek Melayu yang lain di semenanjung Tanah Melayu. Hal ini demikian kerana Singapura yang berdialek-kan Johor-Riau merupakan pusat budaya, politik dan sosio-ekonomi masyarakat Melayu yang mencapai kemuncaknya pada zaman penjajahan British (Asmah, 1992a; Heng, 2011).

Akhbar bahasa Melayu di Malaya bermula di Singapura pada akhir abad ke-19. Dengan tertubuhnya media percetakan, nahu dan kosa kata dialek Johor-Riau 'dipinjam' untuk percetakan. Norma-norma yang dibangunkan untuk bahasa tulisan yang dipelopori golongan inteligensia, yang pada awalnya menggunakan skrip Jawi (Amat Juhari Moain, 1996; Hashim Musa, 2006), tersebar ke sekolah-sekolah, institusi perguruan dan pejabat-pejabat kerajaan di seluruh Malaya dan Singapura. Proses pengintelektualan bahasa berterusan hingga terbentuk kelainan bahasa Melayu yang supralokal, iaitu tidak dibatasi kawasan. Kelainan ini dikenali sebagai Bahasa Melayu Standard (BMS) (Asmah, 1988).

Perkhidmatan radio pula mula beroperasi pada tahun 1946 dengan tertubuhnya Radio Malaya di Singapura. Jika dialek Johor-Riau menjadi model bagi bahasa bercetak (Asraf, 1984), sebutan dialek Johor-Riau pula menjadi norma sebutan juruhebah dan pembaca berita yang bertugas di stesen radio (Asmah 1988, 1992a). Seperti yang berlaku kepada nahu dan kosa kata dialek Johor-Riau, sebutan dialek itu juga berkembang bagi memenuhi fungsinya yang meluas sambil menampung penyebutan perkataan-perkataan baharu yang dipinjam daripada bahasa lain. Gaya sebutan ini dibawa ke Kuala Lumpur apabila Radio Malaya berpindah ke sana dan ke utara apabila Pulau Pinang membuka stesen radionya sendiri, juga di Sabah dan Sarawak (Asmah, 1992a). Maka lahirlah sebutan standard bahasa Melayu supralokal yang merupakan variasi kepada sebutan asal dialek Johor-Riau. Makalah ini menamakan sebutan standard ini Sebutan Johor-Riau (SJR), mengekalkan nama 'Johor-Riau' bagi mengiktiraf asal-usulnya. Asmah (1992a) merujuknya sebagai kelainan /ə/ atau kelainan 'pepet'.

Jelas bahawa pemilihan dialek Johor-Riau sebagai asas kepada pembentukan BMS dan SJR berlaku secara kebetulan dan bukan kerana perancangan atau ketetapan yang dibuat oleh pihak berkuasa (Asmah, 1992a). Laluan yang ditempohi bahasa Melayu standard ini, daripada sebuah dialek kawasan kepada dialek sosial yang diterima masyarakat tanpa dipaksa, tidak unik kepada bahasa Melayu sebaliknya mengongsi sejarah yang serupa dengan bahasa-bahasa dunia yang lain seperti bahasa Inggeris (Coupland, 2014; Hjarvard, 2004).

Harus diingat bahawa sebutan standard bahasa Melayu adalah dwipusat (Asmah, 1992b). Selain daripada SJR (atau kelainan /ə/), terdapat juga kelainan /a/ yang dituturkan di utara Semenanjung Malaysia dan Sabah dan Sarawak. Antara dua sebutan yang tabii ini, SJR memainkan peranan penting sebagai model sebutan di stesen-stesen penyiaran. Oleh yang demikian, ia sebutan yang lebih berpengaruh daripada kelainan /a/. Penutur kelainan /a/ boleh didengar beralih antara kedua-dua kelainan dalam peristiwa-peristiwa bahasa tertentu manakala dalam kalangan penutur SJR, mereka terbiasa dengan kelainan /a/ hanya dalam nyanyian dan deklamasi sajak (Asmah, 1992b). Di samping itu, kelainan /a/ sering disalah anggap sebagai Sebutan Baku kerana beberapa ciri yang dikongsi bersama. Hal ini dijelaskan dalam bahagian tentang ciri-ciri Sebutan Baku.

Bahasa Melayu di Singapura

Apabila Singapura berpisah daripada Malaysia pada tahun 1965, ia mewarisi BMS, baik dalam bentuk tulisan mahupun lisan. BMS adalah salah satu daripada dua dialek sosial bahasa Melayu yang dituturkan di Singapura. Dialek sosial yang satu lagi ialah Bahasa Melayu Basahan (BMB) yang juga terbit daripada dialek Johor-Riau (Asmah, 1986).[1] BMS bercirikan sistem penggabungan yang kompleks, iaitu penambahan imbuhan pada kata akar (‘me-’+‘tolak’ → ‘menolak’, ‘ber-’+‘lari’ → ‘berlari’), ciri yang sering digugurkan dalam BMB (Benjamin, 1993; Koh, 1990). Dalam BMB, kata-kata kerap dipendekkan (contohnya, ‘tidak’ /tidaʔ/ → /taʔ/, ‘hendak' /həndaʔ/ → /naʔ/; /h/ antara dua vokal digugurkan (misalnya, ‘mahu’ /mahu/ → /mau/, ‘tahu’ /tahu/ → /tau/); dan penambahan hentian glotis (/ʔ/) untuk perkataan yang berakhir dengan 'i' dan 'a' (misalnya, ‘nasi’ /nasi/ → /nasiʔ/, ‘bawa’ /bawə/ → ‘bawak’ /bawaʔ/).[2]

Sementara BMS ialah dialek formal yang digunakan oleh golongan terdidik di institusi pendidikan, media dan di upacara rasmi, BMB pula ialah dialek yang tidak tertulis, digunakan sebagai bahasa basahan di rumah dan dalam pelbagai situasi yang tidak rasmi (Koh, 1990). Kedua-dua BMS dan BMB, bagaimanapun, berkongsi ciri sebutan yang sama, iaitu SJR. Sama ada seorang penutur mengucapkan ‘tidak cukup’ (bentuk BMS) atau ‘tak cukup’ (bentuk BMB), ‘cukup’ disebut dengan cara yang sama (/ʧukop/). Begitu juga dengan suku kata ‘pa’ dalam ‘tidak apa’ (BMS) dan ‘takpa’ (BMB); ia disebut dengan cara yang sama (/tidaʔ apə/ dan /taʔpə/). Jelas di sini bahawa identiti orang Melayu Singapura dari segi bahasanya berkait rapat dengan SJR.

Usaha Penyeragaman Bahasa Melayu di Nusantara

Perbezaan yang semakin ketara antara bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa Melayu di negara-negara lain di Nusantara mendorong para bahasawan dari Malaya, Singapura dan Indonesia pada tahun 50-an untuk memulakan usaha menghasilkan satu bahasa Melayu yang standard untuk rantau ini (Muhd Ariff Ahmad, 1993). Ini melibatkan pengkodifikasian bahasa dengan lebih tersusun bermula dengan ejaan diikuti dengan peristilahan, tatabahasa, perkamusan dan akhirnya sebutan. Bagaimanapun, keseragaman penuh merentas sempadan politik sukar dicapai, terutama sebutan (Milroy & Milroy, 2012).

Ada beberapa faktor yang menghambat penyeragaman. Pertama pengaruh luar. Ejaan dan penerbitan kata perkataan dan imbuhan asing yang dipinjam ke dalam bahasa Indonesia dipengaruhi bahasa Belanda manakala Bahasa Melayu di Malaysia dan Singapura dipengaruhi bahasa Inggeris. Bagaimanapun, dalam arena kebahasaan Indonesia masa kini, lebih banyak kata bahasa Inggeris diindonesiakan berbeza dengan kebahasaan Melayu yang lebih cenderung mengekalkan kata bahasa Melayu yang ada. Kedua pengaruh dalaman: Bahasa Indonesia bahasa penyatu pelbagai penutur bahasa asli yang terdapat di Indonesia yang mempengaruhi kosa kata Bahasa Indonesia; Bahasa Melayu pula berinteraksi dengan dialek-dialek bahasa yang sama. Ketiga hubungan terhad di antara penutur: siaran radio dan televisyen di kedua-dua negara jarang melintasi sempadan politik, begitu juga bahan-bahan bercetak yang diterbitkan di kedua-dua negara. Keempat rasa bangga dan pemeliharaan identiti: Bahasa Indonesia dan Bahasa Melayu adalah penanda identiti bagi penutur masing-masing yang lebih cenderung untuk mengekalkan bahasa mereka sendiri (Asmah, 1992a, 1993). Hingga hari ini, Bahasa Indonesia terus berkembang mengikut arah yang tersendiri yang berlainan daripada Bahasa Melayu di Malaysia dan Singapura. Baru-baru ini terbit sebuah kamus bahasa Indonesia-bahasa Melayu bagi memudahkan para penutur kedua-dua bahasa memahami perbezaan antara bahasa mereka (Rusdi Abdullah, 2016).

Pada tahun 1993, selaras dengan harapan awal terhadap usaha penyeragaman bahasa Melayu di Nusantara, pemerintah Singapura, atas nasihat Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura (MBMS) mengisytiharkan Sebutan Baku (SB) sebagai sebutan yang baku, menggantikan SJR, untuk diamalkan di sekolah-sekolah, stesen-stesen media dan untuk kegunaan di upacara rasmi (Muhd Ariff, 1993). Ini menyusuli perisytiharan yang serupa yang dibuat oleh kerajaan Malaysia lima tahun sebelum itu pada tahun 1988. Bagaimanapun, pada tahun 2000, setelah 12 tahun melaksanakan SB, kerajaan Malaysia memansuhkannya dan kembali kepada ‘sebutan biasa’ (iaitu kelainan /ə/ atau SJR) kerana bimbang akan terhakisnya identiti orang Melayu yang sekian lama berteraskan ‘sebutan biasa’ itu (Utusan Online, 2000a).[3] Singapura, bagaimanapun, kekal dengan dasar SB hingga hari ini. Pengekalan SB di Singapura, bagaimanapun, mengundang banyak tengkarah (BH, 2011a; BM, 2018).

Berbeza dengan sebutan standard kelainan /ə/ (SJR) dan kelainan /a/ yang masing-masing mempunyai sistem fonologinya yang tersendiri kerana tumbuh dan berkembang secara tabii dalam masyarakat penuturnya di Malaysia dan Singapura, SB ialah fenomena baru bagi penutur di kedua-dua negara ini, model sebutan yang dibuat-buat yang berpandukan prinsip ‘sebut sebagaimana yang dieja’ (Asraf, 1984; Dahaman, 1994; Mohamed Pitchay Gani, 2004; Suratman, 1989) yang dipaksa ke atas penutur bahasa Melayu. Model sebutan ini dinamakan ‘Sebutan Baku’ dengan meletakkan kata ‘baku’ di dalam namanya tetapi ini tidak dengan sendirinya menjadikannya sebutan yang baku.

Ciri-ciri Sebutan Baku

SB menuntut penuturnya mengucapkan perkataan mengikut cara perkataan itu dieja. Ia mengandaikan bahawa satu huruf dapat dipadankan dengan satu bunyi, dan semua huruf yang muncul dalam perkataan mesti diucapkan (Ismail, 1994). Berdasarkan panduan ini, SB berbeza dengan SJR atas tiga ciri utama berkaitan dengan posisi huruf dalam unit kata: 1) huruf 'a' di suku kata akhir terbuka disebut /ə/ dalam SJR tetapi /a/ dalam SB; 2) huruf 'i' dan 'u' di suku kata akhir tertutup masing-masing disebut /e/ dan

Jadual 1
Ciri-ciri utama beberapa sebutan standard bahasa Melayu

Sistem sebutan / Posisi bunyi dalam kata	Sebutan Johor-Riau (kelainan /ə/)	Sebutan Utara[4] (kelainan /a/)	Sebutan Baku	Sebutan Bahasa Indonesia
1. 'a' di suku kata akhir terbuka	/ə/	/a/	/a/	/a/
2. 'i' & 'u' di suku kata akhir tertutup a. sebelum, 'n', 'ng'; b. sebelum konsonan lain	 /e/ & /o/ /e/ & /o/	 /i/ & /u/ /e/ & /o/	 /i/ & /u/ /i/ & /u/	 /i/ & /u/ /i/ & /u/
3. 'r' di akhir suku kata	senyap	/r/	/r/	/r/

/o/ dalam SJR tetapi /i/ dan /u/ dalam SB; dan 3) huruf 'r' di akhir suku kata disenyapkan dalam SJR tetapi dibunyikan dalam SB. Perbezaan ini ditunjukkan dalam Jadual 1 yang turut menyenaraikan pola sebutan kelainan /a/ dan sebutan Bahasa Indonesia.

Berdasarkan tiga ciri ini, SB serupa dengan sebutan bahasa Indonesia. Sebaliknya, SJR berbeza daripada kedua-duanya. Oleh itu, meminta penutur bahasa Melayu dari Singapura dan Malaysia bercakap menggunakan SB seakan meminta mereka bercakap seperti orang Indonesia[5] (misalnya, /lupa/, bukan /lupə/; /sakit/, bukan /saket/; /takut/, bukan /takot/; /tukar/, bukan /tuka/). Bayangkan situasi yang mana penutur asli bahasa Inggeris dari Britain dianjurkan supaya melucutkan cara sebutan mereka (misalnya, /kɑː/ ('car') dan /ɑːsk/ ('ask')) dan bercakap seperti penutur bahasa Inggeris Amerika (/kɑːr/ ('car') dan /æsk/ ('ask')). Pastinya mereka tidak akan menyambut baik anjuran tersebut kerana ini bermakna meminggirkan identiti mereka sebagai orang British, yang antara-nya diindekskan melalui sebutan. Hal ini demikian kerana sebutan ialah indikator penting identiti bahasa (Lippi-Green 1997). Atas alasan yang sama, dapat difahami mengapa Malaysia memansuhkan dasar SB (Utusan Online, 2000a).

Ketakwajaran Sebutan Baku

Bagi menyokong SB, Asraf (1984) memetik pernyataan K. L. Pike dalam bukunya berjudul *Phonemics*: "kata-kata dieja sebagaimana yang diucapkan dan diucapkan sebagaimana yang dieja, dan tidak ada huruf yang senyap" (Pike, 1947: 57). Pernyataan ini didahului dengan penjelasan tentang bagaimana setiap bunyi bahasa (atau fonem) wujud dengan pelbagai variasi bunyi (atau alofon). Sebagai contoh, bunyi /t/ yang diwakili huruf 't' disebut dengan bibir hampar dalam 'tilam' [tilam] tetapi dengan bibir bundar dalam 'tulang' [tʷulaŋ]; huruf 'a' yang pertama dalam [mãlas] disebut dengan bunyi sengau tetapi yang kedua tanpa sengauan. Jika dinilai secara akustik, bunyi-bunyi ini berbeza. Namun demikian, penutur asli tidak akan mendengar perbezaan ini, mendengarnya hanya sebagai satu bunyi 't' dan satu bunyi 'a', iaitu mengenali bunyi bahasa di peringkat fonem. Atas pertimbangan ini, Pike berpendapat bahawa sistem ejaan yang praktikal adalah sistem yang memperuntukkan satu huruf bagi satu fonem.

Perhatikan bahawa Pike (1947) mengutamakan bunyi (fonem) daripada huruf kerana huruf hanya perwakilan bunyi bahasa. Hanya apabila sistem ejaan itu benar-benar fonemik, iaitu satu huruf dipadankan dengan satu bunyi, iaitu dieja sebagaimana yang diucapkan, barulah kata-kata dapat diucapkan sebagaimana yang dieja. Bagi bahasa Melayu, walaupun sistem ejaannya lebih fonemik daripada kebanyakan bahasa, ia masih tidak fonemik sepenuhnya. Sebagai contoh, bunyi /e/ (dalam 'enak') dan /ə/ (dalam 'emas') tidak ada padanan huruf yang tersendiri; kedua-duanya dieja 'e'. Begitu juga bunyi /k/ dan /ʔ/ (dalam 'kakak' /kakaʔ/, kedua-dua bunyi ini diwakili huruf yang sama, iaitu 'k'. Seterusnya, ejaan bagi akhiran 'an' juga tidak fonemik kerana tidak mewakili dengan tepat kepelbagaian sebutan bagi akhiran ini (misalnya, /wan/ dalam 'tiru–an'; /jan/ dalam 'tepi–an'; /ʔan/ dalam 'duga–an'; dan /an/ dalam 'kasih–an') (Asmah, 2008; Farid M. Onn, 1980).

Banyak lagi ketidsepadanan antara huruf dengan bunyi yang hanya dapat ditemukan melalui analisis fonologi bahasa Melayu (Farid, 1980). Kesemua ini menunjukkan bahawa sistem ejaan bahasa Melayu yang sedia ada tidak memenuhi tuntutan sistem ejaan yang fonemik. Jika ejaan tidak mewakili sebutan dengan tepat, maka sebutan tidak boleh berpandukan ejaan (Pike, 1947). SB, yang berdiri atas dasar 'sebut sebagaimana yang dieja', tidak dapat dipakai untuk bahasa Melayu. Selain itu, ia juga mengelirukan. Terdapat perkataan seperti 'baka' (benih) yang disebut /bakə/ dalam SJR tetapi tidak lagi dapat dikenali jika disebut /baka/ seperti yang dituntut dalam SB.

Pendorong Sebutan Baku

Apakah yang mendorong pemerintah Singapura mengekalkan SB di Singapura? Dua motivasi dapat dikenal pasti (BH, 2004; BM, 2018):

Sebutan Baku lebih 'sistematik dan konsisten' daripada Sebutan Johor-Riau

Penyokong SB menganggap SB lebih 'sistematik dan konsisten' daripada SJR. SJR dikatakan membenarkan banyak perkecualian yang menyimpang daripada rumus deskriptif yang ada (Asraf, 1984; Suratman, 1989). Sebagai contoh, rumus fonologi yang mengubah /a/ di akhir kata kepada /ə/ beroperasi untuk perkataan seperti 'suka' (/sukə/) dan 'bahasa' (/bahasə/) tetapi tidak untuk 'bola' (/bola/) dan 'wanita' (/wanita/). Begitu juga dengan rumus fonologi yang merendahkan vokal tinggi /i/ dan /u/ di suku kata akhir tertutup menjadi /e/ dan /o/; ia beroperasi untuk 'bukit'

(/buket/) dan ‘lanun’ (/lanon/) tetapi tidak untuk 'aiskrim' (/aiskrim/) dan 'kasus' (/kasus/). Perkecualian ini dianggap bermasalah dan ia diatasi dengan mengaplikasikan peraturan preskriptif SB 'sebut sebagaimana yang dieja'.

Terdapat juga rasa bimbang akan timbulnya kekeliruan daripada kesepadanan huruf-fonem yang tidak sempurna itu. Namun, pada hakikatnya, tidak sukar bagi penutur asli SJR untuk menyebut perkataan-perkataan yang disebut di atas. Mereka tahu bagaimana untuk menyebut 'suka' dan 'bola', iaitu /sukə/ dan /bola/, biar tidak konsisten sekali pun penyebutan huruf ‘a’ antara dua perkataan tersebut. Mereka juga tidak perlu banyak berfikir untuk merendahkan vokal tinggi /i/ di posisi akhir suku kata tertutup kepada /e/ untuk ‘bukit’ (/buket/) tetapi mengekalkan ‘i’ untuk ‘aiskrim’ (/aiskrim/). Mereka juga akan menyebut 'lanun' sebagai /lanon/ dan 'kasus' sebagai /kasus/ tanpa merasakan ada yang tidak kena dengan penyebutan ‘u’ yang berbeza itu. Terdapat keseragaman yang tinggi di kalangan penutur SJR tentang cara kata-kata ini diucapkan.

Harus diingat bahawa SJR adalah model sebutan yang tabii yang dikawal oleh peraturan bahasa dalam minda penutur. Rumus-rumus fonologi yang dibangunkan ahli bahasa untuk mendeskripsikan tingkah laku penutur SJR itu mungkin masih belum sampai ke tahap yang benar-benar mewakili peraturan mental itu. Walau bagaimanapun, rumus-rumus yang sedia ada mampu menjelaskan sejumlah besar data fonetik termasuk huraian tentang tiga ciri yang membezakan SJR dan SB (Farid, 1980). Namun demikian, masih terdapat data seperti yang ditunjukkan di atas yang tidak dapat dijelaskan berdasarkan rumus-rumus tadi. Ini hanya mencerminkan kekerdilan manusia dalam usahanya menggali dan memahami rahsia alam (termasuk perilaku manusia berbahasa). Kesedaran ini penting agar SJR dihormati sebagai sistem sebutan yang tabii dengan segala ‘kecacatan’nya. Ia harus terus dikaji bagi mendapatkan huraian yang lebih memuaskan daripada ‘membetulkan’nya supaya menjadi 'sistematik dan konsisten'.

Kesarjanaan dalam bidang fonologi bahasa Melayu tidak semestinya memerlukan pemulihan. Perkecualian daripada rumus deskriptif tidak unik kepada bahasa Melayu. Sebagai contoh dalam bahasa Inggeris, terdapat banyak kata kerja yang tidak mengikut pola infleksi yang biasa, iaitu ada *regular verbs* (kata kerja biasa seperti: ‘jump’-‘jumped’; ‘reel’-‘reeled’; brew’-‘brewed’) dan ada *irregular verbs* (kata kerja tak biasa: ‘buy’-‘bought’; ‘eat’-‘ate’; ‘throw’-‘threw’). Namun demikian, kata kerja-kata kerja yang tidak biasa itu kekal sebagai sebahagian daripada bahasa Inggeris. Seharusnya juga begitu dengan bahasa Melayu; banyak perkataan yang sebutannya menyimpang daripada ketetapan yang sedia ada. Namun ini tidak harus dijadikan sebab untuk ‘membetulkan’ seluruh sistem sebutan.

Sebutan Baku lebih mudah dipelajari dan diajar

Seperti yang dibincangkan di atas, tidak sukar untuk penutur asli SJR mengucapkan kata-kata dalam bahasa Melayu walaupun perlu memadankan bunyi yang berbeza-beza pada satu-satu huruf. Walau bagaimanapun, terdapat keprihatinan bahawa ketidaktekalan sebutan yang wujud dalam SJR menimbulkan kesulitan kepada anak-anak kecil yang belajar membaca dalam bahasa Melayu (Pairah Satariman, 2007;

Suratman, 1989) terutama mereka yang tidak terdedah kepada bahasa Melayu di rumah dan mempelajarinya hanya di sekolah.

Pada dasarnya, ini adalah isu pedagogi dan pembelajaran (Hulme, et al, 2012). Amalan umum untuk mengajar membaca dalam Bahasa Melayu adalah dengan menggunakan kaedah fonik – menyahkodkan perkataan suku kata demi suku kata. Pelajar diajar bahawa setiap konsonan dan vokal mempunyai satu nilai bunyi, misalnya, 'r' disebut /r/, 's' disebut /s/, dan 'a' disebut /a/. Menggabungkan setiap konsonan itu dengan 'a' menghasilkan suku kata /ra/ dan /sa/. Menyusun dua suku kata dalam satu rangkaian menghasilkan /rasa/, iaitu kata ‘rasa’. Kaedah ini bermasalah jika kita mahu perkataan 'rasa' disebut /rasə/ seperti dalam SJR. Malangnya, bukan kaedah mengajar yang disemak semula dan pedagogi yang lebih sesuai dibangunkan demi membantu pelajar membaca 'rasa' sebagai /rasə/, sebaliknya sebutan itu yang dianggap bermasalah dan perlu dibetulkan.

Oleh itu, tidak hairanlah jika setelah 'membetulkan' sebutan, bahasa Melayu menjadi 'lebih mudah' untuk dibaca. Dalam satu kaji selidik seramai 300 pelajar Menengah 3 dan 76 orang guru Bahasa Melayu sekolah menengah, Pairah (2007) mendapati bahawa 88.3 peratus responden pelajar melaporkan bahawa SB membantu mereka dalam pembacaan dan pengejaan. Selain itu, 92.1 peratus responden guru percaya bahawa SB telah berjaya memudahkan pelajar membaca dan mengeja. Bagaimanapun, kajian tersebut tidak menimbangkan lenggok sebutan pelajar-pelajar itu. Tidak mengejutkan jika akhirnya mereka bercakap dengan bahasa Melayu yang kedengaran "berbeza daripada ibu bapa dan nenek moyang” mereka (menukil kata-kata seorang bapa Melayu yang mendengar anak perempuannya bercakap (Osman Sidek, 2013, dikutip daripada Yurni Irwati Mohamed Said, 2015)).

Sebenarnya, tanpa SB pun, bahasa Melayu jauh lebih mudah ‘dibaca’ (dalam ertikata membunyikan huruf) kerana ia mempunyai padanan huruf-fonem yang lebih telus, berbanding bahasa Inggeris. Jika sukar mengajar menyebut 'rasa' dalam SJR kerana huruf 'a' dalam suku kata pertama dan kedua mewakili dua fonem yang berbeza (/a/ dan /ə/), bayangkan betapa sukarnya mengajar huruf 'a' dalam bahasa Inggeris. Dalam bahasa Inggeris, ‘a’ mewakili bukan dua tetapi empat fonem: /æ/ (‘man’), /ɑː/ (‘can’t’), /ɜː/ (‘sofa’) dan /eɪ/ (‘ancient’); Begitu juga huruf 'c', ia mewakili empat fonem: /s/ (‘city’), /k/ (‘cotton’), /ʃ/ (‘species’) dan /tʃ/ (cello); dan rangkaian fonem /ʌf / diwakili dalam ejaan sebagai 'uff' ('stuff') dan 'ough' ('enough'). Guru Bahasa Inggeris perlu bergelut dengan lebih banyak 'ketidaktekalan' sebutan dan yang lebih rumit tetapi mereka menerima bahasa itu seadanya dan merancang pengajaran sesuai dengan ‘ketidaktekalan’ itu. Pelajar masih dapat membaca dengan segala ‘kecacatan’ yang ada pada bahasa itu.

Dalam pengajaran membaca dalam bahasa Inggeris, huruf yang tidak dapat dinyahkodkan melalui fonik diajar dengan mengecam seluruh kata (*whole word*) atau pengecaman kata (*word recognition*). Melalui fonik, pelajar diajar bahawa huruf 'b' mewakili fonem /b/, seperti dalam 'bee' (‘lebah’), 'bus' (‘bas’), dan 'boot' (‘kasut’). Gagasan fonik ‘satu huruf satu bunyi’ dilonggarkan bagi menampung fonem-fonem yang diwakili lebih daripada satu huruf atau rangkaian huruf seperti fonem /f/ yang diwakili huruf ‘f’, ‘ff’, ‘gh’ dan ‘ph’. Hanya perkataan seperti 'once’ (‘sekali') dan 'cough’ (‘batuk') yang tidak mudah dinyahkodkan melalui fonik diajar menggunakan pendekatan seluruh kata.

Dua pendekatan ini – fonik dengan penekanan pada perkaitan huruf dengan fonem, dan pengecaman kata dengan penekanan pada seluruh kata dan makna – sering disepadukan dalam program membaca bahasa Inggeris (Asmah, 1993; Jones & Deterding, 2007). Untuk bahasa Melayu, tiada keperluan mendesak untuk menggunakan kaedah pengecaman kata, hanya meluaskan kaedah fonik bagi menampung fonem-fonem yang diwakili lebih daripada satu huruf. Kanak-kanak yang belajar membaca harus diberitahu bahawa kebanyakan huruf dalam bahasa Melayu mewakili satu fonem tetapi terdapat beberapa huruf yang mewakili lebih daripada satu fonem (bergantung pada posisi huruf-huruf itu dalam perkataan).

Sebutan dan Identiti Penutur Bahasa

Seperti yang dinyatakan sebelum ini, berdasarkan tiga ciri yang membezakan sebutan-sebutan standard dalam bahasa Melayu, model SB serupa model sebutan standard Bahasa Indonesia (SBI) tetapi berbeza dengan model SJR. Kelainan /a/ terletak antara SJR dan SB dan SBI. Ini bermakna orang Melayu Singapura yang mengamalkan SB akan kedengaran seperti orang Indonesia di peringkat segmen bunyi. Sesungguhnya, bagi orang Melayu Singapura yang tidak setuju dengan dasar SB, masalahnya ialah SB menjadikan mereka kedengaran janggal.

Perhatikan petikan daripada rayuan Encik Guntor Sadali, mantan Editor Berita Harian (BH). Berucap di majlis makan malam Anugerah Berita Harian 2011, beliau dilaporkan telah mempersoalkan keperluan menggunakan SB (BH, 2011a):

> "Setelah hampir dua dekad sebutan baku diperkenalkan di sekolah-sekolah, saya rasa sudah tiba masanya Majlis Bahasa Melayu Singapura meneliti semula dengan serius objektif langkah tersebut dan sama ada ia wajar diteruskan. …
> Sebutan bahasa Melayu Johor-Riau yang kini digunakan masyarakat Melayu Singapura seharusnya dapat diterima sebagai sebutan yang standard atau baku. …
> Anggota masyarakat Melayu pada umumnya mendapati sebutan baku begitu janggal, dan disebabkan itu mereka tidak menggunakannya dalam kehidupan harian mereka.
> Malaysia, yang sama-sama memulakan usaha ini dengan Singapura, juga tidak lagi menggunakan Sebutan Baku dalam media penyiaran mereka.
> Jadi, persoalannya ialah patutkah kita terus mengajar Sebutan Baku di sekolah?
> Kepada saya, ia satu usaha yang sia-sia. …
> Marilah kita bercakap dengan cara yang membolehkan kata-kata keluar daripada lidah kita dengan mudah tanpa kedengaran kaku atau seperti dipaksa-paksa."

Encik Guntor bukan orang pertama yang menyuarakan keprihatinannya terhadap SB (rujuk Mohd Zulkifli Rahmat, 2003; Awalludin Ghani, 2007; dan lain-lain) tetapi kerana kedudukan beliau sebagai Editor BH, kenyataannya diberi lebih perhatian oleh masyarakat termasuk MBMS (BH, 2011b). Seperti yang dijangkakan, keraguannya terhadap penerusan dasar SB telah mencetuskan perbahasan bukan sahaja di akhbar arus perdana, tetapi di media sosial seperti Facebook, bahkan di majlis-majlis perkahwinan. Ini mendorong Encik Maarof Salleh, mantan Presiden Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura, dalam ulasannya di BH, mencadangkan: "selagi dasar atau peraturan adalah buatan manusia, ia wajar disemak dari masa ke masa, dipinda jika perlu, dan juga dirombak jika itulah yang diperlukan." (Maarof, 2011).

Sejak itu, terdengar suara-suara yang meminta supaya diadakan semakan atau yang mengkritik dasar SB (misalnya, Annaliza Bakri, 2013; Yurni Irwati, 2015). Dalam surat kepada akhbar *The Sunday Times*, seorang bapa Melayu berkongsi keprihatinannya tentang anak perempuannya yang kedengaran janggal apabila bercakap menggunakan SB, yang beliau rujuk sebagai 'Melayu Baku' (Osman, 2013, dikutip daripada Yurni Irwati, 2015: 62-63):

> “Menguji 'Melayu Baku' sewaktu makan malam bersama keluarga, anak perempuan saya yang bersekolah kedengaran berbeza daripada saya, isteri saya, ibu bapa dan datuk nenek kami ...
> Seperti orang Melayu dahulu, kami bercakap dengan sebutan yang dikenali sebagai 'Melayu Johor-Riau' ...
> Walaupun saya dapat memahami apa yang anak perempuan saya katakan dalam 'Melayu Baku', ... persoalannya ialah mengapa sistem pendidikan kita mahu membuat bahasa Melayunya kedengaran berbeza daripada orang tua dan nenek moyangnya? Jika sebabnya adalah demi penyeragaman bahasa Melayu di rantau ini, nampaknya ia tidak logikal kerana usaha ini hanya dilakukan secara aktif di Singapura yang penduduk Melayunya kecil jumlahnya berbanding dunia berbahasa Melayu yang lebih luas.
> Dunia Melayu yang lebih luas terus berbangga dengan warisan lisan mereka dan menghargai kepelbagaian sebutan dan loghat, serta slanga dan bahasa basahan sebagai sebahagian daripada warisan yang hidup dan dinamis.
> Usaha 'Melayu Baku' Singapura mencerminkan obsesi untuk memudahkan warisan yang kompleks demi memudahkan pengajaran. Akhirnya, ini akan menyebabkan orang Melayu Singapura kehilangan warisan lisan mereka. Fikirkanlah semula dasar ini sebelum keadaan tidak dapat dipulihkan.”

Pandangan bahawa teras kebudayaan Melayu Singapura berindekskan SJR (BH, 2017) sejalan dengan pendirian mahasiswa Melayu Singapura. Dalam kaji selidik 100 orang responden (berusia antara 18-25 tahun) dari enam buah universiti tempatan, Sakinah Mohd Mohsen (2019) mendapati bahawa 94 peratus responden melaporkan bahawa SJR (bukan SB) mewakili masyarakat Melayu Singapura. 91 peratus pula berpendapat bahawa SJR (bukan SB) lebih tepat mewakili bagaimana mereka sendiri berbahasa Melayu, dan 86 peratus responden lebih suka menggunakan SJR (bukan SB) ketika berkomunikasi dalam bahasa Melayu.

Perlu diingat bahawa di seberang tambak, isu identiti juga tergambar dalam keputusan Malaysia untuk menggugurkan SB pada tahun 2000. Prof Asmah Haji Omar dari Universiti Malaya dipetik sebagai berkata (Utusan Online, 2000b):

> "Sistem sebutan baku bahasa Melayu yang diamalkan sejak tahun 1988 boleh melenyapkan identiti bahasa Melayu asal yang telah digunakan sejak zaman-berzaman. … Sebutan baku tidak melambangkan identiti kemelayuan …
> Ia tidak langsung mencerminkan bahasa Melayu yang dikenali mempunyai alunan lagu dan irama yang indah.
> Bahasa baku bila digunakan (dengan SB) tidak kedengaran macam bahasa Melayu selain ia juga merupakan bahasa yang dibuat-buat dan intonasinya bila dituturkan agak kasar, …
> Sebutan baku tidak langsung melambangkan ketulenan bahasa Melayu Johor-Riau yang modelnya telah digunakan sejak dahulu lagi."

Sebutan Hibrid

Tidak banyak kajian yang dilakukan untuk memahami kesan SB ke atas 'lidah' penutur bahasa Melayu. Dalam kajian oleh Sakinah (2019) yang dirujuk sebelum ini, beliau turut menganalisis secara fonetik ucapan spontan dan bacaan 10 respondennya. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa SB yang mampu dituturkan adalah tidak sempurna walaupun responden telah diarah secara eksplisit supaya bercakap dan membaca dengan SB sebaik mungkin. Sebutan yang ditunjukkan oleh responden adalah sebutan hibrid, iaitu campuran SB dan SJR.

Dalam mengucapkan huruf 'a' dalam suku kata akhir terbuka ketika membaca senarai perkataan dan perenggan, ketepatan sebutan berpandukan SB adalah tinggi dan agak sama (purata 98.5%). Ketekalan dalam menyuarakan huruf 'r' di akhir suku kata ketika membaca senarai perkataan dan perenggan juga sama tetapi rendah sedikit (purata 91.9%). Mengucapkan 'i' dan 'u' dalam suku kata akhir tertutup, bagaimanapun, mencatat tahap ketepatan yang berbeza-beza. Ketika membaca senarai perkataan, responden dapat mengucapkan 'i' dan 'u' pada ketepatan 93.7% tetapi ketika membaca perenggan, ketepatan jatuh ke paras 76.2% oleh kerana penyebutan sesetengah responden beralih kepada SJR, iaitu menyebut 'i' dan 'u' sebagai /e/ dan /o/.

Ketepatan jatuh ke paras terendah dalam ucapan spontan yang mana ciri SJR lebih ketara. Ini mungkin kerana responden tidak mempunyai masa untuk mengawasi sebutan ketika bercakap berbeza ketika membaca. Ketepatan dalam mengucapkan 'a' dan menyuarakan 'r' dalam ucapan spontan mengikut SB turun ke paras sekitar 82%. Ketika mengucapkan 'i' dan 'u', paras ketepatan menjunam kepada 26.7% dan 31.0%. Ini bermakna apabila seseorang itu berkata beliau bercakap menggunakan SB, beliau sebenarnya mengamalkan sebutan hibrid, iaitu ciri SBnya terbatas kepada huruf 'a' dan 'r' manakala huruf 'i' dan 'u' bercirikan SJR, iaitu /e/ dan /o/.

Dapatan yang serupa diperolehi Maisarah (2019) dalam kajian beliau ke atas sebutan 20 orang responden yang terdiri daripada pemimpin pemerintah, pembaca berita di televisyen, pembaca berita di radio, dan juruhebah di radio. Antara empat kumpulan ini, pembaca berita di televisyen agak tekal sebutan SBnya (ketepatan menyebut huruf 'a' dalam suku kata akhir terbuka dan menyuarakan huruf 'r' di akhir suku kata agak sama – purata 98.2%; ketepatan menyebut huruf 'u' dan 'i' di suku kata akhir tertutup masing-masing 86.2% dan 61.9%) manakala tiga kumpulan yang lain jelas mengamalkan sebutan hibrid (ketepatan menyebut huruf ‘a’ sekitar 83.6%; huruf ‘r’ sekitar 59.8%; dan huruf ‘i’ dan ‘u’ di paras terendah – sekitar 41.2%). Kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa SB bukan sahaja cuba digunakan (dengan sebutan hibrid) dalam konteks formal (ucapan di parlimen dan laporan berita) tetapi penggunaannya telah memasuki domain yang tidak formal juga (perbualan juruhebah di radio sesama sendiri dan bersama pemanggil). Ini bercanggah dengan dasar yang memperuntukkan SB kepada situasi formal sahaja.

Dapatan-dapatan ini menunjukkan tanda-tanda bahawa model sebutan yang diharapkan pemerintah dan MBMS belum kesampaian. Setelah 25 tahun melaksanakan dasar SB, model sebutan yang mampu dicapai oleh pemimpin, pembaca berita, mahasiswa dan mungkin juga golongan pelajar yang lain adalah model sebutan yang bercampur aduk. Jika trend ini menjadi kebiasaan dan dasar SB diteruskan di sekolah, Singapura mungkin akan melahirkan masyarakat Melayu yang kian tersisih daripada identiti asalnya. Mereka tidak dapat bertutur dalam bahasa Melayu menggunakan SB sebagaimana yang diharapkan pada masa yang sama loghat SJR mereka tidak lagi sempurna. Hal ini umpama peribahasa ‘yang dikejar tak dapat, yang dikendong berciciran’.

Pada awal pelaksanaan SB, tiada penutur asli SB. Pembaca berita dan guru-guru bahasa Melayu antara golongan yang diberi latihan menggunakan SB (Mohamed Pitchay Gani, 2004; Suratman, 1987). Lebih mudah untuk menggunakan SB jika tugas seseorang hanya memerlukannya membaca daripada skrip. Namun demikian, pemimpin dan pembaca berita di radio juga membaca daripada skrip tetapi mereka hanya dapat mencapai tahap sebutan hibrid (Maisarah, 2019). Apatah lagi guru bahasa Melayu yang tidak dapat bergantung pada skrip ketika mengajar. Tuntutan ke atas mereka lebih tinggi – mengawasi sebutan dan juga berfikir dan menyampaikan isi pengajaran secara spontan. Besar kemungkinan ciri SB yang mampu dikawal oleh guru ialah ‘a’ dan ‘r’ manakala ‘i' dan ‘u’ kekal bercirikan SJR. Ini mungkin model SB yang dicontohi murid dan kesannya dapat dilihat dalam ucapan mahasiswa (Sakinah, 2019).

Kesimpulan

Makalah ini menyumbang kepada wacana penstandardan bahasa dengan meneliti evolusi bahasa standard dan sebutan standard, khususnya Bahasa Melayu Standard (BMS), Sebutan Johor-Riau (SJR atau kelainan /ə/) serta kelainan /a/, dalam konteks sosio-sejarah masyarakat Melayu Singapura dan Malaysia. BMS dan SJR adalah kelainan bahasa dan sebutan yang tabii yang berkembang secara kebetulan daripada dialek daerah kepada dialek supralokal. Kelainan /a/ pula sebutan standard yang terbatas kepada orang Melayu di utara Semenanjung dan Malaysia Timur, yang mampu beralih kepada SJR jika perlu. Selain itu, SJR sebati dengan orang Melayu Singapura dan Malaysia, mendarah daging dalam jiwa mereka buat sekian lama. Dalam kalangan orang Melayu Singapura yang berumur 35 tahun ke atas yang bersekolah sebelum SB diperkenalkan, SJR adalah sebutan harian mereka baik ketika berbual dalam situasi yang santai (BMB) mahupun yang formal (BMS). Pembakuan sebutan melalui SB merupakan penafian kewujudan variasi sosial dalam amalan penutur bahasa Melayu (Idris Aman & Shahidi Abd. Hamid, 2001).

Tiada sifat intrinsik dalam mana-mana bahasa dan sebutan yang tabii yang melayakkannya dipilih menjadi asas kepada bahasa dan sebutan yang standard atau baku. Makalah ini menegaskan pembakuan BMB dan SJR atas faktor-faktor ekstrinsik – media cetak dan media penyiaran yang berputik di Singapura yang berdialekkan Johor-Riau, yang secara tidak langsung memantapkan penggunaan BMS dan SJR serta meluaskan jumlah penuturnya di Malaysia dan Singapura. Bukan sedikit peranan orang Melayu Singapura dahulu dalam menjadikan SJR sebutan standard bahasa Melayu yang ulung. Oleh itu, Singapura harus berasa bangga dan meraikan peranan penting yang mereka mainkan. SJR adalah warisan yang berharga yang kini kembali diiktiraf di Malaysia. Malangnya, Singapura terus meminggirkannya atas pertimbangan yang boleh dipertikaikan.

Makalah ini turut menilai semula kebakuan Sebutan Baku (SB) yang merupakan sebutan yang dibuat-buat yang diangkat melalui perundangan sebagai sebutan yang standard. Sukar mempertahankan SB yang berpandukan prinsip ‘kata-kata diucapkan sebagaimana yang dieja’ selagi ejaan bahasa Melayu tidak menepati sebutan. Dalam wacana tentang SB, ada yang menyamakan kelainan /a/ yang tabii dengan SB yang tidak. Prof Asmah Haji Omar, ketika menyokong keputusan jemaah menteri Malaysia untuk memansuhkan SB, menyifatkan SB sebagai sebutan yang “dibuat-buat”, mempunyai intonasi yang “agak kasar” dan “tidak melambangkan identiti kemelayuan” (Utusan Online, 2000b). Beliau, yang sendiri berasal dari utara Semenanjung dan bangga dengan dialeknya, tidak mungkin merujuk kepada kelainan /a/ dalam kenyataannya itu. Hanya SB yang tiada penutur asli di Malaysia mahupun di Singapura mempunyai sifat-sifat itu.

Nota Akhir

1. Terdapat dialek sosial yang ketiga, bahasa pasar, yang pernah menjadi *lingua franca* di Singapura. Ia jarang lagi kedengaran sejak bahasa Inggeris mengambil alih sebagai bahasa penyatu kaum di Singapura melalui dasar yang mengutamakan bahasa Inggeris.
2. Aksara IPA (*International Phonetic Association*, 1999) digunakan untuk mewakili bunyi. Lambang yang diletakkan dalam kurungan mereng (/ /) mewakili bunyi (fonem) dan dalam kurungan berkotak ([ ]) mewakili variasi fonem (alofon). Lambang dalam pengikat kata (‘ ’) mewakili huruf. Misalnya, huruf ‘k’ dalam bahasa Melayu mewakili dua fonem, /k/ dan /ʔ/, bergantung pada posisinya dalam suku kata (‘kakak’ /kakaʔ/). Huruf ‘e’ juga mewakili dua bunyi dalam bahasa Melayu, /e/ dan /ə/ (‘enak’ /enaʔ/; ‘emak’ (/əmaʔ/). /j/ merupakan lambang IPA untuk huruf ‘y’ seperti dalam ‘yuran’ (/juran/). Fonem ini diselitkan antara /i/ dan /a/ dalam ‘tepian’ (/təpijan/).
3. Bagaimanapun, SB masih dibenarkan untuk tujuan pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa Melayu di sekolah-sekolah di Malaysia. Namun, para pelajar tidak diwajibkan menggunakannya dalam ujian lisan.
4. Terdapat satu lagi perbezaan antara kelainan /ə/ dan kelainan /a/ yang tidak ditunjukkan di sini. Dalam kelainan /ə/, huruf 'e' dan 'o' diucapkan sebagai vokal separuh tinggi, iaitu /e/ dan /o/, tetapi dalam kelainan /a/, ia disebut sebagai vokal separuh rendah, iaitu, /ɛ/ dan /ɔ/. Oleh itu, perkataan seperti 'elak', 'petak', 'orang' dan 'tolak' masing-masing

disebut sebagai /elaʔ/, /petaʔ/, /oraŋ/ dan /tolaʔ/ dalam kelainan /ə/ tetapi sebagai /ɛlaʔ/, /pɛtaʔ/, /ɔraŋ/ dan /tɔlaʔ/ dalam kelainan /a/ (Asmah, 1992b).

5. Harus diingat bahawa bahasa Indonesia akan tetap kedengaran berbeza daripada bahasa Melayu walaupun mengongsi tiga ciri yang sama melibatkan huruf-huruf ‘a’, ‘r’, ‘i’ dan ‘u’ itu. Hal ini demikian kerana terdapat ciri-ciri fonetik lain yang berbeza antara dua sebutan ini. Selain itu, kosa kata, ejaan, morfologi dan intonasi antara dua bahasa ini juga berbeza.

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SECOND AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE WRITING AND COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION: A QUALITATIVE META-SYNTHESIS OF RECENT RESEARCH

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ABSTRACT

The use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in the classroom is common nowadays. The bulk of literature produced so far has done little in informing us the factors that facilitate the role of CMC in language writing, and the nature of the interaction that takes place via CMC in a systematic manner. This paper examines what empirical research has found out about the factors that facilitate the use of CMC in second/ foreign language writing instruction and learning, and the nature of interaction that takes place via CMC in an educational context. 60 peer-reviewed published primary studies from 2007-2017 were reviewed. The key findings are as follows. First, instructor support plays a critical role in ensuring the successful implementation of a CMC tool in the classroom. Second, the affordances of CMC in enhancing the writer's identity and the presence of an audience can increase learners' motivation to write. Third, both asynchronous and synchronous CMC have shown to be beneficial, and the provision of training can further enhance the effectiveness of peer reviews. Last, the participatory patterns of CMC in writing are influenced by factors such as task type, personal goals, native-speaker status, and self-perceived competencies. Pedagogical implications are suggested.

Keywords: computer-mediated communication, second and foreign language writing, qualitative, meta-synthesis

Introduction

Writing with the help of CMC has increasingly come under the spotlight for its potential in developing second language (L2) written literacy. For one, with CMC, opportunities to learn to write are no longer restricted to the classroom and its time constraints (Chao & Lo, 2011; Vurdien, 2013). Interaction and peer feedback are also possible (Vurdien, 2013), and Chapelle (2009) notes that in CMC, the written form is often the mode of interaction, and how technology influences the type of linguistic input and how learners access different input forms can impact language acquisition.

A result of CMC facilitating the writing process is the possibility of collaborative writing, and research on CMC in collaborative learning has highlighted its heightened socio- cultural role mediated by the affordances of technology. Collaborative writing is not limited to student-student partnerships but can also include instructor-student interaction. The increasing level and extent of collaboration inevitably throw up questions of ownership, authorship, and audience (Kessler, Bibowski, & Boggs, 2012), especially when the role of the learner is greatly expanded from a solitary writer, to one who is both a writer and an active reader (Chao & Lo, 2011). While Storch (2011) regards joint ownership of the production as "the defining trait of collaborative writing" (p. 275) and excludes aspects such as group-planning and peer-feedback activities from the definition, the existing literature that focus on these very factors show that there is no consensus to the problem. Moreover, with collaborative writing being a social activity, motivational, affective and perception issues are also factors that may influence how technology and CMC impact the second and foreign language writing process. Given the multiple issues surrounding CMC in writing instruction and learning, and the growing body of literature exploring various aspects of this relationship, this review aims to consolidate and consider the findings of these studies, looking at all aspects of the effect of CMC on the writing process, from planning to the finished product. It will also examine the socio-cultural aspects of interaction and motivation. Hence, this meta-synthesis of previous research aims to investigate the following research questions:

i. What are the factors that facilitate the role of CMC in second and foreign language writing?
ii. What is the nature of the interaction that takes place via CMC in such a context?
iii. How do educators and learners perceive the role of CMC in the language classroom?

Methodology

In the search and identification of primary studies to be included in this paper, Lin's (2015) method, which was itself adopted from other meta-synthesis studies (Li, 2010; Sauro, 2011) was used, in line with recommendations on literature search methods for meta-analyses (Oswald & Plonsky, 2010). Firstly, using keywords such as "computer-mediated communication", "CMC", "second language writing" and "L2 writing" in tandem with Boolean search methods, a search was conducted on electronic databases in the disciplines of linguistics, applied linguistics, social sciences and humanities, language education, and language education using technology. Some of these electronic databases included the Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA), JSTOR, ERIC, Web of Science, ProQuest, SpringerOpen, and Taylor & Francis. This step achieved two aims: it enabled the researcher to retrieve the first wave of journal articles and at the same time, it helped to identify key journals in which primary studies and meta-syntheses related to CMC and second-language writing (SLW) that was not limited to English appeared, and in so doing facilitated the second step of narrowing the searching to individual electronic journals. Some of the journals included in the search were Applied Linguistics, Language Learning & Technology, System, CALICO Journal, Journal of Second Language Writing, and Computer Assisted Language Learning. Finally, references related to SLW and CMC from the retrieved journal articles were individually identified and retrieved online. By culling the collection to only those from a decade, i.e., 2007 to 2017, a total of 60[2] peer-reviewed published primary studies were obtained.

Findings

Reflecting Ducate, Anderson, and Moreno's (2011) list of some of the most popular Web 2.0 technologies that include communicative, collaborative, generative, documentative and interactive tools, the studies included in this review looked at the following tools used in second and foreign language writing processes: electronic mail, blogs, collaborative word processors like Google Documents, instant messaging software, social media websites, forums, automated writing evaluation tools, and wikis. We categorised the rising issues and concerns with regard to CMC into five claims.

Claim 1: Carefully Designed and Monitored CMC-Enhanced Tasks with Instructor Support Can Greatly Facilitate the Role of CMC in SLW

The empirical studies reviewed in this paper found the role of CMC to be largely facilitative, and one of its affordances is in the allocation of attentional resources to meet the cognitive demands of the writing process. Such cognitive support can come through the broad categories of planning, instructor-given directions and task design. While a number of studies in this review investigated the effects of support of CMC on learners' written production, other studies recommend some form of facilitation in order to maximize computer-mediated learning opportunities and language acquisition.

[2] Based on published meta-synthesis papers, 60 is the recommended number of articles reviewed by the researchers (Ng & Cheung, 2017, 2019). Please refer to the methodology section for more information on the selection criteria of the articles.

Planning: rehearsal and online.

A common notion of planning is of one that takes place before the actual speaking or writing task, with this type of pre-task planning involving either a step-by-step rehearsal of the task to be carried out, or one that is more strategic and focuses more on the content (Ellis, 2005; Ortega, 1999). However, planning can also be done online. With CMC, the affordances of online planning are greatly expanded. While the synchronous nature of CMC bestows upon the writing process in text chat characteristics of speaking such as the possibility for overlapping turns, it is not a simple hybrid of both production modes (Adams, Alwi, & Newton, 2015). Compared to speaking, CMC allows for a greater amount of lag time between turns, which can be utilized for online planning (Sauro & Smith, 2010). Coupled with the written form preserved as a visible, enduring trace that is available to the learner for linguistic reflection, this implies that the additional time to process visual input and monitor their output may have a positive impact on language acquisition (Sauro and Smith, 2010).

A small number of studies investigated the effects of planning on the quality and quantity of the text produced. Sauro and Smith's (2010) study leveraged on the screen- capture feature of a software that recorded exactly what appeared on the screen in real time, allowing participants to view deletions, which they investigated for evidence of online planning. What they found were higher levels of linguistic complexity and lexical diversity in the final text production compared to the deleted text, which may suggest that the additional time for online planning was used for the production of more complex language. Going a step further, Hsu (2017) looked into combining online planning with rehearsal, and found that while learner' performances in a new task showed linguistic gains in terms of complexity, the extent of accuracy was also higher than from online planning alone. Since it is hypothesized that in the first performance of a task, the content of the message gets cognitive priority over the linguistic tools needed to convey the message, the value of rehearsing or repetition can be seen in freeing up attentional resources to attend to the linguistic demands of the task after having dealt with the bulk of the content of the message, hence resulting a higher extent of accuracy in the actual task (Amiryousefi, 2016; Bygate, 2001).

Informed classroom management strategies and task design.

A number of the studies suggest that a limited extent of teacher intervention before, during, and after the task is one of the most critical factors in determining the success of a particular CMC tool in the language classroom. Teachers are able to render better support to learners due to teacher intervention in collaborative tasks, and teacher's awareness of the advantages of CMC-facilitated tasks (Bibowski & Vithanage, 2016). This teacher-initiated support can come in the forms of informed classroom management strategies and task design.

Firstly, how the task is set up can facilitate learners' ease with the CMC tool in the writing process. Chao and Lo (2011) stress the importance of setting up the learning environment such that learners are well-prepared to work collaboratively

online. To facilitate the use of CMC tools in the classroom, teachers have to demonstrate that the social skills from collaborative work may go online, and has real-life implications and uses in their professional lives (Elola & Oskoz, 2010).
While the CMC tool to be used in the task may depend on the objectives of the writing task, the ease of use is important as it impacts time management and preparation efforts (Chao & Lo, 2011). The choice of CMC tool should also factor in the purpose of incorporating it into the curriculum; having a clearly articulated link between the CMC tool and what students need to learn could reduce the likelihood of both instructor and learners treating the CMC task as extra work (Cheng, 2010). The next step could involve a deliberate and consistent approach in training learners in pre-task workshops to use a particular CMC tool to encourage maximum engagement in the learning task (Lee et al., 2013; Li, M., 2013), as familiarity with Web 2.0 tools may not translate to ease of use with such tools for pedagogical purposes (Dippold, 2009). For example, Rouhshad, Wigglesworth and Storch (2016) recommend exposure to models showing successful negotiations can increase the frequency of negotiations. Hwang et al. (2014) also found that using contextual situations that were familiar to learners in mobile device usage motivated them to write by reducing their anxieties. In public internet forums, the level of interactivity cannot be controlled and a lack of response may decrease motivation to continue participation (Ritchie & Black, 2012). Arnold, Ducate, and Kost (2012) also suggest having class discussions on guidelines on peer reviews. One area to consider could be the language used in discussions. The target language would allow learners to develop their communication skills, but it would restrict their language expressions, and this may potentially prevent deeper discussions (Strobl, 2014).

The most ideal conditions would probably be one where learners are given some guidelines on task execution, but a high extent of autonomy to operate within these boundaries. Ducate et al.'s (2011) evaluation of their study led them to recommend having a less structured approach so as to allow students to exercise some control over parts of the assignment. Similarly, Kessler and Bibowski (2010) documented an unexpected use of the wiki project, which showed that students' use of technology may differ from what the instructor expects, and hence some extent of flexibility should be allowed. Flexibility should also be exercised and autonomy given to students to determine the manner of their contributions.

Task support.

Depending on what the pedagogical focus of the task is, well-considered task designs can help to free up attentional resources for learners to attend to the task at hand. Linguistic support that includes lexical and syntactic items rendered to learners can work in tandem with the affordances of CMC to assist learners in achieving higher levels of accuracy (Ducate et al., 2011; Lee, 2010). Castañeda and Cho (2013) recommend using social software such as videos in pre-task activities to elicit lexical items and grammatical structures needed for the writing task. The teacher's role may even include putting aside assumptions of their students being naturally adept users of digital technologies and guiding them in understanding and using CMC tools in the classroom (Elola & Oskoz, 2017).

Besides vocabulary, other pre-task support activities that focus on task structure and form were also found to reduce the cognitive burden on the learner, resulting in better performances in specific aspects of writing. Alwi, Adams, and Newton (2012) found that there was more attention to form when task structure support was rendered, thus lowering task complexity and allowing learners to allocate more attentional resources to attention to form. The converse is true as well. Having language-focused pre-task activities also helped learners in their study to focus on form. Similar findings were obtained from Adams et al.'s (2015) study, which investigated the effects of different task implementation conditions on the accuracy and complexity of learners' text chat. Learners were split into four groups with different experimental set-ups, and it was found that a higher level of accuracy was observed in the text chats of those provided with structural support, as well as those with language support. However, the subset of learners who received both structural and language support was able to produce target-like structures more often.

Yilmaz (2011) notes that the much lower focus on form in his study could have been a result of the absence of pre-task mini lessons that could have raised the learners' awareness to the target structure, as well as explicit encouragement to discuss aspects of language. In the same vein, Kessler (2009) suggests that instructors offer a limited amount of support so as to encourage attention to form without interfering with student interaction patterns.

Task design.

The use of CMC should also be tailored to the student's learning needs (Chen & Brown, 2012). The aim of Chen and Brown's study (2012) was to obtain findings that could contribute to the design of language lessons with tasks that are beneficial to students. Tasks should probably be challenging yet possible to complete and allows for learner autonomy and is meaningful so that learners are motivated to do it (Chen & Brown, 2012). Authenticity may play a role. For example, in Dippold's study (2009), the real-world use of a CV task motivated the learners more than the summary task, which was perceived as academic.

Certain task types which demand more negotiation for meaning for task completion seem to be more adept at facilitating collaborative work between learners. Yilmaz (2011) investigated the effects of two different task types on the number and characteristics of language-related episodes (LREs). The tasks, a dictogloss and a jigsaw activity, showed that the dictogloss elicited more LREs than the jigsaw task. Also, the proportion of correctly solved LREs were found to be in the dictogloss than in the jigsaw task, which also had more unresolved LREs. Aydin and Yildiz (2014), working on the premise of the nature and type of task having an influence on the writers' focus on form versus content, and the amount and type of interaction among writers during collaborative writing, examined both form-focused and content-focused task types. They found that tasks that were focused on meaning, cognitively more demanding and open-ended had positive effects on learners' writing. Firstly, meaning-focused task types, such as argumentative, informative and decision-making writing tasks, resulted in more content-focused changes, though form-focused changes were also present. The results could be attributed to the design of the tasks, which required requesting and supplying of information to achieve a common goal. Secondly, cognitively more demanding tasks, such as argumentative and decision-making activities, resulted in more peer corrections than self-corrections, as learners had to engage in more negotiations in order to solve problems. Lastly, open-ended tasks that allowed opportunities for learners to engage in problem solving increased collaboration through mutually paying attention to each other's contributions (also Li, 2013). Although in Andujar's (2016) study CMC was used as a medium for student interaction during and instead of the actual writing task, he similarly argues that such chat-based interaction gives rise to the opportunity for LREs, which in turn contribute to knowledge construction and language development.

Some studies also recommend designing tasks to facilitate and encourage peer feedback, another crucial aspect of collaborative work. Yeh (2014) suggests having the entire process of collaborative writing in mind when designing tasks. This is likely to get learners to think about the meaning of the text, and motivate them to go beyond focusing on surface features such as errors, which normally happens when co-editing takes place in the last stage. Likewise, Yeh, Lo, and Chu (2014) suggest that it is important to design interactive tasks that would encourage corrective feedback and peer review in writing.

To sum up, the role that the instructor plays can have an impact on the successful implementation of CMC tools in the writing classroom. The instructor should consider the task design, spells out the requirements, scaffolds the task with appropriate support, and allows student autonomy within this set-up.

Claim 2: CMC Increases Motivation by Enhancing and Expanding on The Identity of The Writer, and Opportunities to Engage an Authentic Audience

The identity of the writer is another aspect which has been found to have an influence on the writing process. When learners were allowed to blog about topics of their choice within the context of their academic writing experiences, they used their blogs to reflect on their identity as L2 writers, focusing on their concerns about writing (Sun & Chang, 2012). Feelings of solidarity and self-awareness were also greatly bolstered, spurring them to continue blogging in the writing project. When learners felt that their work was central to the completion of the final product, their intrinsic motivation improved (Arnold et al., 2012).

CMC may also influence the playing out of the writer's identity in the larger social realm, as suggested by Gebhard, Shin, and Seger (2011). Their study, which investigated the influence of blogs as a CMC tool in the development of L2 literary among L1 Spanish Puerto Rican elementary school students, found that blogs were used by students as an extension of their real-life social connections, which entails the power dynamics, status and identities inherently embedded and expressed in these networks. Because of CMC, the playing out of these identities and roles were not limited to physical space and time. The focus student gained confidence from her adept ability to use technology, and this acted as a motivator in her writing endeavours.

In computer-mediated writing, there is also the possibility of an expanded audience where the reader is not limited to the instructor but also one's peers (Gebhard et al., 2011) or even family (Arslan & Sahin-Kizil, 2010). This was observed to have an impact on learner's motivation to write. Learners in Schenker's (2016) and Vurdien's (2013) studies were motivated by curiosity and interest expressed by their peers to make the effort to produce comprehensible output. Similarly, those in Lee's (2010) study were motivated to write because they knew their peers were also reading. However, the motivational factor may be boosted even further with an authentic audience and purpose. Learners in Mak and Coniam's (2008) study worked collaboratively to produce a brochure introducing their school with wikis, and having an authentic audience in mind gave them a real-world perspective. The affordances of CMC mean that learners can have access to authentic speakers of the second or foreign language that they are learning, and this advantage has been investigated in a number of studies focusing on tools such as emails (Mahfouz, 2010) and internet forums. In L2 internet forums, the authentic audience is the L2 community, and learners have to behave in a way that is appropriate to the language culture. Ritchie and Black (2012) found that learners' ability to make themselves understood in such forums raised their confidence, and this achievement motivated them further. Internet forums also give learners the opportunity to participate in the L2 linguistic community, and observe first-hand how negotiations are conducted in that community (Ritchie & Black, 2012). Therefore, the gains are both linguistic and cultural, as learners gain both communicative competence and knowledge of the L2 community's cultural norms. These can lead learners to be invested in the communicative process (King, 2015).

The audience may not even have to be real, as some studies have shown. In solitary blogging, the activity may not be collaborative and hence no negotiation takes place, but having an imagined audience may spur the writer to produce comprehensible output. The imagined audience is also present in the wiki context, where despite a lack of interaction, learners may be aware of a group of target language speakers (King, 2015). In King's study (2015), learners perceived the approval of the imagined community as important, and this motivated the learners and prepared them for the wider audience of those outside of the classroom (King, 2015).

Interestingly, learners' imagined positions as competent L2 users may result in a lack of negotiation. van der Zwaard and Bannink's (2016) study investigated the phenomenon of non-negotiation in the telling of jokes via videoconferencing and text chat between Dutch L2- English learners and Australian students. They found that for high level L2 learners, their imagined positions as competent L2 users may make admitting to incomprehension of the jokes difficult. A lack of negotiation may not necessarily mean comprehension, as this may mean a saving of face or a preserving of face.

Claim 3: Feedback, Whether Synchronous or Asynchronous, was Beneficial to Learners

One of the affordances of CMC in the writing process is the opportunity for feedback to be given synchronously, and from more than one person at any given time. Computer-mediated corrective review may also lower affective barriers due to its lack of face-to-face communication (Ho & Savignon, 2007). However, that is not to say that there are no limitations. Elola and Oskoz (2016) point out that tools are both facilitative and limiting, and feedback is restricted by the medium used. For example, they documented how an instructor could have written a lot more than she did using Microsoft Word. In addition, there might not even be a huge difference in how feedback is administered, as seen in how instructor electronic feedback (track changes comments in Microsoft Word) has been observed to resemble handwritten feedback (Ene & Upton, 2014).

A number of studies have found positive effects of synchronous CMC on instructor feedback. While asynchronous instructor corrective feedback from the instructor was observed to exert positive influences on writing accuracy, the effect diminished over time (Shintani & Aubrey, 2016). The asynchronous condition resembles the traditional manner of corrective feedback in that it was given after the text has been constructed, which may lead to a focus on form (Shintani, 2016). In comparison, synchronous corrective feedback had more enduring effects on accuracy. This could be due to learners having not only the opportunity to correct the text while in the process of composing it, hence focusing on both form and meaning, but also access to previous corrective feedback while composing and in the process self-correcting them (Shintani, 2016; Shintani & Aubrey, 2016). This effect on accuracy can also be seen in how learner uptake of instructor corrective feedback was the highest for grammar-related items, even though instructors tended to focus more on content (Ene & Upton, 2014). The synchronous condition allowed for internalization, modification, and consolidation. Consolidation, seen in the repeat performance, was unavailable in the asynchronous condition. Hence, synchronous corrective feedback may be considered superior to both asynchronous and traditional corrective feedback because the written form affords reflection, and hence puts less burden on working memory (Shintani, 2016). In addition, due to the nature of asynchronous feedback where the message may be read much later after it has been sent, the tendency to neglect responding to it is higher than in synchronous CMC, which in turn may result in lower interaction (Wang & Vasquez, 2014).

However, asynchronous corrective feedback has its benefits too. The in-time correction and the convenience of not having to consult a dictionary of asynchronous corrective feedback was rated highly (Shintani & Aubrey, 2016). Also, learners did not need to be at the same place or access the material at the same time (Ho & Savignon, 2007). They felt less pressured because of the lack of a face-to-face factor. Target-like reformulations, such as recasts and explicit feedback, that retained the original message for noticing and reflection are also possible in asynchronous corrective feedback. In addition to these advantages of target-like reformulations, a post-test examination of writing scores for undergraduate EFL learners found that the track changes feature in Microsoft Word, where the kind of feedback provided is both explicit and implicit, resulted in even larger linguistic gains in form and content (AbuSeileek & Abualsha'r, 2014), compared to recasts and explicit feedback.

That said, it has been argued that traditional forms of corrective feedback might be easier, and more effective than computer-mediated means that are limited by design. Paper- and-pencil feedback might result in higher accuracy compared to using Facebook, because of a lack of marking functions which hindered comprehension of the feedback (Dizon, 2016). Ho and Savignon (2007) holds a more positive view of computer-mediated review, but argues that since the aim of peer review is to encourage negotiation of meaning, the lack of an oral communication component makes computer-mediated peer review an inadequate standalone tool. Face-to-face peer review with computer-mediated peer review will be preferred.

Training for peer review.

Corrective feedback was welcome among learners, if it was from the instructor or someone considered competent enough to provide meaningful feedback. Learners from two studies expressed that the teacher's feedback was authoritative and was the only one that mattered (Arnold et al., 2012; Bibowski & Vithanage, 2016). While some learners were motivated to give and to receive feedback, the lack of confidence in their own linguistic competence meant that they were more comfortable giving interactive than corrective feedback (Lee, 2010). This discomfort in editing peers' mistakes was reported by a number of studies (Castañeda & Cho, 2013), due to learners' perceived uncertainty in the accuracy of peers' feedback (Castañeda & Cho, 2013; Vorobel & Kim, 2017). Learners in Vorobel and Kim's (2017) study found discussing and providing feedback to peers easier than doing so with the teacher, though they believed that the instructor's feedback would be more honest compared to their peers.

Therefore, a number of studies recommend training learners to give peer reviews (Castañeda & Cho, 2013; Ho & Savignon, 2007). Giving learners training in providing constructive peer feedback would help develop their writing skills, and raise their awareness of the type of errors (Vurdien, 2013), hence avoiding an overemphasis on surface errors (Ene & Upton, 2014). This reflects learners' suggestions to have more structured, explicit guidance on providing peer feedback (Dippold, 2009). Helping learners with metalinguistic knowledge would facilitate peer feedback, through the use of an Error Correction Practice System (Ene & Upton, 2014).

Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE).

Another type of computer-mediated feedback that is worthy of attention is that of AWE tools. Li, Link, and Hegelheimer (2015) studied the attitudes of both instructors and learners towards an AWE tool, and investigated how it was used in writing practice and accuracy of the produced text. Since AWE tool picks up grammatical errors, instructors could focus more on non-surface learners' essay organization and content development. While this reduced the revision load of instructors, concerns about the accuracy of the AWE feedback were raised by both instructors and learners (Lee et al., 2013). Despite the shortcomings, learners perceived that the AWE tool was useful in improving paragraph coherence and essay organization (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Ware, 2011).

Claim 4: Learner Attitudes towards CMC in Writing are Generally Positive

Learners in the majority of the studies showed positive attitude towards CMC in writing in terms of linguistic gains, social and personal goals, gains in grammar, vocabulary and cultural content (Ducate et al., 2011). A heightened awareness of their language use and content creation from Wiki writing (Chao & Lo, 2011; Kost, 2011), an additional perspective on writing, linguistics assistance from peer editing, and the development of communicative skills (Shang, 2007; Vorobel & Kim, 2017) were also reported. Learners acknowledged that collaborative writing improved the overall quality of their writing as they focused on both local and global aspects of their writing (Elola & Oskoz, 2010; Lee, 2010), and expressed a positive disposition towards the ease of translation using online tools (Miyazoe & Anderson, 2010). Such collaborative tools also motivated learners to go beyond the scope of their assignment; Wang (2015) found that students in a business English course did more extensive reading and research of their topic, and paid more attention to how they employed the target language.

However, there were negative perception of CMC in writing. Learners complained about different writing styles, disputes over specific roles in the team, and sharing the responsibility for a shared grade (Kost, 2011). Concerns over being sensitive to others' feelings when providing explicit feedback via a Web 2.0 tool for collaborative work and an unwillingness to incorporate others' feedback were also reported (Vorobel & Kim, 2017). Technical difficulties were also an issue, as difficulties with network issues and the inconvenience of having to use a computer mediation tool to do work might affect learners' inclination towards CMC tools in writing (Chao & Lo, 2011).

Claim 5: The Patterns of Interaction in Collaborative Writing are Varied and are Influenced by a Number of Factors

A number of studies sought to categorize interactional patterns in collaborative writing. The first participatory pattern sees learners engaged in highly collaborative work. This corresponds to Cho's (2017) and Abrams (2016) collaborative group and Li and Zhu's (2013) contributing/mutually supportive group. Cho (2017) found that the indexes of equality and mutuality were more evenly distributed in this group, and there was also more interaction among all members. Li and Zhu (2013; 2017) observed that participants took turns to assume the role of an expert.

The second participatory pattern is what Li and Zhu (2013) terms the authoritative/responsive group, which corresponds to Cho's (2017) facilitator/participants group. In this group, an unequal contribution and yet a harmonious collaboration may be reflected in Cho's (2017) observation of a high level of collaboration in terms of discussion and writing, but with one member who did more of the facilitation and management of the task.

The third "dominant/withdrawn" group has a marked disparity in participation (Li & Zhu, 2013; 2017). It had at least one participant who took control over the task, and at least one who adopted a passive stance. The dominant members may not work collaboratively. Contribution was unequal and non-collaborative. However, equal levels of contribution may not necessarily be positive. Abrams (2016) found an interactional pattern where there were generally low level of participation and mutuality among all members of the group. The sequentially additive group, which resembles Storch's (2002) dominant/dominant interaction, sees equal amounts of contributions from each member, but the level of collaboration in terms of editing each other's text was low.

Factors such as task type, personal goals, native-speaker status, and self-perceived competencies may account for the different interactional patterns observed. When a task was meaning-related, a cooperative approach was undertaken (Arnold et al., 2012). Individual members' goals influenced the way they chose to participate and interact in the group (Cho, 2017). Non-native speakers contribute more when they are in triads of similar competence levels, but contribute less when in groups of mixed competence, or in groups with at least one native speaker (Fredriksson, 2014). The influence of the learner's self- evaluation of their own competencies was also seen in Arnold et al.'s (2012) study, where learners appeared to contribute in areas they felt competent to do so, and compensate for areas they perceive as weaknesses. It should be noted, however, that interactional patterns may not remain static for the duration of the task but have been observed to shift according to the needs of the group members and the task as learners engaged in different components of the assignment (Li & Kim, 2013).

Discussion and Conclusion

This paper reviewed 60 primary studies published from 2007 to 2017, focusing on CMC in second and foreign language writing instruction and learning. The key findings are as follows. First, instructor support plays a critical role in ensuring the successful implementation of a CMC tool in the classroom. Second, the affordances of CMC in enhancing the writer's identity and the presence of an audience can increase learners' motivation to write. Third, both asynchronous and synchronous CMC have shown to be beneficial, and provision of training can enhance the effectiveness of the peer review task. Last, participatory patterns of CMC in writing are influenced by factors such as task type, personal goals, native-speaker status, and self-perceived competencies.

One limitation of this study is that the majority of the empirical research reviewed looked at English as the second or foreign language (75%, 45 out of 60 articles). This may reflect the reality of second or foreign language instruction globally, or English as the dominant language of the internet. Furthermore, many studies were conducted in the United States (38%, 23 out of 60 studies). Findings may not be generalizable to other populations. For future research directions, Lin

(2015) suggests to consider unpublished dissertations and meta-syntheses done on this topic.

In terms of pedagogical implications, given all the affordances and benefits of CMC tools in the writing classroom, the temptation to use them for their own sakes might be there. A careful consideration on how to meaningfully integrate its use is essential to the success of the task at hand.

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