



Issues in Language Studies

Volume 2 Number 1 (2013)



Centre for Language Studies
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
94300 Kota Samarahan, Sarawak.
www.cls.unimas.my

e-ISSN 2180-2726



9 772180 272003

Editorial Committee

Chief Editor	Associate Professor Dr Su-Hie Ting
Associate Editors	Dr Collin Jerome Hamidah Abdul Wahab Wee-Ling Kuan
Editorial Board Members	Dayang Sariah Abang Suhai Florence G Kayad Fumie Hashizume Nur Ardini Jian Abdullah Radina Mohamad Deli Rodolphe Gilles Point Rokiah Pae Rosnah Mustafa Siti Marina Kamil Wan Robiah Meor Osman Yahya Bakeri
Production Associate Editors	Kee-Man Chuah Kai-Chee Lam

ISSUES IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

Issues in Language Studies is a publication of the Centre for Language Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. The journal publishes articles on teaching, learning and the study of languages. It offers a forum for the discussion of local issues that are of global concern. It is a refereed online journal published bi-annually. Currently it is indexed by Google Scholar and the Malaysian Citation Index.

When submitting the work, contributors are requested to make a declaration that the submitted work has not been published, or is being considered for publication elsewhere. Contributors have to declare that the submitted work is their own and that copyright has not been breached in seeking the publication of the work.

Views expressed by the author(s) in the article do(es) not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Committee.

Articles and correspondence on editorial matters should be addressed to:

Dr Su-Hie Ting
Chief Editor
Issues in Language Studies
Centre for Language Studies
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
94300 Kota Samarahan
Sarawak
Malaysia
shting@cls.unimas.my

© 2013

All rights reserved; no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission of the copyright holder.

For further details, visit www.ils.unimas.my

e-ISSN 2180 -2726



9 772180 272003

Notes for Contributors

Manuscripts submitted to *Issues in Language Studies* should not exceed 7,000 words, including abstract, references, tables, figures and appendices.

Detailed guidelines:

Page 1: Title, author's name and affiliation, postal and e-mail address of each author. Please indicate corresponding author with an asterisk.

Page 2: Title, abstract not exceeding 200 words, 4-6 keywords. Articles not written in English should be accompanied by a title, abstract and keywords in English.

Page 3 onwards: Text in single-spacing and margins – top and bottom, left and right – should be 1.25 inches wide, Calibri 11 point.

Do not indent the first paragraph of each section. Indent the first line of subsequent paragraphs by ½ inch.

Use the three-level headings in APA style:

Centred Uppercase and Lowercase Heading

Flush Left, Italicised, Uppercase and Lowercase Side Heading

Indented, Italicised, lowercase paragraph heading ending with a period

Quotations. Use double quotation marks to enclose quotations of fewer than 40 words. Within this quotation, use single quotation marks to enclose quoted material. Long quotations should be placed in a block which is indented ½ inch from the left margin.

Follow APA style for table titles and headings (placed above the table) and figures and figure captions (placed below the figure). Examples:

Table 1

Types of communication strategies used across age groups

Figure 1. Frequency of communication strategy use across age groups

Do not use footnotes. If notes are unavoidable, use a numeral in superscript and list notes at the end of the article, before the References.

Follow APA style (6th ed.) for citation and referencing, with the exception of Malay names which should be spelt in full in the text and the reference list.

Contents

A cross-language study of the speech sounds in Yorùbá and Malay: Implications for Second Language Acquisition Boluwaji Oshodi	1
Gender messages in contemporary popular Malay songs Collin Jerome	13
Genres apart: School and university writing Su-Hie Ting and Muriatul Khusmah Musa	24
Study of science students' expectation for university writing courses Shanthi Nadarajan	38
The effects of increase and variations in time presentations for second language vocabulary learning Radina Mohamad Deli, Zainab Ghareeb-Ali and Shorouk Al-Houti	46
Aplikasi media sosial dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris: Persepsi pelajar universiti <i>Learning of English Language via Social Media: University students' perceptions</i> Kee-Man Chuah	56

A CROSS-LANGUAGE STUDY OF THE SPEECH SOUNDS IN YORÙBÁ AND MALAY: IMPLICATIONS FOR SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Boluwaji Oshodi

Adekunle Ajasin University Akungba Akoko, Nigeria

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia

bolu_oshodi@yahoo.com

Abstract

Acquiring a language begins with the knowledge of its sounds system which falls under the branch of linguistics known as phonetics. The knowledge of the sound system becomes very important to prospective learners particularly L2 learners whose L1 exhibits different sounds and features from the target L2 because this knowledge is vital in order to internalise the correct pronunciation of words. This study examined and contrasted the sound systems of Yorùbá a Niger-Congo language spoken in Nigeria to that of Malay (Peninsular variety), an Austronesian language spoken in Malaysia with emphasis on the areas of differences. The data for this study were collected from ten participants; five native female Malay speakers who are married to Yorùbá native speakers but live in Malaysia and five Yorùbá native speakers who reside in Nigeria. The findings revealed that speakers from both sides have difficulties with sounds and features in the L2 which are not attested in their L1 and they tended to substitute them for similar ones in their L1 through transfer. This confirms the fact that asymmetry between the sound systems of L1 and L2 is a major source of error in L2 acquisition.

Keywords: sound system, Yorùbá, bahasa Malaysia, transfer, asymmetry, second language acquisition

Introduction

It is a fact that the sounds produced by human beings are not just utterances represented by letters but are regarded as functioning units of the sound system of a language which are called phonemes (Lindblom, 1990; Oyebade, 2007; Yusuf, 2007). Every language exhibits two types of sound contrasts which indicate phonemic and non-phonemic differences. These contrasts are usually based on some phonological features such as place and manner of articulation and the state of the glottis. There is ample evidence that L2 learners tend to transfer all the phonological features of their native language to the target language because such

learners are naturally equipped with the phonemes of their L1 and not those of the L2. This confirms that in the case of acquisition of sound system, transfer is usually mono-directional from the native language to the target language (Rochet, 1995). This is why studies on comparative sound system usually focus more on the areas of differences rather than similarities.

Objectives of the study

There have been many contrastive studies of numerous languages. However, there is no known work on contrastive studies which involves an Austronesian language and a Niger-Congo language particularly Yorùbá and Malay. The reason for this is not farfetched; the two languages belong to different language families and have never been in real contact. With the present influx of Nigerians into Malaysia to pursue their studies, and most of them being Yorùbá native speakers, the two languages are now seriously in contact as speakers of both languages interact formally and informally. Thus, this work attempts to compare the sound systems of the two languages and provide an insight into their patterns in terms of similarities and differences, with a focus on the latter¹. The aim is to account for the wrong pronunciation or substitution of sounds and features not attested in both languages and establish the fact that such sounds and features clearly constitute a source of error in either of the languages as L2. It also aims to identify such sounds and features by providing useful insights into why such sounds and features would likely constitute difficulties for them as L2 learners.

Sampling

Ten participants took part in this study; five native speakers of Malay and five native speakers of Yorùbá. The native speakers of Malay are all females who have been married to Yorùbá native speakers from Nigeria for over five years. They are high school graduates and speak English fairly well. They live with their spouses in Malaysia and are conversant with Yorùbá language since their spouses use it with their friends and also on phone when talking to their relatives back home in Nigeria. They all have the knowledge of Yorùbá albeit in a limited form. The five native speakers of Yorùbá are primary school graduates who are currently undergoing an apprenticeship programme at a private college. They have a limited knowledge of English and are not conversant with the Malay language at all. These sets of subjects were specifically chosen in order to minimise and check the effect of transfer from English. This is because English is a functional second language in both Malaysia and Nigeria. A good knowledge of English will definitely influence the pronunciation of some sounds not attested in both languages which may defeat the aim of the study in examining how L2 learners with no formal knowledge of the L2 sounds system and features which differ from those of their L1 would perform in the process of acquiring such L2 sounds and features.

Instrument

A 30-word list which contained all the consonant and vowel sounds in Malay was prepared. The list was given to the Yorùbá native speakers and they were asked to pronounce each word. Their pronunciations were recorded with the focus on sounds and features attested in Malay but not attested in Yorùbá (their L1). The same procedure was repeated with the Malay subjects; they were given a 30-word list which contained all the vowels and consonant sounds of Yorùbá and were asked to pronounce each word. Their pronunciations were recorded focusing on the sounds and features present in Yorùbá but absent in Malay (their L1). Three native speakers of Malay validated the data from the Yorùbá subjects while those of the Malay subjects were validated by the researcher who is a native speaker of Yorùbá.

Results and Analysis

The recorded words were analysed in terms of accurate pronunciation of the target sounds; the sounds and features that are absent in the subjects' L1 but are present in their L2. This was evaluated in order to account for the asymmetries between Yorùbá and Malay sound systems. The subsequent sections will address issues relating to the structure of the sound systems of both Yorùbá and Malay by looking at the sound inventories of both languages this would be followed by the results and analysis of the data collected for each of the features examined.

Consonants

According to Yusuf (2007), consonant sounds are produced by obstructing the air flow totally or partially at some points in the vocal tract. Oyebade (1992) observed that consonants are described in terms of place and manner of articulation (state of the glottis). The different states of the glottis as informed by the larynx for speech production is known as phonation. There are two main states which the glottis can assume in the production of speech sounds in all languages; voiced and voiceless states. These two states shall be examined in Yorùbá and bahasa Malaysia in order to have significant insight into the patterns of the consonant systems in both languages.

Yorùbá consonants

Yorùbá has eighteen phonetic consonant. They appear in bold form below:

1. **/b, t, d, k, g, p [kp], gb, f, s, ʃ [ʃ], h, j [dʒ], m, n, r, l, y[j], w/**

The consonants are illustrated with verbs below:

1. bú /bú/ 'to abuse'
hù /hù/ 'to germinate'

de	/de/	'to arrive'
kí	/kí/	'greet'
ge	/ge/	'cut'
pè	/kpè/	'call'
gbà	/gbà/	'to take'
fọ	/fọ/	'wash'
sé	/sé/	'to deny'
şí	/şí/	'to open' (a door)
tà	/tà/	'sell'
je	/dʒe/	'eat'
mu	/mu/	'drink'
ní	/ní/	'to possess'
rà	/rà/	'buy'
lò	/lò/	'to use'
ya	/ja/	'to tear' (a dress)
wú	/wú/	'to uproot' (a tree)

The above consonants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Yorùbá consonants

Place of Articulation	Bilabial	Labio-Dental	Alveolar	Palato-Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labial Velar	Glottal
Manner of Articulation								
Plosive	b		t d			k g	kp gb	
Fricative		f	s	ʃ				h
Affricate				dʒ				
Nasal	m		n		(ɲ)			
Tap			r					
Lateral			l					
Approximant					ɹ		w	

However, there is a controversial consonant in Yorùbá [ɲ] palatal nasal. Some speakers use it in place of the palatal approximant in certain contexts. For example, why some pronounce the word for pounded yam as [ijǎ] while others pronounce it as [iɲǎ]. Oyebade (2007) observed that the above consonants are all phonemic except [l] and [n] which alternate with each other in slow and allegro speech:

2. Òjó wa ni oko → Òjó wa loko
 Òjó be in farm “Òjó is in the farm”

Malay Consonants

According Clynes and Deterding (2011), the Malay language has eighteen primary consonants:

/p, b, t, d, k, gs, h, tʃ, dʒ, m, n, ŋ, l, r, j, w/

Five consonants are borrowed: f, v, z, ʃ, x and the glottal stop [ʔ] which is controversial because some people see it as part of the Malay primary consonants (Asmah Haji Omar, 2008) while others see it as being borrowed from Arabic. In all, the consonant system is made up of 24 phonetic consonants; the phonetic consonants appear in bold form below:

/p, b, t, d, k, g, f, v, s, z, kh [x], sy [ʃ], h, ʔ, c [tʃ], j [dʒ], m, n, ny [ŋ], ng [ŋ], l, r, y [j], and w/.

The consonants are illustrated with examples below:

1. Pisau	/pisau/	'knife'	masih	/masih/	'still'
Burung	/buruŋ/	'bird'	nama	/nama/	'name'
terbang	/terbaŋ/	'fly'	nyanyian	/ŋaŋian/	'song'
dua	/dua/	'two'	visa	/visa/	'visa'
kepala	/kepala/	'head'	faham	/faham/	
		'understand'			
gigi	/gigi/	'tooth'	zakat	/zakat/	'tithe'
cari	/tʃari/	'search'	syarat	/ʃarat/	'rule'
jari	/dʒari/	'finger'	khidmat	/xidmat/	'service'
ladang	/ladaŋ/	'farm'	ngeri	/ŋəri/	'horror'
rumah	/rumah/	'house'	satu	/satu/	'one'
semut	/semut/	'ant'	hari	/hari/	'day'
baju	/baʒu/	'shirt'	bawang	/bawaŋ/	'onion'
dianggap	/diʔaŋgap/	'be considered'			

The above consonants are shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Malay consonants

Place of Articulation	Labial	Alveolar	Post-Alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Labial-velar	Glottal
Manner of Articulation							
Plosive	pb	t d			k g		ʔ
Fricative	f v	s z	ʃ				h
Affricate			tʃ dʒ		x		
Nasal	m	n	ŋ		ŋ		
Trill		r					
Lateral		l					
Approximant				j		w	

Discussion

From the consonant inventories of both languages, Yorùbá has 18 phonetic consonants while Malay has 24. Seven consonants are attested in Malay which do not occur in Yorùbá. They are /p, v, z, x, tʃ, ɲ and ʔ/. Thus, it is not surprising that all the Yorùbá native speakers had problems pronouncing the words in which these sounds occur in Malay. Consider the examples below:

5. pisang → /pisaŋ/ → /*¹kpisan/ 'banana'
 visa → /visa/ → /*fisa/ 'visa'
 zakat → /zakat/ → /*sakati/ 'tithe'
 khidmat → /xidmat/ → /*kidimati/ 'service'
 cari → /tʃari/ → /*kari/ 'search'
 ngeri → /ŋeri/ → /*ŋeri/ 'horror'
 nyanyian → /ɲanjan/ → /*nyanyian/ 'song'
 dianggap → /diʔanggap/ → /*diangapu/ 'be considered'
 bawang → /bawan/ → /*bawangi/ 'onion'

As shown in Example 5, the Yorùbá speakers substituted the Malay consonants with the closest ones in their own language hence, [kp] was substituted for [p], [f] for [v], [s] for [z], [k] for [x], [k] for [tʃ], [n] for [ɲ], and the glottal fricative [ʔ] was completely not realised because there is no similar sound for it in Yorùbá. The case of [k] for [tʃ] is particularly interesting because the expected substitute should have been [ʃ]. The reason for this is because in Malay [tʃ] is represented orthographically as /c/ which is completely alien to Yorùbá, and the closest sound to the sound [c] phonetically in Yorùbá is [k] and not [ʃ]. Furthermore, the sound [n] was substituted for [ɲ] and at the same time, the consonants 'y' in *nyanyian* 'song' and 'g' in *ngeri* 'were also retained by the Yorùbá native speakers. The reason for this is because in Yorùbá, the nasal in word initial position is a syllabic morpheme which indicates continuous tense in the language. Consider the examples below:

6. ń-l[ńl] 'is going'
 ń-b[ńb] 'is feeding'
 ń-ga[ńga] 'is growing'

This also explains why they do not have problem with the Malay nasals in initial position since the Yorùbá nasals are always syllabic in word initial position. The error in *bawang* 'onion' was due to the fact that Yorùbá consonants are always syllabic wherever they are preceded by a nasal (see ń-ga[ńga] 'is growing' in Example 6) because they usually constitute the onset of a syllable in that position. However, the Yorùbá speakers do have problems with the consonants **sy** [ʃ], **ny** [ɲ] and **ng** [ŋ] based on the fact that phonemically they occur as a single sound in Malay but are

¹ This indicates incorrect form due to the wrong pronunciation of the target feature.

distinct phonemes in all contexts in Yoruba. The fact that consonant cluster as well as consonant final position is not permitted in Yorùbá helps explain why all the consonant clusters in the Malay words were broken up with a vowel (see *khidmat* in Example 5) and a vowel inserted in front of all the Malay words which end in consonant (see *khidmat* and *dianggap* in Example 5) by all the Yorùbá subjects. On the other hand, only two consonants are attested in Yorùbá which are alien to Malay and they are the voiceless and voiced labial velar sounds /kp and gb/. All the Malay subjects had problems pronouncing them. Consider the examples below:

7. apá → /akpá/ → /*apa/ 'arm'
 alápata → /alákpatà/ → /*alapata/ 'butcher'
 igbá → /igbá/ → /*ig-ba, *iba/ 'two hundred'
 àgbàlagbà → /àgbàlagbà/ → /*abalaba, *ag-balag-ba/ 'elder'

As shown in Example 6, the Malay speakers substituted [p] for [kp] for two likely reasons; firstly, orthographically the [kp] sound is represented as [p] in Yorùbá which is a prominent consonant in Malay, and secondly, the closest sound to [kp] in Malay is [p] based on place and manner of articulation. For [gb], two things were noticed; three of the Malay subjects substituted [b] for [gb] while the other remaining subjects separated the g from the b, thereby treating them as different sounds. The three subjects who substituted [b] for the sound must have been influenced by place and manner of articulation; both [gb] and [b] are bilabial sounds while [g] is a velar sound hence there was no error such as *agalaga but *abalaba. The two subjects who separated the sound into two syllables must have been transferred from their L1 which allows consonant cluster. Since Yorùbá does not allow consonant cluster, [kp and gb] are single phonemes in the language which cannot be separated.

Vowels

Vowels are sounds produced with very little obstruction to the air passage in the vocal tract. None of the articulators come close enough to impede air flow (Yusuf, 2007).

Yorùbá Vowels

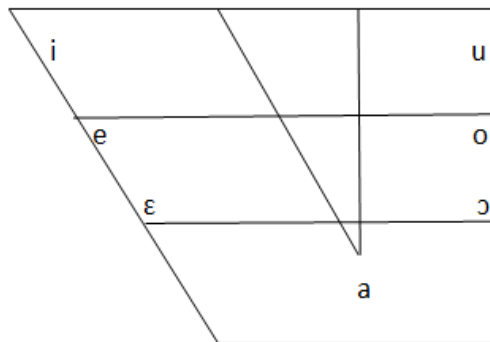
There are seven oral /a, e, ε, i, o, ɔ, u/ and four nasal /ã, ĩ, ẽ, õ/ vowels in Yorùbá, the oral vowels are represented in the words below:

8. /a/ Jà 'fight'
 /e/ ké 'cry'
 /ε/ bẹ 'beg'
 /i/ rí 'see'
 /ɔ/ ló 'go'
 /u/ tú 'untie'

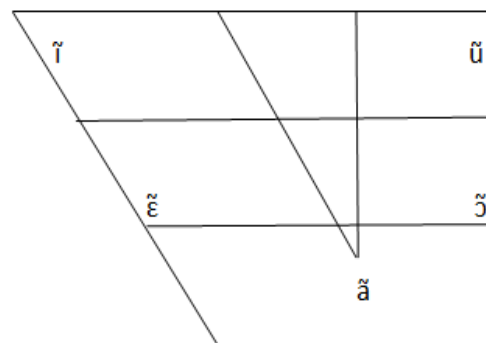
Examples for the nasal vowels are:

- | | | |
|--------|------|-----------------------------|
| 9. /ã/ | iyã | ‘pounded yam’ |
| | /ɛ̃/ | iyɛ̃ ‘that (demonstrative)’ |
| | /ɔ̃/ | itɔ̃ ‘lap’ |
| | /ĩ/ | ‘irĩ’ ‘iron’ |
| | /ũ/ | ‘irũ’ ‘hair’ |

Yorùbá oral vowel chart



Yorùbá nasal vowel chart

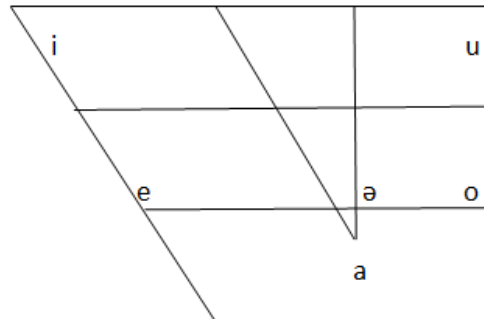


Malay Vowels

There are six vowels in Malay (all oral), they are; /a e i o u ə/.

- | | | | | | | |
|---------|------|-----------|------------|------|---------|----------|
| 10. /a/ | ayam | ‘chicken’ | /u/ | ular | ‘snake’ | |
| | /e/ | esok | ‘tomorrow’ | /o/ | oraj | ‘person’ |
| | /i/ | itik | ‘duck’ | /ə/ | pərang | ‘war’ |

Malay vowel chart



Discussion

A comparison of the Yorùbá and Malay vowel systems revealed some differences between the two systems particularly in the area of nasalisation since there are no nasal vowels in Malay. However, the nasal vowels did not pose any difficulty for the Malay subjects. The reason may likely be because Malay attests nasals both in word initial and final positions. Two vowels, namely, [ɛ and ɔ]², are attested in Yorùbá which are absent in Malay, indicating that all the Malay subjects had problems with their realisation. Consider these examples:

- 11. ẹyẹ /ɛyɛ/ → /*eye/ ‘bird’
- omọ /ɔmɔ/ → /*omo/ ‘child’
- ọbẹ /ɔbẹ/ → /*obe/ ‘soup’
- ẹkọ /ɛkɔ/ → /*eko/ ‘pap’

In the first two examples, the Malay subjects substituted [e] for [ɛ] and in the last two examples they substituted [o] for [ɔ]. The reason for this is clear; the two sounds used as substitutes are the closest to the two Yorùbá sounds which are not found in Malay in terms of place and manner of articulation. For example, [e and ɛ] are mid front vowels while [o and ɔ] are mid back vowels. There is only one vowel in Malay which is totally alien to Yorùbá and that is [ə]. As expected, all the Yorùbá subjects had problems pronouncing the sound in all the tested words in which it occurred. Below are examples:

- 12. perang → /pəraŋ/ → /*perangi/
- semakin → /səmakin/ → /*semakin/
- mengenai → /məŋənai/ → /*mengenai/

As shown in Example 12, the Yorùbá subjects substituted [e] for [ə]. In fact the word *mengenai* ‘about’ was pronounced exactly the way it is written phonetically which shows a direct transfer of the knowledge of Yorùbá to Malay.

Tones

Yorùbá is a tone language with three tones, high tone [´], low tone [˘] and the mid tone [ˊ] which is always left unmarked. Tone is a very important feature in Yorùbá because it performs lexical function. Consider the examples below:

13. igbá 'calabash'
 igba 'two hundred'
 igbà 'climbing rope'
 ìgbá 'garden egg'
 ìgbà 'time'

It is only vowels that take tones in Yorùbá however; the two nasal consonants (m and n) can take tones in context where they become syllabic. For example:

14. òròmbó 'orange'
 Oṅdó 'a town'

As shown above, Yorùbá is a tone language while Malay is not. All the Malay subjects placed the Yorùbá tones wrongly in virtually all the contexts of occurrence. It would be correct to say that the major problem encountered by all the Malay subjects with the Yorùbá sounds system had to do with tone marking; the wrong tone placement on words disrupted all the words that were tested since the words all contained tones. Consider the examples below.

15. alápatà → /alákpata/ → /*alapata/ 'butcher'
 àgbàlagbà → /àgbàlagbà/ → /*abalaba, *ag-balag-ba/ 'elder'
 ìbàjé → /ìbàjé/ → /ibaje/ 'indiscipline'
 olówó → /olówó/ → /*olowo/ 'a wealthy person'
 ọbẹ → /ɔbɛ/ → /*obe/ 'soup'
 ẹkọ → /ɛkɔ/ → /*eko/ 'pap'
 ọmọ → /ɔmɔ/ → /omo/ 'child'

As shown in Example 15, all words except the last one revealed that tone marking is completely absent from all of the words (except the last one) mainly because tone is not a feature of Malay. This explains why all the Malay subjects failed to mark the tone at all. The last example would be correct (in respect to tone marking) because the two syllables in the word carry the mid-tone which is usually unmarked in Yorùbá.

Conclusion

This study examined the sound systems and features of two unrelated languages with data from native speakers of both languages. The results revealed a lot of interesting facts in relation to the issue of pronunciation in second language acquisition. In the area of consonants, Yorùbá learners of Malay as L2 experienced more problems with the consonant sounds than the Malay learners of Yorùbá based on the fact that a higher number of consonants which are attested in Malay do not occur in Yorùbá. On the other hand, the Malay learners of Yorùbá had more problems with vowels because of the two vowels attested in Yorùbá but absent in Malay. Furthermore, both Yorùbá and Malay subjects transferred features of their L1 to the L2 by substituting similar sounds in their L1 for those in the L2 which are absent in their L1.

The most obvious disparity comes from the area of tone marking where all the Malay subjects had serious difficulties with tone marking on Yorùbá syllables. However, one issue remains unclear, and that has to do with why the Malay subjects used only the mid-tone on all Yorùbá syllables in all the tested words but neither the high nor the low tone was used at all. This is an issue that requires further research.

However, studies such Best, McRoberts, and Sithole (1988), Fledge (1995) and Eckman (2008) have observed that differences between the sounds systems of languages do not automatically denote area of difficulty for L2 learners. While this may be true, it must be emphasised that the position taken in this study is based on the data examined as none of the subjects received any formal instruction on the sound systems and features of the L2 on which they were tested. The subjects were all tested as L2 learners who were equipped with the knowledge of the sound system of their L1 and this was what they brought to the L2 context in this case.

In conclusion, the findings from this study clearly revealed that the difficulties the subjects experienced with the sounds system of the L2 can be attributed mainly to the differences between the sounds systems of their L1 and the L2. This corroborate the claims of earlier studies such as Costamagna (2003), Laurent and Philippe (2007) and Avanika, Niroj, Ambalika, and Shastri (2009) which emphasise that those differences in the area of sound systems and features between L1 and L2 definitely constitute a difficulty for L2 learners in the acquisition of L2 sound system.

Notes

¹Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (CAH) (see Lado, 1957) normally compares two languages to identify areas of similarities and differences with focus on the differences based on the premise that it is the differences that are likely to be problematic for L2 learners. Though CAH has been shown to have some flaws by latter studies (e.g The Marked Differential Hypothesis by Eckman, 2008), the concept still remains relevant to second language acquisition (SLA), particularly in terms of showing structural differences between L1 and L2.

² In Yorùbá, [ɛ] is represented orthographically as ẹ and [ɔ] as ọ.

References

- Asmah Haji Omar (2008). *Ensiklopedia Bahasa Melayu*. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.

- Avanika, S., Niroj, B., Ambalika, S., & Shasteri, R. K. (2009). Interference of first language in the acquisition of second language. *Journal of Psychology and Counseling* 1(7), 117-122.
- Best, C. T., McRoberts, G. W., & Sithole, N. M. (1988). Examination of perceptual reorganization for non-native speech contrast: Zulu clicks discrimination by English-speaking adults and infants. *Journal of Experimental Psychology, Human Perception and Performance*, 14(3), 345-360.
- Clynes, A., & Deterding, D. (2011). Standard Malay (Brunei). *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*, 41, 259-268.
- Costamagna, L. (2003). Affricates in Italian as L2: The role of psycho-attitudinal parameters. In L. Costamagna & S. Giannini (Eds.), *La fonologia dell'interlingua: Principie metodi di analisi* (pp. 95-129). Milano: FrancoAngeli Editore.
- Eckman, F. R. (2008). Typological markedness and second language phonology. In J. G. H. Edwards & M. I. Zampini (Eds.), *Phonology and second language acquisition* (pp. 95-116). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Fledge, J. E. (1995). Second language speech learning, theory, findings and problems. In W. Strange (Ed.), *Speech perception and linguistic experience* (pp. 233-277). Timonium, MD; York Press
- Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across cultures: Applied linguistics for language teachers*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Laurent, R., & Philippe, H. (2007). Prosodic transfer from L1 to L2: Theoretical and methodological issues. *Nouveaux Cahiers de Linguistique Française*, 28, 41-66.
- Lindblom, B. (1990). On the notion "possible speech sound". *Journal of Phonetics*, 18, 135-152
- Oyebade, O. (1992). Phonology II. In O. Yusuf (Ed.), *Introduction to Linguistics*. Ilorin: Unilorin Press.
- Oyebade, O. (2007). Yoruba Phonology. In O. Yusuf (Ed.), *Basic linguistics for Nigerian languages teachers* (pp. 221-239). Port Harcourt: M & J Orbit Communications Limited and Emhai Press.
- Rochet, B. L. (1995). Perception and production of L2 speech sounds by adults. In W. Strange (Ed.), *Speech perception and linguistics experience: Theoretical and methodological issues in cross-language speech research* (pp. 379-410). Timonium, MD: York Press Incorporated.
- Yusuf, O. (2007). Phonetics. In O. Yusuf (Ed.), *Basic linguistics for Nigerian languages teachers* (pp. 29-50). Port Harcourt: M & J Orbit Communications Limited and Emhai Press.

GENDER MESSAGES IN CONTEMPORARY POPULAR MALAY SONGS

Collin Jerome

Centre for Language Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

jcollin@cls.unimas.my

Abstract

Gender has been an important area of research in the field of popular music studies. Numerous scholars have found that contemporary popular music functions as a locus of diverse constructions and expressions of gender. While most studies focus on content analyses of popular music, there is still a need for more research on audience's perception of popular music's messages. This study examined adult Malay listeners' perceptions of gender messages in contemporary Malay songs. A total of 16 contemporary Malay songs were analysed using Fairclough's (1992) method of text analysis. The content of the songs that conveyed messages about gender were the basis for analysis. The results showed that the messages revolve mainly around socially constructed gender roles and expectations in romantic relationships. Gender stereotypes are also used in the songs to reinforce men's and women's roles in romantic relationships. The results also showed that, while listeners acknowledge the songs' messages about gender, their own perceptions of gender and what it means to be a gendered being in today's world are neither represented nor discussed fully in the songs analysed. It is hoped the findings from this, particularly the mismatch between projected and perceived notions of gender, contribute to the field of popular Malay music studies in particular, and popular music studies in general where gender messages in popular songs and their influence on listeners' perceptions of their own gender is concerned.

Keywords: gender, Malay, popular Malay songs, romantic relationship

Introduction

Gender has been an important area of research in the field of popular music studies. Numerous scholars have argued that popular music functions as a locus of diverse constructions and articulations of gender. This is clearly evidenced in the way popular music conveys powerful ideas and messages about gender which continues to shape people's perceptions of their own gender. Walser (1993), for instance, posits that music and lyric help construct people's gender identities in a compelling way by "infusing them with power and implying that they are natural and desirable" (p. xvi). Furthermore, popular music has long been regarded as being loaded with

traditional gender roles and stereotypes. Rock music in the West, for example, is rich with stereotypical gender behaviours where men are visibly and commonly portrayed as “sexually aggressive, rational, demanding and adventuresome” and women as “emotional, deceitful, illogical, frivolous, dependent, and passive” beings (Berns, 2010, p. 484). Studies have shown that popular music not only serves as a site of construction, but also a subversion of gender role-stereotypes. Western rock music in particular intermittently disputes dominant gender and sex roles by allowing the interaction between traditional masculinity, femininity, androgyny, and homosexuality in the process of masculine identity construction (Mäkelä, 2004). Studies have also shown that popular music is traditionally linked to its central and most enduring theme: romance and love (Ostlund & Kinnier, 1997 as cited in Bader, 2007). Holtzman (2000), for instance, maintains that “popular music has traditionally featured romance as its central theme with lyrics sung by both men and women, proclaiming the joy of love and the agony of its loss” (pp. 88-89). These lyrics are packed with dominant ideas and messages about gender, particularly gender role expectations and stereotypes in romantic relationship which include men as the “pursuer and most interested in sex” and women as the “pursued and most interested in romance” (Holtzman, 2000, p. 88). It would certainly be interesting to find out how the lyrics of popular music convey ideas and messages about gender and the various ways listeners respond to them and reflect on their own gender in the process.

Purpose of the study

This study examined adult Malay listeners’ perceptions of gender messages in contemporary popular Malay songs. It begins by analysing messages about gender in the-lyrics, followed by an analysis of adult Malay listeners’ perceptions of these messages as well as their own ideas about gender and what it means to be a gendered being in today’s modern world.

Methodology

Twelve adult Malay female respondents, aged 23-33, were selected using purposeful sampling method (see Patton, 1990). The respondents were attached to Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) when the study was conducted. They were all well-educated (having received tertiary education ranging from diploma to master’s degree level) and were regular listeners of contemporary popular Malay songs. The songs analysed for this study were chosen based the respondents’ favourite popular Malay songs they regularly listen to on the radio (see Table 1). This method of song selection is based on Hakaman and Well’s (1993) technique of gathering listeners’ favourite songs for lyrical analysis in popular music studies.

There were two main procedures involved in the study: the analysis of the song lyrics and focus group interviews. The song lyrics were analysed using Fairclough’s (1992) method of examining the words (especially word meaning and

wording) and metaphors used in lyrics. Fairclough (1992) posits that metaphors encompass other figures of speech including simile and personification, all of which influence people's thinking, behaviour, knowledge, and beliefs in a powerful way (as cited in Locke, 2004). Copies of the song lyrics were distributed to the respondents prior to the focus group interviews. Almost all respondents knew the song lyrics by heart which eased the interviewing process.

Table 1
Selected popular Malay songs

Song title	Singer(s)	Gender
1. Kian	Asmawi Ani @ Mawi	Male
2. Sembunyi	Misha Omar featuring Andy Flop Poppy	Female
3. Dewi	Dewa 19	Male
4. Aku Cinta Kau dan Dia	Ahmad Dhani/Dewa 19	Male
5. Sandaran Hati	Letto	Male
6. Cahaya Cinta	Siti Nurhaliza	Female
7. Lagu Jiwa Lagu Cinta	Mawi featuring M. Nasir	Male
8. Sesuatu Janji	Taufik Batishah	Male
9. Biarlah Rahsia	Siti Nurhaliza	Female
10. Aku Bukan Untuk Mu	Rossa@ Sri Rossa Roslaina Handiyani	Female
11. Terlalu Cinta	Rossa @ Sri Rossa Roslaina Handiyani	Female
12. Izinkan Aku Pergo	Kaer@ Wan Mohammad Khair Wan Azami	Male
13. Terlalu Istimewa	Adibah Noor	Female
14. Mungkir Bahagia	Hazami @ Nor Kamal Hazami Ahmad	Male
15. Jikalau Aku	Ezlyn @Azline Ariffin	Female
16. I'm Sorry Goodbye*	Kris Dayanti	Female

*The lyric as shown in Appendix 1 is written in Malay, with an exception of the title and the final lines of the chorus which are both written in English.

The interviews were carried out in six sessions, each involving two respondents. This was purposely done given that the respondents were made up of six pairs of close friends/colleagues who spent most of their time together during and after office hours. The pairing allowed the respondents to feel at ease when discussing gender messages in the songs. During the interview, the respondents were asked to comment on messages about gender in the song lyrics and the extent to which these messages were consistent with their own perceptions of gender and what it meant to be a gendered being in today's world. Each interview session lasted nearly an hour and the feedbacks and comments were audiotaped, and then transcribed verbatim.

Results and Discussion

The results from the lyrical analysis showed that contemporary popular Malay songs, particularly those analysed in the study, focused on heterosexual romantic relationship except for the song “Sandaran Hati” that revolved around spiritual love and the song “Terlalu Istimewa” that centred on love for the dearly departed. The results corroborate Holtzman’s (2000) and Paxson’s (2003) observations that romance and romantic relationships are the central feature of many of popular songs today. The results also showed that the songs conveyed messages about gender role expectations and stereotypes in romantic relationships, namely, leaving one’s lover and concealing one’s feelings and desires for the other. The lyrical analysis further revealed that physical-anatomical, natural and abstract objects were used to convey and reinforce these messages.

Leaving one’s lover

Most of the songs analysed conveyed dominant gender role expectations in romantic relationships where men were depicted as more inclined to leave their lovers while women endured the pain as a consequence. The word *pergi* (go or take leave) was frequently used to describe men’s decision to leave their female lovers as evidenced in the songs sung by male singers. Women, on the hand, blamed themselves for the breakups, in addition to being portrayed as emotional, as evidenced in the use of the word *menyesal* (regret) in the songs sung by female singers. The analysis of the song lyrics also revealed gender role stereotypes in a love triangle. For example, women were portrayed as the ones who still pined for their former lovers despite having forged new relationships as illustrated in the song “Terlalu Cinta”:

*Jangan dekat atau jangan datang kepadaku lagi
Aku semakin tersiksa karena tak memilikimu
Kucoba jalani hari dengan pengganti dirimu
Tapi hatiku selalu berpihak lagi padamu*

Do not come near or come back to me again
I'm getting more hurt for not having you
I try to move on with a new lover
But my heart still pines for you

Men, on the other hand, were depicted as opportunists in a love triangle. For example, they could easily break their promises and choose one woman, and leave the other as evidenced in the songs “Aku Cinta Kau dan Dia” and “Mungkir Bahagia”. Men were also depicted as having the ability (and even the liberty) to leave their lovers with a promise that they would return to them after settling some unfinished business as shown in the song “Suatu Janji”. At least one song, “I’m sorry goodbye” challenged dominant gender role expectations in romantic relationship,

where women were portrayed as the one who could leave and even abandon the relationship:

*maafkan ku harus pergi
ku tak suka dengan ini
aku tak bodoh
seperti kekasihmu yang lain*

I'm sorry I have to go
I do not like this
I'm not stupid
like your other lovers

“Terlalu Istimewa” was also another exception. The act of leaving centred more on the demise of a loved one, most probably a child rather than a lover’s decision to leave or abandon a romantic relationship.

Concealing one’s feelings

Most of the songs analysed represented men as being less expressive of their feelings in a romantic relationship. Sadness, loneliness and pain were only felt and contained from within as illustrated through the use of words such as *pilu di dalam dada* (sadness of/in the heart), *tak nampak di mata* (the eyes cannot see), and *batin terseksa* (tormented heart) in the song “Kian”. Such feelings reinforce the dominant view that men are not allowed to show lapse of emotional control or express signs of emotional vulnerability in romantic relationships (see Seidler, 2006). Men’s feelings and desires for women as presented in the song “Lagu Cinta Lagu Rindu” had to be repressed for fear of public exposure. Such feelings could only be expressed through singing (*menyanyi*) and dancing (*menari*). This amplifies the Adler and Proctor’s (2010) contention that “men often express their feelings through actions and activities rather than in words” (p. 129).

However, the lyrical analyses revealed that men were not the only ones who concealed their feelings. In the song “Biarlah Rahsia,” the female singer persuaded her listeners (women in particular) to put themselves in her shoes by understanding what she was going through in her relationship as she was determined to keep the bond with her lover a secret: *ku putuskan, biarlah rahsia* (I’ve decided keep it a secret). The song “Sembunyi” revealed another level of emotional concealment, unlike male singers whose suppressed feelings were expressed through singing and dancing, the female singer concealed her feelings for her lover or love interest through body language and gestures, namely, eye contact (e.g., *bertentang mata*) and facial expressions (e.g., *bibirku bisu*). The irony is that these supposedly concealed feelings were not only acknowledged by her lover or love interest, but were also noticed by others (e.g., *Tersentap lalu ku sedar di perhatikan*).

The use of physical-anatomical, natural and abstract objects as metaphors

The lyrical analysis showed that physical-anatomical objects such as *hati*, *dada*, and *jiwa* (heart) as well as *mata* (eyes) and *bibir* (lips) were used in the songs as metaphors for feelings and emotions in romantic relationships. For instance, the heart was used by male singers to represent the place where love dwelt and it was in this place that feelings were concealed and disclosed as evidenced in the song “Kian” (e.g., *sebak di dada, pilu di dalam dada*). Natural and abstract objects were also used as metaphors to convey and reinforce dominant messages about gender in romantic relationship. For example, in the song “Mungkir Bahagia”, *malam* (night) and *ombak* (waves) represented the male singer’s feelings of loneliness and sadness.

Gerimis duka
Malamku kelam
Ombak lara

Drizzle of sorrow
My night is dark
Waves of sadness

An interesting contrast was evidenced in the song “Sembunyi” where *malam* (night) was described as full of stars, signifying hope and passion for lovers (e.g., *bintang-bintang di malam*). Natural and even supernatural objects such as *udara* (air), *nyanyian* (songs) and *dewi* (goddess) were used in the song “Dewi” as metaphors to represent women and their beauty in romantic relationships while *tugu* (statue) was used in the song “Cahaya Cinta” to metaphorically represent the male lover’s ego and pride. There was an exception of using abstract subject such as God in some of the songs analysed. The female singer in the song “I’m sorry goodbye”, for instance, sought God’s blessings and assistance, and thanked Him for revealing the truths about the man’s infidelity and unfaithfulness. The male singer in the song “Sandaran Hati”, on the hand, sought God’s guidance in both love and life.

It can be concluded that contemporary popular Malay songs, especially those analysed in this study, convey messages about the dominant gender role expectations and stereotypes in romantic relationships which include men leaving or abandoning their lovers and concealing their feelings and desires for their lovers. These messages are further shaped by the demands of culture and tradition as projected most clearly in the song “Jikalau Aku,” where men should seek their female lovers’ parental consent (*izin*) and blessings (*restu*).

Focus group interviews

The results from focus group interviews indicated that all respondents acknowledged the dominant gender messages in the songs analysed. When asked about the songs’ messages about men’s and women’s role expectations and stereotypes, the respondents agreed that women were lyrically depicted as being emotionally dependent and vulnerable in romantic relationships, despite the

evidence of female emotional strength in the songs “Terlalu Cinta” and “I’m Sorry Goodbye.” This corresponds with Bern’s (2010) view of popular music’s portrayal of women as “emotional,” “dependent,” and “passive” beings (p. 484). The respondents also agreed that men were expected to exert power and authority in the relationship (e.g., initiating communication) and women were supposed to repress their feelings and desires for the opposite sex. One respondent cited the *Sunnah* to indicate that Malay Muslim men were expected to play more dominant roles while Malay Muslim women were expected to play more submissive roles and be bound by tradition, culture and religion no matter how “educated” and “open-minded” they had become. Such a response corresponds with numerous scholars’ view that the concept of Malay Muslim subjectivity within the context of the Malay world is deeply influenced and molded by culture and religion (see Khoo, 2006; Ong & Peletz, 1995; Ruzy 2006). Ruzy Suliza Hashim (2006), for instance, maintains that Malay Muslim men are expected to become fathers and the heads of the households, while Malay Muslim women are expected to comply with and actualise their *fitrah* (human natural disposition) by becoming wives and mothers (p. 16). The respondents claimed that they had no qualms with the use of physical-anatomical, natural and abstract objects in the song lyrics to represent women mainly because these objects were commonly used in songs sung by male singers to praise women and show their love for them. The respondents also pointed out that there were many popular Malay songs sung by male singers who addressed their lovers by name such as the songs “Isabella” and “Juwita”. However, the respondents admitted that it would be rather uncommon and even unwomanly for female singers to call their lovers by name. The use of pronouns such as *mu* (you) and *dia* (him) as evidenced in the song “Terlalu Cinta” was more socially acceptable.

However, to show contrast with the earlier views that somehow accept the norms of how men and women are lyrically represented, the respondents argued that dominant messages about women in the songs analysed, in particular, and popular Malay songs, in general, must be redressed and corrected. This amplifies Shuker’s (2003) view on *resistance*, where popular music listeners “work with the form itself [i.e. song or song lyric], break it up and subvert its conventions” (p. 55; notes added). One respondent pointed out that women continued to be portrayed in popular Malay songs as victims of men’s infidelity and her immediate reference to the song “Papa Jahat” which was not analysed in the study justified her claim. The song, as the respondent recalled, showed men’s tendency to be unfaithful and sexually promiscuous in the husband-wife relationship. Other respondents claimed that popular Malay songs should emulate the West where western female singers were more liberated in challenging normative gender roles. The respondents cited Juliana Banos, a Malay female singer whose songs were not analysed in the study, to show that women could also play more dominant roles in romantic relationship. In Juliana’s song “Mana Satu,” for instance, the woman took takes on the role as the pursuer, rather than the pursued, and the one who has the liberty to choose the right lover or partner for herself. This challenges the dominant gender roles in romantic love songs where men are often portrayed as “the pursuer” while women are “the pursued” (Holtzman, 2000, p. 88). Since the songs analysed mostly revolved around romantic relationship, the respondents argued that ideas and messages

about what it meant to be a woman in today's modern world were neither represented nor discussed fully in the lyrics. What seemed to be lacking, as the respondents claimed, was the image of the modern Malay woman and the many roles she plays: a career woman, a wife, a mother, a daughter and so on. Popular Malay songs, as the respondents argued further, should portray the modern Malay woman who has the same rights as men and who displays and possesses a "modern" outlook and mannerism (i.e. superior, intelligent, dependable) which are key to overcoming the challenges and demands of today's world.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that contemporary popular Malay songs, particularly those analysed in this study, not only transmit prevailing messages about gender role expectations and stereotypes in romantic relationships, but fail to represent fully listeners' perceptions of their gender and the roles they take on or assume in these relationships. This is because such songs, as the respondents claim, are primarily created for entertainment purposes or for listening pleasures only. They believe that *lagu puisi* (poetic song) is the most appropriate and effective medium to convey diverse ideas and messages about gender. While the respondents agree with the songs' portrayal of female roles in romantic relationship, they argue that the songs' messages about women must be redressed and corrected. This corroborates Shuker's (2001) view that dominant ideas, messages, and meanings produced in popular music are infinite rather than finite as they are constantly mediated and resisted by listeners. It is not wrong to say that popular Malay songs, in particular, and popular music, in general, can serve as important sites of *construction* and *subversion* where dominant ideas about gender are not only conveyed, constructed, and reinforced, but also subverted and redefined by listeners' diverse ideas about gender.

It should be mentioned that the findings of this study were drawn from a small sample of adult Malay women and their views about their gender and gender messages in the songs may not be representative of the views of Malay women in Malaysia and beyond. Despite the fact that the study was conducted in 2007, many popular Malay songs in Malaysia today continue to convey normative gender role expectations and stereotypes. It is also important to mention that analysing popular songs using Fairclough's (1992) method of textual analysis can be quite subjective, particularly when the analysis is influenced by the researcher's own understanding and personal biases. Future research on popular Malay songs (or songs of other ethnicity) may consider using other more systematic methods of analysing gender messages in the song lyrics and listeners' perceptions of these messages. Such methods include content analysis of song lyrics (see Wimmer & Dominick, 2011) and audience analysis (see Longhurst 2007). Holtzman's (2000), for instance, outlines a set of questions to help researchers elicit listeners' opinions (and their own in the process) of gender roles in popular songs that feature romantic love relationship:

[I]s there an indication of whether men or women are the aggressors, the most romantic, and the most sexual? What does this small sample tell you about roles of men and women in popular music? To what degree are the relationships featured intense, dramatic, romantic, conversational? What messages are conveyed about the nature of romantic relationships? . . . To what extent did your sample reinforce or challenge the dominant ideology of the gender roles in romantic relationships and the nature of the relationships itself? Are the relationships in this sample similar or different to the relationships you have had? (pp. 88-89)

The following questions can also be addressed in future work on gender in popular Malay songs:

- How are men and women represented in recent popular Malay songs?
- How do the lyricists of popular Malay songs represent masculinity and femininity?
- What do the song lyrics tell us about the lyricists' choice of words in portraying men and women? What do these words tell us about the lyricists' own notions of masculinity and femininity?
- Are these notions shaped by dominant ideas of gender?
- How might a study on lyricists' representations and listeners' perceptions help expose diverse views about gender within the Malay society?

It is hoped the findings from these future research will contribute to the field of popular Malay music studies in particular, and popular music studies in general where gender messages in popular songs and their influence on listeners' perceptions of their own gender is concerned.

References

- Adler, R. B., & Proctor II, R. F. (Eds.). (2010). *Looking out/looking in* (13th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.
- Bader, A. (2007). "Love will steer the stars" and other improbable feats: Myths in popular love songs. In M. Galician & D. L. Merskin (Eds.), *Critical thinking about sex, love, and romance in the mass media: Media literacy applications* (pp. 141-160). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Berns, R. M. (2010). *Child, family, school, community: Socialisation and support* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Fairclough, N. (1992). *Critical language awareness*. London: Longman.
- Hakaman, E. A., & Wells, A. (1993). Music preference and taste cultures among adolescents. *Popular Music and Society*, 17(1), 55-69.
- Holtzman, L. (2000). *Media messages: What film, television, and popular music teach us about race, class, gender and sexual orientation*. New York, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.
- Khoo, G. C. (2006). *Reclaiming adat: Contemporary Malaysian film and literature*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

- Locke, T. (2004). *Critical discourse analysis*. London, UK: Continuum.
- Mäkelä, J. (2004). *John Lennon imagined: Cultural history of a rock star*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative research and evaluative methods* (3rd ed.) Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Paxson, P. (2003). *Media literacy: Thinking critically about music & media*. Portland, ME: J. Weston Walch Publisher
- Longhurst, B. (2007). *Popular music and society* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Ong, A., & Peletz, M. (Eds.). (1995). *Bewitching women, pious men: Gender and body politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Ruzy Suliza Hashim. (2006). Meniti duri dan ranjau: pembikinan gender dan seksualiti dalam konteks dunia Melayu [Scaling mines and thorns: the construction of gender and sexuality in the context of the Malay world]. *Sari: International Journal of Malay World Studies*, 24, 15–34.
- Seidler, V. J. (2006). *Transforming masculinities: Men, cultures, bodies, sex and love*. Oxon, UK: Routledge.
- Shuker, R. (2001) *Understanding popular music* (2nd ed.). Oxon, UK: Routledge.
- Walser, R. (1993). *Running with the devil: Power, gender, and madness in heavy metal music*. Middletown, CT, Wesleyan University Press.
- Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R. (2011). *Mass media research: An introduction* (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Wadsworth.

Appendix

I'm Sorry Goodbye

Sebelum bertemu denganmu
Diriku bahagia
Semenjak bertemu denganmu
Ku makin bahagia
Semakin lama aku
Semakin tau tentang engkau
Sedikit kecewa
Ternyata engkau tak baik

Pertama tama semua manis
Yang engkau berikan
Membuat aku merasakan
Cinta sebenarnya
Semakin hari
Semakin terungkap
Yang sesungguhnya
Kumakin kecewa
Ternyata kau penuh dusta

Maafkan ku harus pergi
Ku tak suka dengan ini
Aku tak bodoh
Seperti kekasihmu yang lain
Terima kasih oh Tuhan
Tunjukkan siapa dia
Maaf kita putus
So thank you so much
I'm sorry goodbye

GENRES APART: SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY WRITING

Su-Hie Ting¹

Muriatul Khusmah Musa²

¹Centre for Language Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

²Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Pulau Pinang

¹shting@cls.unimas.my

²muriatul557@ppinang.uitm.edu.my

Abstract

This study examined the types of writing emphasised in secondary school and university. The specific aspects studied were the genres that students write best, genres frequently written in school, and genres frequently required in written coursework assignments in university. The data on school writing were obtained from questionnaires distributed to 235 students enrolled in English courses in two Malaysian universities whereas the data on university coursework assignments were obtained through interviews with lecturers in the two universities. The results showed that there is a mismatch between types of writing emphasised in school and university. Students frequently write recount and discussion in school but university coursework frequently requires assignments to be written in the form of research articles and explanations. In view of the different emphases in school and university writing, students entering university have difficulty coping with academic discourse. The findings suggest that it is beneficial to sensitise university students to textual conventions of commonly used academic genres at university to speed up their learning of academic discourse.

Keywords: academic writing, genres, recount, discussion, explanation, research article

Introduction

Students who enter university often cannot handle academic writing well because of the different nature of writing emphasised in secondary school and university (Cullip & Carol, 2002). Compilation of related information from different sources is no longer sufficient as students need to critically evaluate information and cite authoritative sources to make their point. Studies have shown that students cannot get by with general writing skills at university. For example, Horowitz's (1986) analysis of 54 written assignments from 29 courses in a United States university revealed that the common types of writing are "summary of/reaction to a reading, annotated bibliography, report on a specified participatory experience, connection of theory and data, case study, synthesis of multiple sources, and research project"

(p. 449). Based on a study in a South African university, Jackson, Meyer and Parkinson (2006) reported that for science undergraduates there is a mismatch between the most frequently assigned task which is a laboratory report and the most frequently given reading materials which are textbooks and discursive essays. In view of the mismatch, Jackson et al. (2006) suggested that science communication courses need to emphasise research report writing. Business students, on the other hand, have problems communicating in a professional role as business people solving real-world problems, based on Zhu's (2004a) analysis of 95 course documents from undergraduate and graduate business courses in a university in the United States. These studies show that university students need to write a variety of academic genres and they are generally not equipped with the necessary writing skills.

In the Malaysian context, research has shown that university students are better at some academic genres than others. For example, Ting and Tee (2008) found that undergraduates in the Teaching of English as a Second Language programme wrote discussions and arguments better than explanations. The problems with explanations are the absent or unclear statement of purpose, inconsistent use of tenses and lack of reference to develop coherence (Ting & Tee, 2009). The findings are based on analysis of explanations written by biology undergraduates. In comparison, university students are more familiar with discussions. They could even switch from informal language to formal language when participating in discussions on given issues in an online forum when the audience changed from their peers to their lecturer (Ting & Puteh, 2012). These students were able to state the issue under discussion clearly at the beginning and attempt an assessment of viewpoints at the end of the discussion. However, the argument genre is apparently more difficult, particularly for students who are less proficient in English. Ting, Raslie and Jee (2011) analysed Letters to the Editor written by proficient and less proficient students and found that while the latter can learn to use additive and adversative connectors, they were less adept at providing a clear statement of stance in the introduction and a clear restatement of stance in the conclusion compared to the proficient group. These findings suggest that in the Malaysian context, students could have been more familiar with the discussion genre because of more practice in school.

At this point in time, the different nature of the writing at school and university remains a proposition (e.g., Cullip & Carol, 2002). To our knowledge, there have been no studies comparing the types of writing done in school and university in a single study in the setting. At the university level, studies have been carried out on academic writing in different settings (e.g., Horowitz, 1986; Jackson, Meyer, & Parkinson, 2006; Jenkins & Pico, 2006; Zhu, 2004a, 2004b), including Malaysia (Ting & Tee, 2008; Ting & Puteh, 2010). However, studies on school writing in the Malaysian setting have tended to be on error analysis (e.g., Darus & Subramaniam, 2009; Maros, Tan, & Salehuddin, 2007; Talif & Edwin, 1989) rather than on writing skills. Because of the lack of studies comparing writing in school and university, there is no empirical evidence as to whether there is a match or mismatch between types of writing emphasised at the two levels.

Purpose of study

This study examined the types of writing emphasised in secondary school and university. The specific objectives of the study were to: (1) identify the genres that students write best; (2) determine the genres frequently written in school; and (3) determine the genres frequently required in written coursework assignments in university.

Method of study

The participants of the study were 235 students from two public non-research intensive universities in Malaysia (128 from Uni 1 and 113 from Uni 2). Uni 1 is located in Sarawak whereas Uni 2 is located in Pulau Pinang. The participants had their earlier education in secondary schools all over Malaysia. At the time of the study, the students aged 20 to 25 were registered in generic English courses. The majority of the students in the study can be considered as having lower proficiency in English. For students from Uni 1 who had sat for MUET, only 26% out of 128 students scored Band 4 (n=28) and Band 5 (n=5) while the majority had Band 3. Those with Band 3 use the language with noticeable inaccuracies, in contrast to students with Band 4 who have a satisfactory command of the language and occasional inaccuracies in the use of the language (Malaysian Examinations Council, 2006). For Uni 2 diploma students who had not sat for MUET at the time of the study, 45% of the 113 students scored A in their SPM English and 55% scored B and below.

Two data collection techniques were used in this study to find out whether there is a match between types of writing frequently done in school and university. The data on school writing were obtained by means of students' self-reports in a questionnaire whereas the data on university writing were acquired from analysis of written coursework assignment questions given by lecturers.

A questionnaire was formulated to obtain participants' reports of types of writing frequently done in school. Six types of writing were listed in the questionnaire with examples so that it was clear to participants what the technical terms meant:

1. Stories
2. Discussion (e.g., Advantages and Disadvantages of ...)
3. Argument (e.g., Animal abusers should be jailed)
4. Explanation of a process (e.g., Lab experiment steps)
5. Classification (e.g., types of forest)
6. Review of books and movies

The first five types of writing were based on classification of academic genres by Derewianka (1991) and Feez (1998) (see Appendix 1). However, the term "stories" was used instead of "recounts" to minimise use of jargon and the term "classification" was used instead of "information report" (Derewianka, 1991) to

avoid confusion with general factual reports. Review was included in the list because Horowitz (1986) had identified as summary of/reaction to a reading as one of the common types of writing required in university written assignments.

In the questionnaire, participants were first asked to identify the type of writing they did the best. Then, students were asked to report the frequency with which they wrote these six types of texts in English lessons (at least once a week, once in two weeks, once in a month, once in a semester, once in a year, and never). Besides the genres, the questionnaire also elicited demographic information such as gender, faculty and English proficiency scores. In the analysis of the questionnaire responses, frequencies for each of the responses were computed.

To obtain data on university writing, lecturers were interviewed to find out the written assignments given as coursework assessment. In both universities, two lecturers in each faculty were interviewed. The lecturers were asked to name two courses they were teaching during the academic year and to provide an assignment question each. Altogether, 32 lecturers were interviewed, giving rise to 64 coursework assignments (30 from Uni 1 and 34 from Uni 2). The number of assignment questions from the two universities was not the same because of the different number of faculties in the two universities.

The assignment questions were subsequently categorised into recount, discussion, argument, explanation, classification and review. Explanations of lab procedures and protocols were classified as explanation because they involve a systematic sequencing of events. For example, "write a report on application of using PIC 1684A general board" (Microcontroller course). The frequencies were computed for comparison to find out whether there is a match between writing frequently done by students in school and the types of writing required for coursework assignments.

Results and Discussion

Genres that students write best

The results showed that the participants were the most familiar with discussion and recount. Although there were 235 participants, the total responses added up to 241 because some students felt that they were equally good in two types of writing. Out of 241 responses, 39.83% and 37.76% identified discussion and recounts as the two types of writing that they did best respectively (Table 1). In comparison, very few participants reported that they wrote argument, explanation, classification and reviews well. The next part of the results will show that more participants were able to write discussion and recount well because of frequent practice in school.

Table 1
Types of writing that students do best

	Uni 1	Uni 2	Total	Percentage
Discussion	58	38	96	39.83
Recount	29	62	91	37.76
Argument	12	6	18	7.47
Explanation	13	2	15	6.22
Classification	9	5	14	5.81
Review	7	0	7	2.90
Total	128	113	241*	99.99

*The total does not tally with number of participants (235) because some students selected more than one option

Genres frequently written in school

Based on the participants' self-reports, they had the most practice writing discussion in school. Table 2 shows that 57 participants wrote discussion essays at least once a week and 65 reported that they wrote discussion essays once in two weeks. The second highest frequency is for recounts, with 49 reporting that they wrote recounts at least once a week and 59 reporting that they wrote recounts once in two weeks. The frequencies for the other genres lagged behind.

Table 2
Frequency of types of writing done in school

	At least once a week	Once in 2 weeks	Once in a month	Once in a semester	Once a year	Never	Total *
Discussion	57	65	66	31	8	7	234
Recount	49	59	47	30	24	21	230
Argument	28	49	75	39	15	18	224
Explanation	33	50	66	40	27	18	234
Classification	20	47	71	30	26	41	235
Review	30	34	67	34	25	44	234

* Some missing responses resulting in totals less than 235

Based on these results, it can be concluded that the participants would have less problems with written assignments which require reporting of events and discussion of issues since they had more exposure to these two types of writing in school. A common type of discussion essay that students are asked to write is the advantages-disadvantages essay and a popular type of recount is imaginative recounts (e.g., one day in the life of ...) and personal recounts (e.g., what I did during

the holidays) rather than factual recounts (see Derewianka, 1991 for details of classification).

In this study, the three types of writing which the participants did not have much practice writing are review, classification and explanation. Table 2 shows that the largest number of participants reported that they had never written any review or classification (44 and 41 respectively) compared to other types of writing. The number of participants who reported that they wrote review and classification once a year is also among the highest compared to other types of writing (25 and 26 respectively). The infrequent writing of review and classification is reinforced by the results showing that very few participants had practice writing these once a week or once in two weeks.

Besides review and classification, the participants were also seldom asked to explain processes or how and why phenomena happen. Although only 18 participants reported that they had never written explanations during their secondary school years, a total of 67 stated that they had either written explanations once a year or once a semester (equivalent to two times a year). Only 33 participants stated that they had written explanations once a week. This number is low compared to 57 who reported that they wrote discussions once a week. To sum up, the types of writing frequently done in secondary school are discussion and recount, while the least done are review, classification and explanation. The argument genre falls in between.

Genres frequently required in written assignments in university

In this section, the results on the frequently required genres in university writing are presented, and concomitantly compared with the results on school writing to determine whether there is a match or mismatch between the types of writing that are required at the two levels of education.

Past research which has specifically highlighted academic disciplines studied by the university students (e.g., Jackson et al., 2006 – science; Zhu, 2004a – business) indicate that the type of writing science and arts students are required to produce may differ according to the disciplines. In view of this, the written coursework assignments in this study were broadly categorised into arts and science. The total of 64 coursework assignments is too small to allow further subdivision. For examples of assignment questions from the science and arts degrees, see Appendix 2.

Table 3
Frequency of genres required in university assignments

Genre	Arts	Science	Total	Percentage
Research article	11	6	17	26.56
Explanation	5	12	17	26.56
Classification	5	4	9	14.06
General essay	2	6	8	12.50
Recount	3	2	5	7.81
Promotional materials	3	1	4	6.25
Discussion	3	1	4	6.25
Total	32	32	64	99.99*

*Total percentage does not add up to 100 due to rounding-off

The analysis revealed that the types of writing required in written coursework assignments are more varied than school writing. The genres which emerged from the analysis, and which were not explored in the questionnaire on school writing, are research article and promotional materials (e.g., posters, flyers). In fact, research article and explanation are the two most frequently types of writing required in written coursework assignments at the two universities (Table 3).

Examples of assignment questions in the research article genre are as follows:

- Report the findings of a site investigation (Project Management course)
- Write a business plan (Marketing Strategy course)

Business plans are put in the category of research articles because they resemble research proposals. To complete this type of assignments, students need to read and cite related research in order to provide a background for their investigation. At the same time, the students also need to align their research projects with current societal needs which serve as an impetus for their study. The results show that more of the research article assignments were from the arts rather than from the sciences (11 versus 6), mainly because the economics and business lecturers were inclined to ask their students to conduct mini research projects and write business plans. The business plan is, in fact, one of the real-world tasks that business executives need to produce, and it is one of the popular types of assignments from Zhu's (2004a) analysis of assignments given in undergraduate and graduate business courses in a large university in the United States. The finding on the high frequency of research articles among the written coursework assignments concurs with Horowitz's (1986) finding as reporting of research project is one of the seven main university writing tasks. Jackson et al. (2006) also advocate the use of research articles as models for teaching academic writing.

Besides research articles, explanation is another genre frequently required in university writing. Examples of coursework assignment questions requiring an explanation of how or why certain phenomenon occurs are:

- Explain how glands function (Basic Medical Science course)
- Describe the effects of pollutants produced in the industry and suggest preventive and control measures for these pollutants (Environmental Pollution and Monitoring course).

In this study, 12 out of 17 assignment questions requiring explanations of processes were given by science lecturers. Due to the nature of the science discipline which involves study of natural phenomena (e.g., diseases, pathways, problem solving), explanations are more relevant to the sciences than to the arts. Having said that, arts students may explain social phenomena such as how crowd behaviour works, so the same style of sequential explanations is needed. Unsworth (1999) stated that at a higher level, subjects such as history involve causal explanations. However, based on the results of this study, explanation seems to be a feature of science writing rather than the arts. In this light, university students in the science discipline may have some difficulty producing coherent sequenced explanation because explanation is among the less practised types of writing in school (Table 2). In addition, not many students report confidence in writing explanations well (Table 1). Hence, explanation is one of the academic genres which ought to be given more attention in academic writing courses in the university so that students are aware of the organisational structure and language features of a good piece of explanation. The awareness raising is necessary in view of findings on the difficulties that Malaysian students have with explanations (e.g., Ting & Tee, 2008, 2009). Elsewhere, Klein and Rose (2010) have highlighted the little practice that students have writing explanations although they may be given brief explanations to read in science and social studies. Instruction in writing of explanations would bring benefits because Drury and Jones (2010), and Mort and Drury (2012) have successfully used the online learning platform, WRISE (“Write Reports in Science and Engineering”), to teach laboratory and field trip reports.

The genres that are the least required in university writing tasks are recount, promotional materials and discussion (see Table 3). Of these, discussion and recount are the two most frequently practised types of writing in school (Table 2) and yet the skills learnt are not in demand at university level. The results show a mismatch in types of writing required at school and university levels. The findings are not meant to suggest that school students should be taught types of writing frequently required at university but to point out that when students enter university, they need to expand their repertoire of writing abilities to include more academic genres such as research articles which most have not encountered in school. To help students handle academic discourse, the findings suggest that academic writing courses should consider using research articles as reading texts to familiarise university students with this academic genre. Since the impact of the academic writing course is often limited, a concerted effort by discipline lecturers to introduce research articles in their course is needed to increase students’ exposure to the

research article genre before they are required to produce written coursework assignments in this genre.

The skill to write classification is less required than the skill to write research articles and explanations but it is not as negligible as the skill to write recount, promotional materials and discussion – as far as the results of this study go. Out of 64 assignment questions analysed, 9 (or 14.06%) involved classification of phenomena. The number of the classification-type assignments from the arts and science courses are balanced (five and four respectively). Although zoology and botany students are expected to describe taxonomies of animals and plants, classification is not confined to the sciences as shown by the examples of coursework assignments given by arts lecturers in this study:

- Describe string instruments (Introduction to Music)
- Describe the music composition from middle age to 20th century (Music Appreciation course)
- Distinguish among human resource executives, generalists and specialists (Human Resource Management)

Classification-type questions may require students to describe characteristics of one class (e.g., signs of food spoilage, description of string instruments) or one category which encompasses sub-categories (e.g., types of workplace conflict, differences between human resource executives, generalists and specialists). Since classification is not common in school writing (Table 2), this is a genre that students who enter university need to learn. A study by Ting and Law (2008) revealed that classification-type essays written by university students often show characteristics of other genres such as personal response resembling recounts. These essays often lack a clear identification of the category described but instead the introduction presents general information on the topic.

This brings the discussion to the results on the eight assignment questions which were classified as general essays because they do not reflect one particular genre. Most of the general essays require students to present facts on different aspects of a given phenomenon. However, general essays only constituted 12.5% of 64 written coursework assignments analysed in this study. The majority of the assignment questions required the university students to demonstrate writing in one genre or another. General essays have a tripartite organisation (i.e., introduction-body-conclusion) (Cahill, 2003; Gautreau et al., 1986; Liu, 2005) but genres have typical textual structure and language features to suit communicative purpose. While the ability to write general essays may be adequate at school level, academic discourse at university requires knowledge of textual conventions. To speed up students' acculturation into the academic discourse, explicit teaching of the genres is needed and many studies have shown the benefits of genre-based instruction (e.g., Flowerdew, 2000; Marshall, 1991; Osman, 2004).

Conclusion

The study showed that the types of writing required in school and university differ. The main types of writing done in school are recount and discussion but research

articles and explanations are emphasised in university coursework assignments. The study has found empirical evidence on the mismatch between types of writing emphasised in school and university which may explain why students entering university have difficulty coping with academic discourse. As these types of writing differ in the textual organisation and language features because of different communicative purposes, it is beneficial to sensitise students to the textual conventions of commonly used academic genres at university to speed up their learning of academic discourse. Admittedly, the findings are based on student reports of types of writing frequently practised in school and the lecturer reports of coursework assignment questions are a sampling of written coursework assignment questions given by lecturers in Malaysian universities. Regardless of this, the study has established a mismatch in types of writing required at these two educational levels for further investigation. Further studies involving analysis of actual writing done by secondary students in a school year in various schools would lead to a better understanding of how to bridge the gap between school and university writing in the teaching of academic writing at university level.

References

- Cahill, D. (2003). The myth of the “turn” in contrastive rhetoric. *Written Communication*, 20(2), 170-194.
- Cullip, P. F., & Carol, D. (2002). Tailoring an EAP course to disciplinary needs: The UNIMAS effort. *The English Teacher*, XXVIII [Electronic version]. Retrieved July 23, 2009, from <http://www.melta.org.my/ET/2002/wp05.htm>
- Darus, S., & Kuang, C. H. (2009). Common errors in written English essay of Form one Chinese students: A case study. *Eur. J. Soc. Sci.*, 10(2), 242-253.
- Darus, S., & Subramaniam, K. (2009). Error analysis of the written English essays of secondary school students in Malaysia: A case study. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(3), 483-495.
- Derewianka, B. (1991). *Exploring how texts work*. Newtown, New South Wales: Primary English Teaching Association.
- Drury, H., & Jones, J. (2010). Transforming the teaching of report writing in science and engineering through an integrated online learning environment, WRiSE (Write Reports in Science and Engineering). In C. H. Steel, M. J. Keppell, P. Gerbic & S. Housego (Eds.), *Curriculum, technology & transformation for an unknown future. Proceedings ascilite Sydney 2010* (pp. 313-323). Accessed April 8, 2013, <http://ascilite.org.au/conferences/sydney10/procs/Drury-full.pdf>
- Feez, S. (1998). *Text-based syllabus design*. Sydney, Australia: Macquarie University.
- Flowerdew, L. (2000). Using a genre-based framework to teach organizational structure in academic writing. *ELT Journal*, 54(4), 369-378.
- Gautreau, A. L., Averett, J. B., Trusock, D., McFerren, S. E., Phipps, C., Lynch, M. ... Speer, L. W. (1986). Our readers write: What's a practical idea for teaching organization in writing? *The English Journal*, 75(5), 61-68. Retrieved October 11, 2012, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/818208.pdf?acceptTC=true>
- Horowitz, D. M. (1986). What professors actually require: Academic tasks for the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20(3), 445– 462.

- Jackson, L., Meyer, W., & Parkinson, J. (2006). A study of the writing tasks and reading assigned to undergraduate science students at a South African University. *English for Specific Purposes*, 25(3), 260–281.
- Jenkins, H. H., & Pico, M. L. (2006). SFL and argumentative essays in ESOL. Proceedings of 33rd International Systemic Functional Congress, 155.
- Klein, P. D., & Rose, R. A. (2010). Teaching argument and genre to prepare junior students for writing to learn. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 45(4), 433-461.
- Liu, L. (2005). Rhetorical education through writing instruction across cultures: A comparative analysis of select online instructional materials on argumentative writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 14(1), 1-18.
- Malaysian Examinations Council. (2006). *Malaysian University English Test*. Retrieved November 20, 2012, from <http://www.mpm.edu.my/documents/10156/c5c332ab-3d97-4959-83c0-09866eea0774>
- Maros, M., Tan, K. H., & Salehuddin, K. (2007). Interference in learning English: Grammatical errors in English essay writing among rural Malay secondary schools students in Malaysia. *Jurnal e-Bangi*, 2(2), 1-15. Accessed May 6, 2013, from <http://journalarticle.ukm.my/1539/1/marlyna07.pdf>
- Marshall, S. (1991). A genre-based approach to the teaching of report-writing. *English for Specific Purposes*, 10(1), 3-13.
- Mort, P., & Drury, H. (2012). Supporting student academic literacy in the disciplines using genre-based online pedagogy. *Journal of Academic Language & Learning*, 6(3), A1-A15.
- Osman, H. (2004). Genre-based instruction for ESP [Electronic version]. Malaysia: Universiti Teknologi MARA. *English Teacher*, 13. Accessed March 20, 2006, from <http://www.melta.org.my/ET/2004/2004-13.pdf>
- Talif, R., & Edwin, M. (1989). Error analysis of Form Four English compositions. *The English Teacher* Vol XVIII. Accessed October 5, 2012, from <http://www.melta.org.my/ET/1989/main9.html>
- Ting, S. H., & Law, L. (2008, March 17-19). Genre-based approach to teaching English for Academic Purposes: Changes in undergraduates' academic writing. *Proceedings of International Conference on Teaching and Learning (IMCICON)*, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.
- Ting, S. H., Raslie, H., & Jee, L. J. (2011). Case study on persuasiveness of argument texts written by proficient and less proficient Malaysian undergraduates. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 8, 71-92.
- Ting, S. H., & Puteh, F. (2012). Academic discussion: From informal to formal writing in online forum. *English for Specific Purposes (ESP Malaysia)*, 18, 31-40.
- Ting, S. H., & Tee, P. F. (2008). TESL undergraduates' ability to handle academic text-types at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak. *Asiatic Journal of Languages and Literatures*, 2(2), 85-100.
- Ting, S. H., & Tee, F. P. F. (2009, April). Organisational and grammatical features of explanations written by Biology undergraduates. Proceedings of 4th International Conference on English Language Learning Conference (ELT-CON 2009), Georgetown, Malaysia.

- Unsworth, L. (1999). Developing critical understanding of the specialised language of school science and history texts: A functional grammatical perspective. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 42(7), 508-521.
- Zhu, W. (2004a). Writing in business courses: An analysis of assignment types, their characteristics, and required skills. *English for Specific Purposes*, 23, 111–35.
- Zhu, W. (2004b). Faculty views on the importance of writing, the nature of academic writing, and teaching and responding to writing in the disciplines. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13, 29-48.

Appendix 1: Characteristics of selected text-types

Genre	Purpose	Generic Structure	Language features
Argument	To argue for or against an issue	Thesis ^ arguments ^ reinforcement of thesis	Language showing writer's position Reference
Discussion	To weigh up two or more sides of an issue	Issue ^ Arguments for and against ^ Assessment/ recommendation	Causal and comparative conjunctions Modality Conditional clauses
Explanation	To explain why or how a phenomenon happens	Phenomenon ^ sequenced explanations	Generalised participants Cause-and-effect relationships Present tense Action verbs
Information Report [Classification]	To classify and describe the phenomena objectively	Identification of topic ^ information	Generalised participants Present tense Language for defining, classifying, comparing
Recount	To tell what happened	Orientation ^ Series of events ^ Personal comment	Specific participants Simple past tense Action verbs Linking items to do with time Use of first person pronoun for personal recount and third person pronouns for factual recount Passive voice may be used in factual recounts
Instructions	To tell someone how to do or make something	Goal ^ Materials ^ Method	Generalised participants Imperatives ("you" is not mentioned) Linking words to do with time Mainly action verbs Simple present tense Detailed, factual description Detailed information on how (adverbs), where, when

Sources:

Derewianka (1991), pp. 10-46.

Feez (1998), pp. 86-101.

Appendix 2: Written coursework assignments categorised by genre

Academic genre	Course	Examples of assignments
Research article	Project management	Report the findings of a site investigation.
	Marketing Strategy	Write a business plan.
Explanation	Basic medical science	Explain how glands function.
	Environmental pollution and monitoring	Describe the effects of pollutants produced in the industry and suggest preventive and control measures for these pollutants.
Classification	Hematology	Describe the characteristics of myeloblast, promyelocyte and myelocyte.
	Music Appreciation	Describe the music composition from middle age to 20 th century.
General essay	Bioinformatics	Describe the background, features and simulation of an online tool database.
	Environmental Health	Make a summary of any article about environmental health issues from magazine, newspapers or journals.
Recount	Construction Technology	Report on a site visit to any construction site and include recommendations of new technology
	Introduction to Social Science	Break a norm in attire. Talk to people and observe people's behaviour. Report how people feel.
Promotional	Social Pharmacy & Public Health	Develop a health promotion campaign in a community pharmacy in an urban area.
	Fundamentals of marketing	Take any product brand and create an advertisement to make the customers aware of the brand. Explain the rationale of the advertisement.
Discussion	Psychology	Use the personality theory to discuss innate and learned behaviour.
	Pediatric nursing	Discuss issues of parental smoking and child abuse.

STUDY OF SCIENCE STUDENTS' EXPECTATION FOR UNIVERSITY WRITING COURSES

Shanthi Nadarajan

Centre for Language Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
nshanthi@cls.unimas.my

Abstract

The New Malaysia Education Blueprint (2012) states that the private sector continues to have concerns for Malaysian graduates' English proficiency. The present study investigates the views and expectations of science students taking English courses in a public university. The findings revealed that learners saw opportunities to communicate and job applications process as important soft skills. They preferred practical learning methods above traditional teaching methods. Learners considered group performance, personal attitudes and online activities as important learning opportunities, while factual knowledge, report writing were least supported despite the fact that the majority viewed both assessments and instructional process as relevant. The data revealed that though they were dissatisfied with their existing level of proficiency, many students continued to expect an A for their course. An assessment of the learner's' language ability revealed that language ability was less under the learner's control and more dependent on learner proficiency level. Taken together, this study suggests that the curriculum for the Professional Writing course should be highly diversified and balanced, with some emphasis on getting less proficient learners to read and improve their grammar skills while better students should be given opportunities to develop creative talents and interpersonal skills.

Keywords: Science students, writing skills, employability, motivation, professional communication

Background

Malaysia's language education system has undergone several changes over the last three decades. Developments in language policies, greater awareness about language learning and teaching learning and innovations in technology have brought forth a rich variety of resources and assessment tools that have made it possible to address language problems that were once considered remotely possible. Nevertheless, despite these enhancements the new Education Blueprint (Ministry of Education, 2012) continues to state that public perception of the quality of education outcomes remains mixed with expectations continuing to vary across

different groups. A primary concern is the industry perspective that continues to reveal that there is "... widespread concern about: (i) the lack of higher order thinking skills,... and (ii) the level of graduates' English proficiency." (Ministry of Education, 2012). Interestingly, students themselves continue to remain optimistic with 95% being quoted in 2011 as agreeing or strongly agreeing that their education helped them develop the right set of life skills. Taken together with a previous national study (Isarji Hj Sarudin, Ainol Madziah Zubairi, Mohamed Sahari Nordi, & Mohd Azmi Omar, 2008) which found that both industries and students were concerned about the direction of their life skills, it is possible that matters may have changed within these few years but some insights into how students continue to feel about university language courses may be in order. In an effort to optimise learning opportunities and improve undergraduate language performance, a survey was conducted on science students language needs with an aim of understanding more about their expectations and views of a professional writing language course at the university.

Overview

Learner difference and motivation have been well explored in L2 literature. Gardner (1985) looked at integrativeness and attitudes in terms of the desire to learn the L2 and learner evaluation of the L2 teacher and course. These features have been seen as capable of contributing to some understanding about learner motivation and their performance. Dörnyei (2005) looked at integrativeness in relation to the ideal L2 self, the ought to L2 self and the L2 learning experience. The ideal L2 self is "representative of the ideal image that L2 learners wish to approach in the future (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 106) while the ought to L2 self is the L2 specific aspect of one's ought to self" (Papi, 2010, p. 469). This less internalised aspect of the L2 self refers to the "qualities one perceives one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid negative outcomes" as a language learner (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009, p. 29). The following study is motivated by many of these observations.

Method

In the study data were obtained from 86 undergraduates from three science based programs, namely, Medicine, Resources Science and Cognitives Sciences enrolled in an undergraduate level Professional Writing English course. The undergraduates filled in online questionnaires and participated in two vocabulary tests. The objectives of the writing course were to get learners to construct convincing professional letters, reports and workplace documents in addition to participating in face-to-face professional situations. The aim of the study was to determine the relationship between and within learner personality, language affects, motivation properties and language use. The changes in learners' language ability was assessed through a pre-test post test design but only the results of students who completed both pre-test and post test were used in the language ability findings.

Results

The Malaysian University Entrance Test (MUET) band levels were taken as the indicator for learners’ perceived intellect at the point of the study. All participants were categorised into three groups based on their bands (e.g., Beginner (Bands 1 & 2); Intermediate (Bands 3 & 4) and Advanced (Bands 5 & 6). Henceforth, all data were analysed according to these three levels.

Perceived competence

In terms of assessing ideal L2, learners’ assumed competence and expectation, the learners’ general feeling about the course and their expected grades were analysed. Most students believed the course to be of average difficulty but expected an A for the course irrespective of their initial level (see Table 1). Students were willing to allocate a minimum of 2 to 4 hours to reading the modules every week (see Table 2). However, common comments from students were as below:

“truly... I just spent the time on this subject when there is an assignment to submit. If there is no assignment, there is no time to spend on it”

(Respondent 1)

Table 1
Survey of science students’ perceived competence

Muet Band*	Subject matter Percentage			Expected Grade		
	Easy	Average	Difficult	A	B	C
Beginner	5	85	10	50	45	5
Intermediate	7.9	66.7	25.4	57.1	38.1	4.8
Advanced	33.3	66.7	0	100	0	0

Table 2
Survey of science students’ readiness

Muet Band*	Willing to spent on reading for class Percentage			Willing to speak in class		
	2 hours	4 hrs	>4 hrs	Never	Seldom	Always
limited	35	45	20	10	55	35
Intermediate	47.6	34.9	17.5	14.3	49.2	20.6
Advanced	0	66.7	33.3	0	0	100

To investigate learner attitude, students were asked to comment based on their perceptions of their lecture and slides used in class (see Table 3). Satisfaction was high for both lectures and teacher presentation indicating that there was a general level of acceptance for what was being taught. Incidentally, the slides were part of the course materials.

Table 3
Survey of science students' consciousness and attitude

MUET	lectures			slides	
	Percentage				
Band*	focused	relevant	comprehensible	useful	effective
limited	100	90	95	100	95
Intermediate	100	95.2	95	93.7	88.9
Advanced	100	100	100	100	100

Language related affect

The learning situation is an important factor for learner motivation. To assess learner’s preferred language learning situations, participants were requested to indicate their preferred learning situations based on a four-point Likert scale (see Table 4). The findings revealed that the learners clearly preferred group activities irrespective of proficiency level closely followed by online activities. Language anxiety was assessed in terms of learners preferred mode of assignment and total time spent on completing course assignments. The preference was for pair and group work (see Table 5). In terms of time spent on all three assignments, most students seem to spend approximately 2 to 4 hours on each assignment (see Table 6). Next, learner satisfaction in terms of most interesting and least interesting course was analysed (see Table 7). A majority of students from the beginner and intermediate groups found the topics on ‘Job Application’ and ‘Mock Interview Process’ to be most useful while report writing and grammar was seen by the intermediate group to be less important. The advanced group indicated letter writing to be the most useful skill. One interesting comment from an intermediate learner about the job interview process being as follows:

“The most useful topic is the ‘Job Interview’ as it give me the chance and lots of knowledge to practice for real job interview.”

(Respondent 2)

Table 4
 Survey of science students' preferred learning conditions

	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
<i>Beginner</i>				
	Percentage			
Lectures	0	5	40	55
Group Activities	0	45	35	20
Online Activities	10	15	40	35
Task based Activity	0	15	55	30
Focused Reading	0	20	35	45
<i>Intermediate</i>				
	Percentage			
Lectures	0	9.5	38.1	52.4
Group Activities	0	20.6	47.6	31.7
Online Activities	7.9	36.5	41.3	14.3
Task based Activity	6.3	20.6	44.4	27.0
Focused Reading	3.2	27.0	38.1	30.2
<i>Advanced</i>				
	Percentage			
Lectures	0	33.3	0	66.7
Group Activities	0	33.3	33.3	33.3
Online Activities	0	66.7	0	33.3
Task based Activity	0	66.7	0	33.3
Focused Reading	0	66.7	33.3	0

It should be mentioned that the learner seemed to overlook the fact that this was a language course where the emphasis was on getting learners to use accurate and appropriate language and not simulate a discipline specific job application process. Furthermore, in terms of assignments, the general preference was for pair and group work for both beginner and intermediate group though only 60 percent seem to think that they were successful in completing the assignments while the advanced group appeared ambivalent for all three assignment modes though they were confident of their ability to do well in the assignment. In terms of the most useful and least useful topics, learners appeared mixed in their comments. The beginner and intermediate groups were in greater favour of the job interview process while the advanced group were more interested in the ability to write convincing letters. As for least useful topic, the intermediate group had some students voting in favour of grammar and report writing suggesting that students may be less comfortable with deep processing strategies and in favour of surface learning strategies which may be a cause for concern in the writing classroom.

Table 5
Survey of science students' preferred mode of assignment

Muet Band*	Percentage			
	Individual	Pair	Group work	Success rate
<i>Beginner</i>	53.2	78.9	68.4	68.4
<i>Intermediate</i>	56.8	86.4	75	60.2
<i>Advanced</i>	66.7	66.7	66.7	100

Table 6
Survey of science students' time spent on language assignments

Muet Band*	Percentage			
	2 hours	4 hours	1 day	>1day
<i>Beginner</i>	60.5	28.9	7.9	2.6
<i>Intermediate</i>	2.3	48.9	29.5	17.0
<i>Advanced</i>	33.3	66.7	0	0

Table 7
Survey of science students' view on most useful and least useful topic

	Most Useful				Least Useful		
	Job interview	Communi- cation	Letter writing	grammar	none	grammar	Report Writing
Beginner	85	15	0	0	100	0	0
Intermediate	45	15.9	1.6	11.1	92.1	3.2	4.7
Advanced	0	0	100	0	100	0	0

Changes in language ability

To gauge differences in learners' actual language ability over time, two independent variables were examined to determine different learner's language ability. Only academic and specialised vocabularies were assessed in this study because the emphasis of the course was on getting learners to increase their academic and professional language ability. The paired *t*-test for academic words revealed a statistically reliable difference between the mean of pre-test ($M=7.69$, $s=4.26$) and post-test ($M=9.65$, $s=4.78$) at $t(51)=-3.201$, $p=0.002$. $\alpha=.05$. The paired *t*-test for specialised words revealed a statistically reliable difference between the mean of pre-test for specialised words at ($M=5.73$, $s=3.62$) and post test ($M=7.28$, $s=4.24$) at $t(52)=-3.17$, $p=0.003$, $\alpha=.05$ suggesting that the differences were significant.

Discussion and Conclusion

The data of the present study suggest that the subjects did experience an increase in their language ability in terms of academic and professional vocabulary. The participants viewed job interview, communication and letter writing as important. However, it was the beginner group that viewed the job interview process to be the most useful while the advanced learners seemed biased towards professional letter writing skills. Even within the intermediate groups, there were mixed sentiments in terms of useful courses and less useful courses with some finding letter writing and grammar to be useful while others indicating a preference for grammar and report writing to be shelved from the course. Less proficient students must find both grammar and writing as meaningful in order to master such soft skills. It can be said that a one size fits all teaching approach that includes the latest teaching and technology tools may not be helpful to all. The study also suggest that there is a heavier preference for paired assignments and group assignments even among advanced learners suggesting that assignments should be diversified with additional opportunities for learners to work together even in large classes from time to time. This is to be expected because group learning activities have also been popular with language learners but there is a need to place them in appropriate groups. Furthermore, tests and assignments should be balanced to encourage students to use more factual knowledge and challenging activities. The fact that more than half the class for each level did not like traditional teaching methods like lectures is an added cause for concern because writing is a deep learning process which requires noticing strategies, greater awareness about how words link with one another and opportunities to use the language well in an interesting and novel manner. These experiences can probably be best shared by an informed lecturer. Where this is not possible, learners must be encouraged to read extensively to learn and practise on their own. Unfortunately, reading is not viewed positively in this study. This is a cause for concern because when science students do not want to spend time on their writing, process skills on their own or read beyond their immediate needs, they may not be able to reason and apply critical thinking skills systematically. While group-based writing may be motivating and enjoyable, there is also the need for mastery of factual knowledge in terms of writing types, formats and authors' point of view and ideas must be coherently and cohesively linked and this come with practice and consolidation. The findings from this study is revealing because it focuses on a group that is often assumed to be of a higher intellect and knowledgeable in a number of skills. The implication from this study is that language courses in universities should take into consideration the differences within and between learner levels and learners' intellectual capabilities and provide opportunities for learners to display them. In other words, soft skills should include mastery of factual knowledge, interpersonal communication skills and novel teaching methods that encourage learners to process language in depth, view grammar as important and accept professional writing as necessary for greater employability in the long run.

References

- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The Psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (Eds.). (2009). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Isarji Hj Sarudin, Ainol Madziah Zubairi, Mohamed Sahari Nordi, & Mohd Azmi Omar. (2008). The English language proficiency of Malaysian public university students. In Zuraidah Mohd Don, Md Yusof Abu Bakar, Nor Aieni Haji Mokhtar, Rohana Jani, Ainol Madziah Zubairi, Norasma Othman & A. Gan (Eds.), *Enhancing the quality of higher education through research: Shaping future policy* (pp. 40-65). Malaysia: The Ministry of Higher Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2012). *The Malaysian education blueprint 2013-2025: Preliminary report*. Malaysia.
- Papi, M. (2010). The L2 motivational self system, L2 anxiety, and motivated behavior: A structural equation modeling approach. *System*, 38, 467-479.

THE EFFECTS OF INCREASE AND VARIATIONS IN TIME PRESENTATIONS FOR SECOND LANGUAGE VOCABULARY LEARNING

Radina Mohamad Deli¹

Zainab Ghareeb-Ali²

Shorouk Al-Houti³

¹Centre for Language Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

^{2,3}Department of Language and Linguistics, University of Essex

¹mradina@cls.unimas.my

²zghare@essex.ac.uk

³skalho @essex.ac.uk

Abstract

Barcroft (2007) found opportunities for word retrieval to be advantageous during second language vocabulary learning. This study extended such a finding and investigated the effect of increased time in target-word retrieval for learning new vocabulary in the L2, as well as the effect of presentation orders of different time conditions on word retrieval. The data were obtained from 17 native Arab speakers who attempted to learn 24 new English words by viewing 24 word-picture pairs. Each picture and its corresponding word were viewed with different time lags of 0, 6 and 12 seconds between them in different presentation orders. The results showed that, although the increased time does not positively affect word retrieval, the overall findings correspond to Barcroft's (2007) view, at least in the case of 6 seconds lag. The results also showed that the production of target words in both the control and retrieval-oriented conditions depend on and vary according to the order of presentation, particularly in the case of 6 seconds lag in which word gain is found to be highest when the lag is presented first and second.

Keywords: Second language vocabulary learning, word retrieval, time lags

Introduction

Researchers have long been interested in memory-related phenomena mainly because they constitute a large part of human cognitive processes and their extended importance in the pedagogical domain. As for the present study, interest in both aspects has prompted the replication and expansion of Barcroft's (2007) research on L2 vocabulary learning. Our earlier observation on L2 learners showed

that a positive effect occurred when opportunities for word retrieval were made available during vocabulary learning. This led to an investigation of whether increased time to provide L2 learners with such opportunities had a positive effect on their vocabulary learning. A further investigation was also carried out in an attempt to examine the effect of different orders of time presentation on word recall. The aim of this study was to find out whether there were significant differences in the recall of target words with different time conditions and presentation order of these in L2 vocabulary learning. The underlying theory in Barcroft's (2007) study, which is drawn from Slamecka and Graf's (1978) generation effect, emphasises that information is better retained when one actively participates in producing it, rather than passively accepting it from an external source (DeWinstanley & Bjork, 2004). The generation effect has also been replicated in many studies using a variety of generation conditions, materials and memory tests. These studies suggest that aside from single lexical items, generation conditions also enhance memory for meaningful abbreviations, word compounds, numbers, sentences and pictures (see Mulligan & Duke, 2002).

Extending findings of the generation effect, Mulligan (2006) conducted a study on recall performance improving over repeated recall attempt – a phenomenon known as hypermnesia. The critical theoretical issue of concern was whether hypermnesia is due to repeated testing per se or increased retrieval time. By referring to Roediger and Thorpe's (1978) study, Mulligan concluded that the number of items recalled increased across multiple recall and single long, demonstrating hypermnesia for both pictures and words condition. In relation to the present study, the allocation of time for word retrieval prior to testing, particularly the increase from the control condition (0 seconds) to 6 and 12 seconds, mirrors the increased retrieval time in Roediger and Thorpe's study where they provide more opportunities for self-generation of information, which result in better recall of target items. As for the order of presentation, the present study predicted the likely effect on L2 vocabulary learning along the lines of a theoretical perspective on generation effect which states that the most important limiting condition for such an effect is experimental design (Mulligan & Duke, 2002, p. 1044). Most generation effect studies, however, focus on recall of known words (Barcroft, 2007). Thus far, there are only a few studies dealing particularly with word retrieval of new words although within different contexts of L2 vocabulary learning such as translation-based, picture-based and nonword learning (see Barcroft, 2007; McNamara & Healy, 1995; Royer, 1973). Barcroft (2007) extended the findings of the previous studies into the domain of picture-based intentional vocabulary learning. The present study maintains that pictures or images are highly advantageous in promoting word retrieval.

McNamara and Healy's (1995) procedural account of the positive generation effect is particularly vital because it extends beyond episodic memory tasks to the acquisition of multiplication skills and most importantly to foreign word acquisition and retention. In their experiment, participants learned nonwords by association with English nouns via different training condition (i.e. read vs. generate) and it was found that the generate condition produced better results. In fact, some participants in the read conditions produced exceptional results, due to self-generating effect of

recall. As discussed by Barcroft (2007), following this account, generating target words should promote the development of the cognitive processes involved in the retrieval of word forms, which help facilitate word learning. He further discussed the possibility of a rather similar “semantically-cued” strategising of learning and benefit due to the procedural account, for both recall known words and novel words.

The need for more research to be done on the retrieval of new words is an extension of the importance of memory to word-learning. Additionally, the pedagogical bearing of such a research is warranted in that new methods of vocabulary learning involving self-generation, rather than rote-learning has been claimed, much less proven to produce differing results. According to Rohde and Tiefenthal (as cited in Barcroft 2007), processing novel words is different from processing known words due to the optimum “form-meaning” mapping in the former. Hence, there may be a difference in the way generation effect improves memory for novel words and known words, thus the need to investigate the extent in which they differ from each other (Barcroft, 2007).

There were several differences between the present study and Barcroft’s. Firstly, the latter only examined two conditions, namely, a control condition (0 second lag) and a retrieval-oriented condition with 6 seconds lag, whilst the former included another condition which is a retrieval-condition with 12 seconds lag. This was to find out whether a longer time lag of 12 seconds would have a similar positive effect for word retrieval. Nonetheless, the amount of time for which the participants were exposed to each individual target word in all conditions remained constant at 6 seconds. The present study only displayed the picture-pair to the participants alongside each other once for three seconds prior to the conditions instead of twice to find out whether this had an effect on word retrieval. There was also the potential presentation order effect to be considered as groups of learners were presented with different lags sequentially. Moreover, a post-test was only administered immediately after the experiment as the focus was not in assessing retrieval performance over time. Different materials were also used to carry out the present study’s experiment. Finally, a different L1 group with a different L2, namely Arab speakers, was chosen due to the fact that they can be considered as true beginners who have limited access and exposure to the target language (i.e. English). For instance, in Barcroft’s study, English L1 speakers learnt new words in Spanish as an L2.

In the present study, it was hypothesised that allocating more time to provide for opportunities of word retrieval in L2 vocabulary learning and starting out with a longer lag positively affect production of target words. As such, the predictions are as follows:

1. Arab L2-learners of English should produce more target words (or part of them) with 12 seconds lag allocated for word retrieval in vocabulary learning;
2. Starting out with a 12 seconds lag, followed by 6 seconds and no lag allocated for word retrieval in L2 vocabulary learning increases learners’ production of target words.

If there is a significant effect of conditions or different time lags, there are six sets of predictions to be considered in terms of production of target words (i.e. learners' scores), as represented in Table 1.

Table 1
Prediction based on the production of words (scores) in each condition

No.	Scores ranked by condition
1	12s > 6s > 0s
2	12s > 0s > 6s
3	6s > 12s > 0s
4	6s > 0s > 12s
5	0s > 6s > 12s
6	0s > 12s > 6s

If there is a significant effect of presentation order, there are six sets of predictions to be considered, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Prediction based on the production of words (scores) in each group by order of presentation

No.	Scores ranked by group (order of presentation)
1	12s-0s-6s > 6s-12s-0s > 0s-6s-12s
2	12s-0s-6s > 0s-6s-12s > 6s-12s-0s
3	6s-12s-0s > 12s-0s-6s > 0s-6s-12s
4	6s-12s-0s > 0s-6s-12s > 12s-0s-6s
5	0s-6s-12s > 6s-12s-0s > 12s-0s-6s
6	0s-6s-12s > 12s-0s-6s > 6s-12s-0s

Methodology

Eighteen native Arab speakers who were learning English as a second language (age M= 26.35, s.d.= 4.387) participated in this study. All of them were students doing elementary English language courses either at the Colchester English Study Centre or the University of Essex. A majority of the speakers identified themselves as having poor proficiency of English in the questionnaire. Additionally, none of them were able to provide answers for a pretest carried out to assess knowledge of simple English words. They were randomly divided into three groups who did the experiment separately from each other.

The learners were presented with 24 new English words by viewing pictures and their corresponding words, with different conditions; control (C), retrieval-oriented (RO) with 6 seconds lag and RO with 12 seconds lag, and different presentation order of these conditions. Most importantly, the processing time for both pictures and words presented together were kept constant in all conditions at

6 seconds. The pictures used were simple black-and-white drawings based on an existing vocabulary learning material by Snodgrass as well as some which were randomly searched for through Google Images. All 24 words were concrete nouns (see Appendix) that were randomly sorted in terms of domain, unlike those used in Barcroft’s study which mostly come under household tools. The words vary in number of syllables (1, 2 and 3) and length to reflect words in real life and in each set of eight words, the total number of syllables was set to be approximately similar. Accordingly, the words were also controlled for frequency and difficulty. A pretest containing these words and additional distracters amounting to 30 words were also used. There was also an answer sheet comprising pictures numbered 1 to 24 for the post-test.

Table 3
Conditions and their order of presentation

		Conditions		
Order of Presentation (Group 1/2/3)	C	RO	RO	
	(0 seconds lag)	(6 seconds lag)	(12 seconds lag)	
	RO	RO	C	
	(6 seconds lag)	(12 seconds lag)	(0 seconds lag)	
	RO	C	RO	
	(12 seconds lag)	(0 seconds lag)	(6 seconds lag)	

A consent form, a language-background questionnaire and written instructions were provided for the participants prior to the experiment, whilst an answer sheet (post test) with numbered pictures and blanks were provided following it. The DMDX software was used to run exact presentation time of pictures and target words on a projected screen. This procedure was simpler and possibly more accurate than the original study’s use of flashcards and cassette tapes. There were no practice sessions and breaks during the experiment. Accordingly, the participants were learners with all 24 picture-pair alongside each other only once for three seconds prior to presentation of the conditions instead of twice to control for tiredness effect, which could have simultaneously affected word retrieval.

There were two levels of scoring; syllable score and letter position score. Syllables in each word were scored out of 1. For example, a score of 0 will be awarded for any incorrect letters to represent monosyllabic words (e.g., “peard” or “kear” for pear). A different syllable scoring was opted for ease of totalling each word with the score of 1. Furthermore, the present study experimented with a different language than in the original study. The English language does not have a very transparent grapheme-phoneme relationship as opposed to Spanish. However, the present study replicated Barcoft’s (2002) scoring protocol for letter position with minor alterations by deducting 1 mark from total letter scores for each additional and unnecessary letter. For example, if “shark” is spelt as “sharkp”, 1 mark is deducted from the total letter score 5 = 4/5.

Two items, namely, item 4 “dustpan” and 5 “trophy”, were removed from the data because the total score mean for the two words in both the syllable and

letter position scoring fell below 15%. Consequently, only the data from 22 out of 24 words were used. Additionally, on the basis of poor performance (below 20% in both scoring), the data from one participant in group 1, which is the group presented with the 0, 6 and 12 seconds lag presentation order, was excluded leaving the group with only five participants which reduced the total number of participants to 17. The scores were submitted to repeated measures ANOVA by subject and by item. The order of presentation was counterbalanced using a Latin Squares design which resulted in three groups of people experiencing three sets of presentation orders; group 1 with 0s-6s-12s lags, group 2 with 6s-12s-0s lags and group 3 with 12s-0s-6s lags.

Results

Table 4
Mean of syllable scoring by condition

Group	Condition					
	0s		6s		12s	
	M	sd	M	sd	M	sd
1: 0-6-12	.52	.31	.57	.24	.46	.26
2: 6-12-0	.30	.24	.53	.34	.38	.34
3: 12-0-6	.28	.22	.29	.20	.44	.23
Mean Total	.35	.26	.42	.30	.43	.27

Table 5
Mean of letter position scoring by condition

Group	Condition					
	0s		6s		12s	
	M	sd	M	sd	M	sd
1: 0-6-12	.68	.28	.68	.18	.61	.22
2: 6-12-0	.52	.22	.71	.17	.54	.25
3: 12-0-6	.47	.15	.31	.20	.57	.19
Mean Total	.54	.22	.54	.25	.57	.21

Tables 4 and 5 represent the syllable (S) and letter position (LP) score means respectively based on condition (0s, 6s and 12s lags) in total as well as by group. The repeated measures ANOVA by subject found no significant effect of condition for both S score and LP score (see Appendix). The main effect of group on the scores was also non-significant for S and LP. However, the condition × group interaction was significant for the LP score and a near significant effect for the S score. All pairwise comparisons were done using parametric tests. Within-subject pairwise comparisons using the paired-sample *t*-test indicated no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of S and LP. Between-subject pairwise

comparisons using the independent-sample *t*-test, however, revealed a significant difference between group 1 and group 3 in the 6s lag score means for S ($p=.28$) and LP ($p=.012$), and a significant difference between group 2 and group 3 for 6s lag score means only for LP, $p=.004$ and a relatively significant one for S, $p=.085$). As for the ANOVA by item, the results revealed no significant effect on condition for both S and LP score. The main effect of group on the scores was also non-significant for S and LP. There was again, however, a significant interaction of condition \times group of in both S and LP scores. Within-subject pairwise comparisons using the paired-sample *t*-test indicated no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of S and LP. Between-subject pairwise comparisons using the independent-sample *t*-test, however, revealed significant differences between group 1 and group 3 in the control (0s lag) score means for S ($p=.015$) as well as a significant difference in the 6 seconds lag condition for LP ($p=.008$) and a near significant one for S ($p=.057$). There was also a significant effect for 6s lag between group 2 and 3 for S ($p=.021$) and LP ($p=.014$).

Discussion

Generally, the result for conditions can be summarised as follows: providing learners with longer time lags to retrieve target words have no effect on their L2 vocabulary learning and the same is true for order of presentation, which means that the overall findings invalidate the earlier hypothesis. The prediction that a longer lag for word retrieval and starting with such a lag (i.e. 12 seconds) will aid the Arab learners to produce more words are thus nullified. These findings seem to oppose results from Barcroft's (2007) study which reflects Slamecka and Graf's (1978) positive outlook on generation effect. However, such a hypothesis should not be accepted at face value on the basis that there was a significant and a near-significant effect of interaction between the conditions and groups of different presentation order. This may indicate that there was a different kind of condition effect occurring when presentation order was taken into consideration and that this cannot be concluded as completely different from Barcroft's (2007) hypothesis. As for the non-significant effect of condition, it could be attributed to the small sample size used in this experiment.

Based on the overall score mean, a trend in which learners perform better with a lag of 12 seconds was observed. However, based on individual group score means, the control condition and the retrieval-oriented conditions were found to produce varied results across conditions. There was an observable trend for when the control condition and the control-oriented conditions were presented in the final position—participants' scores were lowest in these conditions. When the retrieval-oriented conditions were presented first, participants scored highest in these conditions. Conversely, for the control condition, when it was presented in the initial position, participants still performed better with 6 seconds lag but not with 12 seconds lag as it was presented last for the syllable score, but for the letter position score, the control condition produced similar results as the 6 seconds lag. Although the findings pertaining to order of presentation suggest no effect on word production thus rejecting the prediction of 12-6-0 presentation order being the best

sequence, a consideration must be made for the condition interaction with the presentation order, especially in the case of 6 seconds. As there was a significant difference of score mean for 6 seconds lag when it was presented in the initial and middle when compared to the final position, this confirms that there is a detrimental effect particularly for the 6 seconds lag when it is presented in the final position. However, it should also be taken into account that in group 3 in which the 6 seconds lag was presented last, the participants may have experienced tiredness or habitual effect. They had gotten used to having a longer lag initially and was disorientated when presented with no lag soon after, that by the time they got to the 6 seconds lag they lost interest in attempting to produce correct answers. In conclusion, the production of target words in L2 vocabulary learning in both the control and retrieval-oriented conditions is affected by the order of presentation, at least for the 6 seconds lag in that when it was designed to be presented last immediately after a 0 seconds lag, learners produced the least target words. As suggested by Mulligan and Duke (2002), experimental design can be a limiting condition for generation effect to take place, which in our case could possibly be the varying order of presentation.

Conclusion

In general, it can be concluded that increased time to provide for word retrieval does not positively affect learners target word production in L2 vocabulary learning and this is also true in the case of order of presentation in that there were no significant effect found. However, it must be noted that this could have been attributed to the confounding effect produced by the design of the present study which took into account too many conditions as well as presentation orders. However, one particular finding is in line with Barcroft's (2007) claim of a positive effect for opportunities of word retrieval in vocabulary learning as in the case of 6 seconds lag having a significant effect due to presentation order. The fact that 6 seconds lag produced higher word gains in two of the presentation orders except when presented last should not be ignored, although it was only observed as a trend. A good question to ask is whether a longer lag for word retrieval would result in better word gain if the effect of presentation order is eliminated. If so, what is the best way to investigate longer time lags without having to deal with order of presentation effect? Perhaps comparing just two (control and retrieval-oriented) instead of more conditions at one time would be a more viable option for increase in word production.

References

- Barcroft, J. (2002). Semantic and structural elaboration in L2 lexical acquisition. *Language Learning*, 52(2), 323-363.
- Barcroft, J. (2007). Effects of opportunities for word retrieval during second language vocabulary learning. *Language Learning*, 57(1), 35-56.

DeWinstanley, P. A., & Bjork, E. L. (2004). Processing instructions and the generation effect: A test of the multifactor transfer-appropriate processing theory. *Memory & Cognition*, 2(6), 945-955.

McNamara, D. S., & Healy, A.F. (1995). A generation advantage for multiplication skill training and nonword vocabulary acquisition. In A. F. Healy & L. E. Bourne, Jr. (Eds.), *Learning and memory of knowledge and skills: Durability and specificity* (pp. 132-169). California: Sage Publications.

Mulligan, N. W., & Duke, M. D. (2002). Positive and negative generation effects, hypermnesia, and total recall time. *Memory & Cognition*, 30(7), 1044–1053.

Mulligan, N. W. (2006). Hypermnesia and total retrieval time. *Memory*, 14(17), 502-518.

Roediger, H. L., & Thorpe, L. A. (1978). The role of recall time in producing hypermnesia. *Memory & Cognition*, 6, 296-305.

Royer, J. M. (1973). Memory effects for test-like events during acquisition of foreign language vocabulary. *Psychological Reports*, 32, 195-198.

Slamecka, N. J., & Graf, P. (1978). The generation effect: Delineation of a phenomenon. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Learning & Memory*, 4, 592-604.

Appendix

Table 1
Twenty-four word-list used for the study

Set 1		Set 2		Set 3	
No.	Word	No.	Word	No.	Word
1	pair	9	tie	17	grasshopper
2	beaver	10	windmill	18	cannon
3	shark	11	thumb	19	archer
4	dustpan	12	castle	20	cello
5	trophy	13	stove	21	comb
6	bucket	14	feather	22	rope
7	hoof	15	pyramid	23	ladder
8	rug	16	briefcase	24	bench

Table 2
Statistical value of syllable scores in participant and item analysis

Factor	Participant Analysis				Item Analysis			
	F-value	d.f.	p-value	eta-squared	F-value	d.f.	p-value	eta-squared
FACTOR 1	0.732	2	0.490	0.05	0.519	2	0.599	0.027
FACTOR 2	1.93	2	0.181	0.216	1.673	2	0.214	0.15
FACTOR 1 X FACTOR 2	2.1	4	0.108	0.231	4.68	4	0.005	0.33

Table 3
Statistical value of syllable scores in participant and item analysis

Factor	Participant Analysis				Item Analysis			
	F-value	d.f.	p-value	eta-squared	F-value	d.f.	p-value	eta-squared
FACTOR 1	0.061	2	0.941	0.04	0.131	2	0.878	0.007
FACTOR 2	1.09	2	0.364	0.134	2.076	2	0.153	0.216
FACTOR 1 X FACTOR 2	4.65	4	0.005	0.399	4.33	4	0.006	0.313

APLIKASI MEDIA SOSIAL DALAM PEMBELAJARAN BAHASA INGGERIS: PERSEPSI PELAJAR UNIVERSITI

Kee-Man Chuah

Centre for Language Studies, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
kmchuah@cls.unimas.my

Abstrak

Kewujudan pelbagai aplikasi berasaskan media sosial telah menawarkan satu wadah yang baik untuk para pengajar memaksimumkan penggunaan aplikasi tersebut dalam pendidikan. Kajian ini mengenal pasti persepsi pelajar tentang penggunaan aplikasi media sosial dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris yang melibatkan sejumlah 100 orang pelajar prasiswazah yang mengikuti kursus pengukuhan Bahasa Inggeris. Mereka dikehendaki untuk melibatkan diri dalam aktiviti-aktiviti berasaskan media sosial yang dijalankan dalam laman e-pembelajaran kursus tersebut selama 10 minggu. Pada penghujung minggu ke-10, borang soal selidik diberikan kepada pelajar untuk mengenal pasti persepsi mereka tentang aktiviti-aktiviti yang telah dijalankan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan para pelajar berpendapat *Wiki* telah membantu penulisan mereka, manakala video *YouTube* banyak digunakan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan kemahiran bertutur. Selain itu, kumpulan perbincangan *Facebook* dianggap berguna untuk pembelajaran tatabahasa dan perkataan. *Twitter* pula hanya digunakan untuk menerima informasi tentang definisi perkataan. Perbincangan tentang kekuatan dan kelemahan media sosial dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris dan cadangan untuk meningkatkan potensi aplikasi tersebut juga disertakan.

Kata kunci: persepsi, pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris, media sosial, aplikasi

Learning of English Language via Social Media: University students' perceptions

Abstract

The introduction of various social media applications has offered a favourable platform for educators to maximise the use of such tools for language learning. This paper examines student's perceptions on the use of social media applications in English language teaching. In this study, 100 undergraduates enrolled for an English remedial course were required to engage in the online activities provided in the e-learning portal for 10 weeks. The portal used various social media tools to assist students' learning. A survey was then carried out at the end of the tenth week. The findings indicated that the students generally benefited from the use of Wiki in enhancing their writing while YouTube videos were extensively used to improve their

speaking skills. Facebook group was deemed useful to learn grammar and vocabulary. However, Twitter served mainly as a tool to retrieve updates on the definition of words. Based on the findings, this paper also explores the affordances and constraints of social media in English language learning and proposes several ways how such tools could be leveraged to maximise their potentials.

Keywords: perception, English language learning, social media, applications

Pendahuluan

Perkembangan pesat teknologi maklumat dan komunikasi telah membolehkan maklumat diterima dengan cepat dengan hanya menggunakan peranti komputer yang mempunyai akses internet. Sebarang maklumat yang diperlukan boleh diperoleh pada bila-bila masa. Kemajuan ini juga telah menyumbang kepada perubahan cara pengajaran dan pembelajaran yang tidak lagi terhad kepada kandungan buku teks mahupun perkara yang disampaikan oleh seseorang guru di dalam kelas. Kop (2011) menjelaskan bahawa satu sumbangan terbesar teknologi internet dalam dunia pendidikan adalah dari segi penyebaran kandungan pembelajaran tanpa sempadan. Pelajar-pelajar boleh melayari laman-laman sesawang yang berguna untuk memantapkan lagi kefahaman mereka tentang sesuatu subjek atau topik.

Dari perspektif pengajaran bahasa berasaskan komputer, pelbagai kajian lepas telah menunjukkan keberkesanan teknologi dalam memantapkan lagi proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran (Weller, 2011). Manakala dalam pengajaran bahasa, Chambers (2010) mengatakan bahawa aplikasi komputer, khususnya internet telah memudahkan lagi pelajar untuk mempelajari tatabahasa dan perbendaharaan kata. Kern (2006) pula berpendapat teknologi berfungsi sebagai perantara antara guru dengan pelajar. Keberkesanan sesuatu teknologi itu dalam proses pengajaran dan pembelajaran banyak bergantung kepada peranan guru. Guru harus bijak menggunakan teknologi yang ada dengan menggunakan pedagogi yang bersesuaian. Hal ini demikian kerana, tanpa perancangan yang rapi, penggunaan teknologi semata-mata tidak akan membantu mencapai objektif pengajaran. Kern (2006) juga berpendapat aplikasi-aplikasi internet perlu dimaksimumkan penggunaannya dalam pengajaran bahasa.

Sejajar dengan perkembangan internet, media sosial kini menjadi aplikasi internet yang kian popular. Media sosial ditakrifkan sebagai sekumpulan aplikasi internet yang dibina berasaskan ideologi dan teknologi Web 2.0 yang membenarkan penghasilan dan perkongsian bahan-bahan yang dijana oleh pengguna (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Populariti media sosial banyak bergantung kepada penglibatan golongan remaja. Wardrip-Fruin dan Montfort (2003) menyatakan bahawa golongan remaja yang terdedah kepada teknologi maklumat pada usia muda lebih terdorong untuk melibatkan diri dalam perkongsian maya, khususnya melalui media sosial. Media sosial juga dianggap mampu membantu pelajar berinteraksi dengan lebih mudah terutamanya dari segi pembelajaran bahasa (Annand, 2011) dan mendapatkan informasi bermanfaat dalam pelbagai format seperti gambar, video

dan animasi (Azer, 2012). Walau bagaimanapun, Boyd (2010) berpandangan pesimistik terhadap keberkesanan media sosial dalam penyaluran maklumat secara berkesan. Boyd (2010) berpendapat bahawa, walaupun media sosial dapat mengumpulkan beribu-ribu maklumat dalam masa yang singkat, tahap perhatian yang diberikan oleh pengguna adalah sangat rendah, dan kebanyakan maklumat yang dipaparkan melalui media sosial tidak dibaca langsung oleh pengguna.

Kajian tentang penggunaan media sosial sebagai aplikasi dalam pengajaran bahasa masih pada peringkat awal. Kebanyakan kajian lepas lebih tertumpu kepada aplikasi yang membantu pelajar dalam penulisan seperti *Wiki* dan *blog* (Huang & Hung, 2009; Kessler, Bikowski, & Boggs, 2012). Isu yang selalu timbul dalam kajian lepas ialah kerahsiaan pengguna (Hunter, 2011). Hal ini membataskan kajian yang dapat dijalankan, memandangkan media sosial memerlukan seseorang pengguna untuk memberi maklumat peribadi. Justeru, kajian ini akan menggabungkan aplikasi media sosial dalam laman e-pembelajaran supaya maklumat peribadi peserta kajian tidak akan terdedah kepada umum. Kajian ini juga akan membolehkan pelajar menggunakan aplikasi media sosial dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris.

Tujuan Kajian

Kajian ini dijalankan adalah untuk memenuhi objektif-objektif berikut:

- i. Mengenal pasti persepsi pelajar tentang penggunaan media sosial dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris, dan
- ii. Mengenal pasti kekuatan dan kelemahan penggunaan media sosial dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris.

Kaedah Kajian

Kajian ini melibatkan 100 pelajar prasiswazah yang mengikuti kursus pengukuhan Bahasa Inggeris. Pelajar-pelajar yang terlibat dalam kajian ini dikehendaki terlibat secara aktif dalam aktiviti-aktiviti berasaskan media sosial yang dijalankan melalui laman e-pembelajaran kursus berkenaan. Media sosial yang dipilih ialah *Wiki*, *Facebook*, *Twitter* dan *YouTube*. Para pelajar perlu melibatkan diri dalam aktiviti-aktiviti yang diberikan untuk tempoh 10 minggu. Pada penghujung minggu ke-10, borang soal selidik diberikan kepada pelajar. Mereka dikehendaki menjawab soalan-soalan yang diberikan, untuk mengenal pasti pandangan mereka terhadap empat jenis media sosial yang dipilih untuk kajian ini. Maklum balas yang diperolehi akan dikira dan dianalisis mengikut peratusan tertentu iaitu bersetuju dan tidak bersetuju berdasarkan pernyataan soalan yang diberi.

Dapatan dan Perbincangan

Dapatan kajian ini akan dibahagikan kepada dua bahagian. Bahagian pertama ialah persepsi pelajar tentang media sosial dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris, manakala

bahagian kedua ialah senarai kekuatan dan kelemahan media sosial dalam proses pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris.

Persepsi pelajar tentang penggunaan media sosial

Jadual 1
Persepsi pelajar terhadap Wiki

Pernyataan	Setuju	Tidak Setuju
Saya bekerjasama dengan rakan-rakan dalam melengkap <i>Wiki</i> .	58%	42%
Saya menyertai aktiviti <i>Wiki</i> untuk meningkatkan kemahiran menulis.	65%	35%
Saya memberi lebih sumbangan dalam aktiviti <i>Wiki</i> berbanding di dalam kelas	53%	47%

Jadual 1 menunjukkan persepsi pelajar tentang penggunaan *Wiki* sebagai aplikasi yang membantu mereka menulis karangan Bahasa Inggeris. Secara amnya, pelajar memberikan maklum balas yang positif terhadap penggunaan *Wiki*. Sebanyak 58% daripada mereka bersetuju bahawa mereka bekerjasama dengan rakan-rakan yang lain dalam melengkapkan maklumat yang diperlukan dalam *Wiki* dan 65% pelajar juga beranggapan *Wiki* telah meningkatkan kemahiran menulis mereka, manakala 53% menyatakan bahawa mereka memberi lebih sumbangan dalam aktiviti *Wiki* berbanding aktiviti yang dijalankan di dalam kelas. Dapatan ini menyokong hasil kajian Kessler (2009) yang menunjukkan bahawa penggunaan *Wiki* telah membantu pelajar bekerjasama untuk mempelajari struktur penulisan yang betul. Aplikasi ini membolehkan pelajar memantapkan lagi penulisan mereka dengan bantuan rakan-rakan tanpa keperluan pengawasan daripada pelajar.

Jadual 2
Persepsi pelajar terhadap Facebook

Pernyataan	Setuju	Tidak Setuju
Saya berbincang dengan aktif melalui <i>Facebook</i>	85%	15%
Saya suka berbincang dengan rakan melalui <i>Facebook</i>	83%	17%
Saya mengambil peluang untuk menulis lebih banyak dalam <i>Facebook</i>	67%	33%

Jadual 2 menunjukkan persepsi pelajar terhadap penggunaan *Facebook* dalam sistem e-pembelajaran. *Facebook* digunakan sebagai wadah untuk perbincangan ilmiah dan sosial. Dapatan yang diperoleh jelas menunjukkan populariti *Facebook* dalam kalangan pelajar. Sebanyak 85% pelajar mengakui bahawa mereka aktif berbincang melalui media tersebut dan 83% menyatakan

mereka suka berbincang dengan rakan melalui *Facebook*. Walau bagaimanapun, hanya 67% berpendapat mereka mengambil peluang untuk menulis lebih banyak dalam *Facebook* berbanding media lain. Melalui pemerhatian yang dijalankan, pelajar-pelajar didapati lebih cenderung untuk berkongsi pandangan melalui *Facebook*. Pelajar yang selalunya pasif di dalam kelas juga dilihat lebih aktif apabila berbincang melalui aplikasi media sosial tersebut. Senario ini dilihat sejajar dengan hasil kajian Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Herman, dan Witty (2010), iaitu pelajar dikatakan lebih menyukai perbincangan melalui *Facebook* kerana aplikasi ini merapatkan jurang antara ahli kumpulan dan memudahkan perkongsian pendapat.

Jadual 3
Persepsi pelajar terhadap *Twitter*

Pernyataan	Setuju	Tidak Setuju
Saya mengikuti <i>Twitter</i> untuk mempelajari perkataan baharu	56%	44%
Saya mengikuti <i>Twitter</i> untuk memperoleh maklumat terkini	49%	51%
Saya mengikuti <i>Twitter</i> untuk mendapatkan panduan tatabahasa	38%	62%

Jadual 3 menunjukkan persepsi pelajar tentang penggunaan *Twitter* dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris melalui laman e-pembelajaran. Peratusan pelajar yang menyukai *Twitter* dilihat lebih rendah berbanding media sosial lain. Hanya 56% bersetuju bahawa mereka mengikuti *Twitter* untuk mempelajari perkataan baharu, manakala 49% mengikuti *Twitter* untuk memperoleh maklumat terkini. Selain itu, hanya 38% pelajar mengikuti *Twitter* untuk mendapatkan panduan tatabahasa. *Twitter* dianggap lebih sesuai untuk mempelajari perkataan baru memandangkan setiap kandungan yang dihantar oleh pengguna tidak boleh melebihi 140 abjad (Kop, 2011). Kekangan ini menyebabkan penggunaannya untuk tujuan lain seperti meningkatkan kemahiran menulis dan bertutur mungkin tidak akan membuahkan hasil yang baik.

Jadual 4
Persepsi pelajar terhadap *YouTube*

Pernyataan	Setuju	Tidak Setuju
Video <i>YouTube</i> membantu saya dalam kemahiran bertutur	75%	25%
Video <i>YouTube</i> membantu saya memahami tatabahasa	45%	55%
Video <i>YouTube</i> membantu saya dalam kemahiran menulis	41%	59%

Jadual 4 menunjukkan persepi pelajar tentang penggunaan video *YouTube* dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris yang diberikan melalui sistem e-pembelajaran. Sebanyak 75% pelajar bersetuju bahawa video-video yang ditonton melalui *YouTube* banyak membantu mereka dalam kemahiran bertutur. Terdapat banyak video yang mengajar tentang sebutan yang betul dan juga teknik pengucapan yang berkesan. Walau bagaimanapun, hanya 45% pelajar berpendapat video *YouTube* membantu mereka memahami tatabahasa. Selain itu, 41% pelajar juga berpendapat video *YouTube* membantu mereka dari segi kemahiran menulis. Walaupun terdapat video-video menarik tentang tatabahasa dan kemahiran menulis yang diberikan, pelajar secara amnya berpendapat bahawa media sosial ini lebih sesuai digunakan untuk memantapkan penguasaan kemahiran bertutur mereka.

Kekuatan dan Kelemahan Media Sosial

Berdasarkan dapatan kajian, beberapa kekuatan dan kelemahan media sosial dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggeris telah dikenal pasti. Dari segi kekuatan, media sosial didapati membantu perkongsian ilmu dan maklumat secara terbuka. Pelajar tidak berasa malu kerana interaksi berlangsung secara maya, dan bukannya bersemuka. Selain itu, media sosial juga memberikan konteks pembelajaran bahasa yang baik. Perbincangan melalui Facebook, sebagai contoh, membantu pelajar berhubung dengan pelajar dari luar negara yang memerlukan mereka untuk menggunakan Bahasa Inggeris dengan betul.

Dari segi kelemahan media sosial pula, penggunaan aplikasi ini boleh mengurangkan kawalan terhadap aktiviti pelajar. Pengajar juga mungkin akan menghadapi kesukaran untuk mengawal pelajar dalam media sosial. Isu akses kepada internet juga boleh membantutkan penggunaan media sosial dalam pembelajaran. Di samping itu, media sosial juga boleh menjadi ancaman kepada penggunaan tatabahasa yang betul. Pelajar mungkin akan taksu dengan penggunaan “bahasa Internet” atau “bahasa rojak”. Situasi ini akan menjejaskan penguasaan bahasa para pelajar. Isu kerahsiaan peribadi juga perlu diberi perhatian. Pelajar akan berasa tidak selesa untuk berinteraksi sekiranya maklumat peribadi mereka tidak dilindungi daripada orang awam yang tidak dikenali. Lantaran itu, panduan penggunaan media sosial dalam pembelajaran perlu diwujudkan untuk memaksimumkan potensi aplikasi media sosial.

Rumusan

Secara keseluruhannya, kajian ini telah mengenal pasti persepi pelajar prasiswazah terhadap penggunaan media sosial dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris. *Facebook* didapati sangat popular dalam kalangan pelajar dan media sosial ini banyak digunakan untuk tujuan perbincangan. *Wiki* pula digunakan untuk menggalakkan perkongsian pandangan dalam penulisan. Pelajar-pelajar juga didapati dapat mempelajari struktur penulisan dengan lebih efektif melalui *Wiki*. Di samping itu, video-video *YouTube* didapati berupaya membantu pelajar meningkatkan kemahiran bertutur, manakala *Twitter* digunakan untuk mempelajari perkataan baru.

Kajian ini juga telah menyenaraikan kekuatan dan kelemahan media sosial dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris. Walaupun terdapat kekangan dalam penggunaannya, media sosial ternyata dapat meningkatkan minat pelajar untuk mempelajari Bahasa Inggeris. Aplikasi-aplikasi media sosial memberikan konteks dan kemudahan yang baik untuk pembelajaran bahasa. Namun, pengajar harus bijak menggunakan aplikasi-aplikasi tersebut supaya objektif yang ditetapkan dapat dicapai. Kajian lanjut tentang impak media sosial terhadap prestasi pelajar boleh dijalankan pada masa akan datang untuk membuktikan keberkesannya dalam pembelajaran.

Rujukan

- Annand, D. (2011). Social presence within the community of inquiry framework. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 12(5), 40–56.
- Azer, S. A. (2012). Can YouTube help students in learning surface anatomy? *Surgical and Radiologic Anatomy*, 34(5), 465-468.
- Boyd, D. (2010). Streams of content, limited attention: The low of information through social media. *EDUCAUSE Review*, 45(5), 26–36.
- Chambers, A. (2010). Computer-assisted language learning: Mapping the territory. *Language Teaching*, 43(1), 113–122.
- Huang, H. T., & Hung, S. T. (2009). Implementing electronic speaking portfolios: Perceptions of EFL students. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 41(5), 84–88.
- Hunter, R. (2011). Erasing “property lines”: A collaborative notion of authorship and textual ownership on a fan Wiki. *Computers and Composition: An International Journal for Teachers of Writing*, 28(1), 40-56.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 59-68.
- Kern, R. (2006). Perspectives on technology in learning and teaching languages. *TESOL Quarterly*, 40(1), 183–210.
- Kop, R. (2011). The challenges to connectivist learning on open online networks: Learning experiences during a massive open online course. *The International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 12(3), 19–38.
- Kessler, G. (2009). Student-initiated attention to form in Wiki-based collaborative writing. *Language Learning & Technology*, 13(1), 79-95. Retrieved from <http://ilt.msu.edu/vol13num1/kessler.pdf>
- Kessler, G., Bikowski, D., & Boggs, J. (2012). Collaborative writing among second language learners in academic web-based projects. *Language Learning and Technology*, 16(1), 91-109. Retrieved from <http://ilt.msu.edu/issues/february2012/kesslerbikowskiboggs.pdf>.
- Roblyer, M. D., McDaniel, M., Webb, M., Herman, J., & Witty, J. V. (2010). Findings on Facebook in higher education: A comparison of college faculty and student uses and perceptions of social networking sites. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 13(3), 134-140.

- Wardrip-Fruin, N., & Montfort, N. (2003). *The new media reader*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Weller, M. (2011). A pedagogy of abundance. *Spanish Journal of Pedagogy*, 249, 223–236.