

Volume 8 · Issue 1 · 2022

ISSN 2367-5705 Print
ISSN 2367-8704 Online

ENGLISH STUDIES

at NBU



NEW
BULGARIAN
UNIVERSITY

ENGLISH STUDIES AT NBU

New Bulgarian University

Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures

Volume 8, Issue 1, 2022, ISSN 2367-5705 (Print); 2367-8704 (Online)

Editor in Chief

Boris Naimushin, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Managing Editor

Stanislav Bogdanov, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Consultant Editors

David Mossop, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Thomas McLeod, Freelance conference interpreter (AIIC), Rome, Italy

Statistics Editor

Liubomir Djalev, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Members of the Editorial Board

Jorge Díaz-Cintas, University College London, UK

Steven Beebe, Texas State University, USA

Ali Mirsepassi, New York University, USA

Abdelmajid Bouziane, University Hassan II, Casablanca, Morocco

Tatiana Milliaressi, University Lille 3, France

Renate Hansen-Kokorus, University of Graz, Austria

Ewa Welnic, University of Economy in Bydgoszcz, Poland

Eleonora Sasso, University G. D'Annunzio of Chieti-Pescara, Italy

Elena Alikina, Perm National Research Polytechnic University, Russia

Todor Shopov, St Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, Bulgaria

Albena Bakratheva, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Diana Yankova, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Svetlana Dimitrova-Gjuzeleva, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Elena Tarasheva, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Ekaterina Todorova, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Anna Krasteva, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Tadd Graham Fernée, New Bulgarian University, Bulgaria

Tadeusz Lewandowski, University of Opole, Poland; University of Ostrava, Czech Republic

All rights reserved*Cover Design*

© Stanislav Bogdanov, 2022

Desktop publishing

Stanislav Bogdanov

21, Montevideo Street,

Building 2, Office 312

1618 Sofia,

Bulgaria

Email: englishstudies@nbu.bg

Web: <https://www.esnbu.org>

CONTENTS

About the journal	2
Editor's message	3
<i>Stan Bogdanov</i>	
Articles	
How Talented Second-language Learners Regulate their Emotions and Cope with Stress	5
<i>Christina A. DeCoursey</i>	
The Effect of Using Whatsapp on EFL Students' Medical English Vocabulary Learning During the Covid-19 Pandemic	29
<i>Saud Alenezi and Elias Bensalem</i>	
Exploring Translator and Interpreter Training in the Trinidad and Tobago Context: An overview	43
<i>Antony Hoyte-West</i>	
Making Room for Social Responsibility in Translator Training	53
<i>Seda Taş İlmeç</i>	
Genre-Specific Irrealia in Translation: Can Irrealia Help Define Speculative Fiction Sub-Genres?	73
<i>Matej Martinkovič</i>	
Critical Thinking as an Integral Outcome in Translator and Interpreter Training	93
<i>Mesut Kuleli and Didem Tuna</i>	
Invaders, Attackers and Destroyers: Trespassing-related Terms and Representations in Nigerian Newspaper Headlines	117
<i>Ebuka Elias Igwebuike</i>	
Poetics of Migration Trauma in Mohsin Hamid's <i>Exit West</i>	141
<i>Qurratulaen Liaqat</i>	
Book Review	
Translation Revision and Post-editing: Industry Practice and Cognitive Processes–Book Review	159
<i>Yi Li</i>	
Volume 8, Issue 1 metrics	164

About the journal

Aims & scope

English Studies at NBU (ESNBU) is an entirely open access, double-blind peer reviewed academic journal published by the Department of Foreign Languages and Cultures, New Bulgarian University in two issues per year, June and December, in print and online.

ESNBU welcomes original research articles, book reviews, discussion contributions and other forms of analysis and comment encompassing all aspects of English Studies and English for professional communication and the creative professions. Manuscripts are accepted in English. Translations of published articles are generally not accepted.

Submission and fees

Submissions are accepted from all researchers; authors do not need to have a connection to New Bulgarian University to publish in ESNBU.

There are **no submission fees** or **publication charges** for authors.

Copyright

Authors retain copyright and grant the journal right of first publication with the work simultaneously licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0).

Abstracting and Indexing

[CEEOL](#) - Central and Eastern European Online Library

[ERIH PLUS](#) - European Reference Index for the Humanities and the Social Sciences

[MLA](#) - Directory of Periodicals and MLA International Bibliography

[ROAD](#) - Directory of Open Access Scholarly Resources

[OpenAIRE](#)

[WoS Core Collection](#) (ESCI) - Web of Science Emerging Sources Citation Index

[DOAJ](#) - Directory of Open Access Journals

[Crossref](#) member

Brill [Linguistic Bibliography](#)

EBSCO

ICI Index Copernicus - [Journals Master list database](#)

[RSCI](#) Core - Russian Science Citation Index (РИИЦ)

[CNKI SCHOLAR](#) (CNKI) China Knowledge Resource Integrated Database

[ZDB](#) - Zeitschriften Datenbank

[EZB](#) - Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek

[BASE](#) (Bielefeld Academic Search Engine)

[iDiscover](#), the University of Cambridge's search and discovery system

[European University Institute](#) Articles+

Evaluated by [MIAR](#) - Information Matrix for the Analysis of Journals

Archiving

English Studies at NBU is archived in

-[Bulgarian National Library](#) "St. St. Cyril and Methodius" (both print and digital full text formats)

-[Central and Eastern European Online Library](#) (CEEOL) (digital, full text).

-[The Library of Congress](#) (both print and digital from Vol4, Issue 2, 2018)

-The British Library (both print and digital from Vol4, Issue 2, 2018)

EDITOR'S MESSAGE



Stan Bogdanov,
Managing Editor
englishstudies@nbu.bg

English Studies at NBU is now bringing out Volume 8!

This issue is focused on translator and interpreter training, although we also feature articles on language teaching and discourse.

Starting off with an examination of students' regulation of emotions and coping with stress (DeCoursey, 2022) and the impact of mobile technology on vocabulary learning during the pandemic (Alenezi et. al., 2022), we move on through issues of translator and interpreter training – an overview of the Trinidad and Tobago context (Hoyte-West, 2022), translator and interpreter's social responsibility (İlmek, 2022), critical thinking as a desired outcome in translator and interpreter training (Kuleli et. al. 2022), to end up in genre-specific irrealia (Martinkovič, 2022), and discursive representations in Nigerian newspaper headlines (Igwebuike, 2022) and the discursive aesthetics of migration trauma in the contemporary novel, "*Exit West*" (Liaquat, 2022), which received several awards.

That said, I would like to invite submissions for our next issue in December 2022.

I wish you all good reading.

Most of the news is about our web site and web presence:

- **Expandable References section.** The References section on the website for each article is expandable when clicked. They are still on the page, but the feel of clutter is way less.
- **WoS accession number is an active link to the full record.** You've probably noticed we display the WoS (Web of Science) accession number below the DOI for each

article on the article landing page. It is now an active link - when clicked, the full details of the paper, as indexed in WoS, are displayed. You can create a free account, or you may log in through your institution to view all the data.

- **Developing and implementing a wiki-like notation system for embedding structured metadata through RDFa and DublinCore.** We learned RDF, RDFa and DublinCore to enhance our articles' metadata so it can be 'meaningful' to computers. While in the front end you won't see any noticeable changes, there's been a lot of back-end development. We re-coded the website and worked out and implemented a wiki-like notation method for embedding rich structured metadata using DublinCore vocabulary within the landing pages for each article so that the metadata can be read 'automagically' by computers. This will enable metadata crawlers / spiders / bots to harvest the metadata for each article in a meaningful way. We hope that our visibility and web presence, especially in automatic-harvesting databases, will require minimal human intervention, if at all.

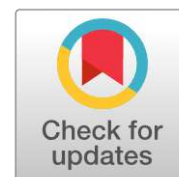
Thank you and as always, please let us know what you like about ESNBU or how we can make it better through email or social media.

Be well!

HOW TALENTED SECOND-LANGUAGE LEARNERS REGULATE THEIR EMOTIONS AND COPE WITH STRESS

Christina A. DeCoursey

Nazarbayev University, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan



Abstract

Most studies of talented learners focus on the nature of their accelerated cognitive abilities, and on structuring curricula to support them in achieving academically. Few studies of talented learners explore their emotional regulatory and coping strategies, as part of how they learn. Yet emotional regulation and coping strategies are an essential component of self-efficacy and self-regulation. Many talented learners are now also second-language learners. Programmers are among the most talented of 21st century learners. Programming requires linguistic proficiency, advanced quantitative reasoning, and multiple, complex forms of procedural reasoning. Mixed methods were used to explore how 34 talented programmers responded to a stressful second-language task. Data was analysed using one deductive and one emergent content coding frame, Appraisal analysis, and transitivity analysis. Results show that talented programmers handle stress by identifying and solving contextual problems. They realise positive subjective attitudes as evaluations of context, but frame negative emotions as interior experiences. As actors, they represent themselves as closely aligned with their team.

Keywords: talented learners, second-language learners, self-efficacy, emotional regulatory strategies, coping strategies, content analysis, Appraisal analysis

Article history:

Received: 12 March 2022

Reviewed: 16 March 2022

Accepted: 21 March 2022

Published: 30 June 2022

Copyright © 2022 Christina A. DeCoursey



This open access article is published and distributed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at linguistcd@gmail.com. If you want to use the work commercially, you must first get the authors' permission.

Citation: DeCoursey, C. A. (2022). How Talented Second-language Learners Regulate their Emotions and Cope with Stress. *English Studies at NBU*, 8(1), 5-28. <https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.22.1.1>

Associate Professor DeCoursey did her PhD at the University of Toronto, and her post-doctoral fellowship at the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. She was Director of Writing Programs at the American University in Bulgaria, founded and ran the Hong Kong Polytechnic University's MA in English Language Arts, sat on the International Steering Committee for Inter-Disciplinary.net's annual Experiential Learning in Virtual Worlds conference, was chair of the Department of English Linguistics and Translation at the American University of Science and Technology in Beirut, Lebanon, and served as TESOL ESP rep (Middle East). Her research interests include technology in language learning, healthcare communication, and forensic linguistics.

E-mail: linguistcd@gmail.com



<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7930-8352>

Literature Review

Self-efficacy describes the emotional regulatory and coping strategies learners use to gain their academic goals (Bandura, 2006). Learners with high self-efficacy regulate affective and social determinants of their academic achievements, actively self-monitoring, re-appraising and self-correcting (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2010). Yet there are significant differences between individual learners (George, 2013). Talented students with exceptional abilities are a distinct category of different individuals (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2011). Studies of talented learners, that is, learners gifted with exceptional abilities who have persistently achieved academically, have identified their cognitive characteristics. They rank in the top 2% on standardised tests (Page, 2010). They enjoy better short-term and working memory than their peers (Leikin, Paz-Baruch & Leikin, 2013). They are quick to acquire new concepts and solve novel problems (Little, 2012). They have extended concentration spans (Freiman, 2010), enhanced observational abilities (Singer, Sheffield, Freiman & Brandl, 2016) and high content retention rates (Geake, 2009). Highly curious, motivated and goal oriented (McCormick & Plucker, 2013), they display both creative and critical thinking (Pfeiffer, 2012) and show a preference for complexity (Barfurth, Ritchie, Irving & Shore, 2009). Many talented learners are now educated in English-medium-of-instruction (EMI) universities.

Few studies explore the emotions of talented L2 learners, though their regulation and coping strategies must be an important part of their ability to achieve. “Gifted”, and “talented” are distinct. Many studies of the emotional dimension of learning focus on gifted students, those with exceptional abilities who have not achieved, seeking to account for their under-achievement (Lee, Olszewski-Kubilius, & Thomson, 2012). Other studies focus on gifted learners in minority groups or gifted and learning-disabled students, again seeking contextual factors to explain their failure to excel (Biddick, 2009). Despite the global spread of second-language (L2) learning, the question of talented learners working in their second language usually gets only passing mention in studies of talented learners. This study explores how talented computing post-graduates manage their emotions, when attempting a stressful learning task in their L2, English.

Many studies of talented students focus on how to design learning environments specifically for these high-achieving learners (Callahan & Hertberg-Davis, 2012). They explore curricular acceleration, course compacting, enrichment and intensive course

formats (Dixon & Moon, 2014). They explain how talented undergraduates are mature enough to assume professional investigative roles, in shared research programs (Hockett, 2009). Meta-analyses of these studies focus on talented learners' university and career achievements (Steenbergen-Hu & Moon, 2011). Even here, the emotional dimension of talented learning remains under-explored. Yet self-efficacy research foregrounds emotional regulation as a "key aspect" of learner identity and performance, as emotions help learners assess and respond to learning situations as they unfold, prompt them to adjust their performance, provide feedback about performance, and reinforce or undermine motivation to persist (Boekarts, 2011, p. 413). The same thing has long been observed of effective L2 learners (Gregersen, 2019). Talented L2 learners must be effective at emotional regulation, using an efficient mix of regulatory and coping strategies, in order to succeed. Many such talented learners also attend English medium-of-instruction (EMI) universities, though there are few studies of talented students' achievement in second-language (L2) contexts (Hymer & Michel, 2013).

To date, there are no studies of the emotion and coping strategies of talented L2 programmers. Programming requires advanced language, mathematical and procedural skills. It is not widely appreciated, that talented learners, including those in STEM fields, have better than average language skills (Biedroń, & Szczepaniak, 2009). Skilled reading connects lexical content to perceptual, experiential and long-term memory systems (Perfetti & Stafura, 2014). Prior knowledge is used to generate inferences, summaries and conceptual representations (Perfetti, Yang, & Schmalhofer, 2008). Programmers need advanced language proficiency to understand problems described by non-specialists, and explain concepts and systems used in solving them (Beynon, 2009). Coding requires advanced numeracy and quantitative reasoning, to identify, segment and coordinate complex patterns, using conditional, analogic, syllogistic, temporal and combinatorial reasoning (Lee, Martin, Denner, Coulter, Allan, Erickson, Malyn-Smith & Werner, 2011). Often referred to as "the fourth literacy" (Tedre & Denning, 2016, p. 121), computational thinking is procedural, meaning the coder must structure all of this information within complex algorithms (Tedre, 2014). Complexity and causality are characteristic of computational thinking (Grover & Pea, 2013). Programmers must move easily between abstract and detailed content represented in textual, mathematical and diagrammatic formats, and between levels within their component processes and information

structures (Snyder, 2014). The cognitive demands of these tasks must create emotional responses, and talented L2 programmers clearly handle them effectively.

As there have been no studies of talented L2 programmers, this study is exploratory in nature, and focuses on how these learners handle their emotions, as part of the challenge of L2 learning. Research questions included: what ideational content do talented programmers realise, when they talk about handling stressful L2 learning tasks? What emotions and evaluations do they realise? How do they characterise stressful tasks, in terms of agency and process? How do they understand themselves and others as actors, and how do they characterise agency?

Method

A somewhat stressful task was given to a participant group of L2 programmers, at an EMI university. The task was used to elicit written personal reflections, after completion. Reflections were analysed, to find out how talented programmers regulate their emotions and cope with stressful cognitive challenges.

Participants

Participants included 34 full-scholarship students registered in an Information Technology major program at an EMI university. All were non-native speakers of English, who had attained a minimum CEFR B1 level of English, as required for university entrance.

Task

A twenty-minute English language oral presentation was selected as the stressful task. The preparation period was 10 days, and ran concurrent with seven other assessed L2 speaking and writing tasks required within an intensive-format course. L2 learning can never be perfect. Programming students write more than they speak. Participants were all aware that their spoken English was imperfect, and that effective L2 oral performance was required to pass the course. Thus, the task elicited participants' regulatory and coping strategies.

Instrument

Participants were asked to write about 400 words on their experience, immediately after giving the presentation, with the reflection due by the end of the

working day on which the presentation was given. The prompt was brief and lexically simple, to allow participants to determine its meaning as they chose (MacArthur, Graham & Fitzgerald, 2008). Writing personal opinions generates greater subjective content than writing more formal academic genres such as reports, patents and research articles (Geeraerts & Cuyckens, 2007).

Data analysis

Participant reflections were aggregated into a corpus, which was analysed in three ways. First, the corpus was coded for content. Two coding frames were used, one to classify content that reflected regulatory and coping strategies identified within the self-efficacy theory, and the other to reflect frequently-realised issues. Second, the corpus was coded for frequently-realised emotional content. Appraisal analysis is the most semantically delicate form of sentiment analysis, and can identify specific and discrete areas of emotion and evaluation. Third, transitivity analysis was used to taxonomise how participants characterised agency, causality and process.

Content analysis

Content analysis represents textual data as a set of frequency scores for specific ideas realised in the text. Ideational content is organised as major themes subdivided into multiple subunits. Coding frames may be deductive, using constructs drawn from the theory being applied to the corpus, or they may reflect emergent themes and subunits arising inductively from the corpus (Drisko & Maschi, 2016). Coding is usually constrained, including content relevant to the research focus, and excluding other content (Franzosi, 2008). Text corpora may be coded by human annotators or by software. Opinion mining and sentiment analysis techniques are now used in place of latent content coding (Lewis, Zamith & Hermida, 2013). Themes and subunits should be kept referentially clear and mutually exclusive (Stemler, 2015). To ensure reliable frequency scores, the clause functions as a bounded coding unit (Krippendorf & Bock, 2009). Distal clauses are counted separately (Hopkins and King 2010). N-gram dichotomous lexeme members are counted collectively within the clause (Bazerman & Prior 2004).

Content was coded twice, using two coding frames, as in Table 1.

COPING & REGULATION		FREQUENTLY-REALISED CONTENT	
THEME	SUBUNIT	THEME	SUBUNIT
emotion regulation	distraction	self-evaluation	experience
	concentration		English
	perspective-taking		learning
	emotional expression		self-analysis
	emotional suppression		self-advising
context sensitivity	re-appraisal	team membership	self-criticism
	reported stress		process
	perceiving demands		writing prep
	perceiving opportunities		rehearsal
	engagement		decisions
	disengagement		problems
	responding to feedback		solutions
		presentation content	PPT content
			scripting
			audience relations
		performance	team coordination
			problems
			solutions
			face
			voice, speech
			body, gesture
			problems
			handouts
			timing

Table 1. Deductive and emergent coding frames

The deductive frame used coping and regulation strategies from self-efficacy theory for its themes and subunits (Webb, Miles & Sheeran, 2012). Labels and definitions were taken from Bonnanno and Burton's (2013) retrospective of this research. Strategies used as subunits included: attentional deployment strategies such as self-distraction or self-focused concentration, up-regulation or expression and down-regulation or suppression as response modulation strategies, and cognitive change or re-appraisal (Boekarts, 2011). The second coding frame was emergent, reflecting frequently-realised themes and subunits in participant reflections.

Appraisal analysis

The study of emotion is complex, with methods and results debated. Facial, neurological, circulatory and endocrine methods for determining what people feel remain implicit (Izard, 2013). Emotions with a biophysical substrate have been identified using neurological methods. Yet these methods have complexified our understanding of subjective responses, in revealing the brain's continual re-appraisal of external events

(Moors, Ellsworth, & Scherer, 2013). Linguistic methods of subjective attitude analysis are similarly imperfect, but offer some definition. Systematic classification systems for taxonomising the lexis used to realise subjective appraisals have emerged within psycholinguistics, reflecting lexicogrammar found in all languages (Fontaine, Scherer & Soriano, 2013). While all taxonomies remain provisional, “Appraisal theories of emotion have gained widespread acceptance in the field of emotion research” (Kuppens, Van Mechelen, Smits, De Boeck, & Ceulemans, 2007, p. 689). Derived from systemic functional linguistics, the Attitude system is analytically delicate, comprising three sets, nine categories and twenty-four semantic subcategories (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004). Appraisal models of subjective responses offer a method of categorising the “multitude of emotional experiences that do not correspond to the categories proposed by any basic emotions theorist” (Moors, Ellsworth, & Scherer, 2013, 126).

When responding subjectively, individuals select specific words from those they know. Text corpora may be analysed for patterns representative of the participant group that generated them (Thompson, 2004). The negative-positive polarity of emotion is instantiated in all languages, and represents the most basic biophysical and psychological dimension of response (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002). For example, “I do not have good presentation skills” is negative, where “it was a great experience” is positive. All languages contain morphosyntactic resources for realising subjective attitudes, both directly and indirectly. For example, “I feel more confident” is a direct realisation of a subjective emotional state. However, in “with a limited amount of time to explain the topic, the pressure becomes our enemy, and the challenge increases the difficulty again”, a negative appraisal is dispersed among various lexicogrammatical elements in the sentence (Martin and White, 2005). The use of software for automatic tagging of text corpora is well-established (Argamon, Bloom, Esuil & Sebastiani, 2007). Emotional lexis is easily identified by softwares using natural language processing (Read & Carroll, 2010). Softwares identify and tag indirectly-realised attitudes through compiling extensive concordances, which are then sophisticated through statistical machine-learning tasks, and supervised classification tasks (Polanyi & Zaenen, 2006). Results are “robust” (Taboada, Brooke, Tofilovsky, Voll, & Stede, 2011, p. 36). In this study, the software CorpusTool (CT) was used (O’Donnell, 2008).

Transitivity analysis

Verbs are “the cornerstone of the semantic organization of experience” (Halliday, 1994, p. 19). At the neurological level, “verbs are functionally independent linguistic entities” (Crepaldi, Berlingeri, Cattinelli, Borghese, Luzzatti, & Paulesu 2013, p. 303), with signature forms of brain processing and storage (Kemmerer & Gonzalez-Castillo 2010; Moseley & Pulvermüller 2014). While neurolinguistic typologies of verbs are currently developing and changing, they provide a basic justification for distinguishing several categories of actions based on the human biophysical and cognitive systems they activate (Berlingeri, Crepaldi, Roberti, Scialfa, Luzzatti & Paulesu, 2007, p. 529). At the linguistic level, verbs are a representational strategy, used to characterise agency and activity (Kulikov, Malchukov & Swart 2006). Despite morphosyntactic differences, all languages contain resources for distinguishing processes by agent and type (Næss, 2007). These structures may be used as analytic parameters (Malchukov, 2006). For example, “enjoy” in “we enjoyed doing it” represents participants as equal and identical, assumes they are doing the same thing, and casts that as a positive emotional state. By contrast, “introduce” in “we introduced this feature to our audience” differentiates participants into novice and experienced roles. “Giving” in “My team and I were giving encouraging chocolates as a prize” identifies alignments through the complex actor, differentiates roles through its organisation of agent and object of the action, structures implicit power relations through the semantic kernel of the verb choice, and suggests different perspectives and interior experiences via syntactically coordinated attributes. Analysing verb choices helps us see regularities in how causality and responsibility are shaded with meaning (Kemmerer & Eggleston 2010).

When realising personal opinions, people select specific verbs from among those they know. Their choices may be analysed using the process type system network, as in Figure 1.

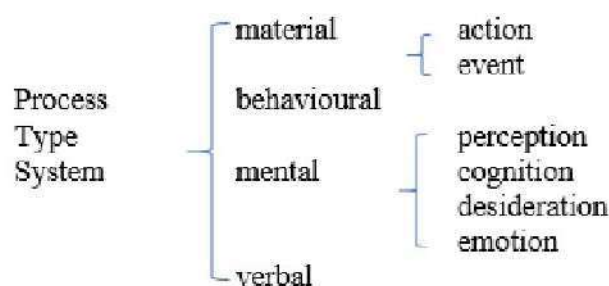


Figure 1. The Process Type System

Material processes comprise two sub-types: material actions, or physical events involving the self acting intentionally, and materials events where the self is passively acted upon (Halliday & Matthiesson, 2004). Behavioural processes represent embodied cognition, as they involve the writer's body, for example "I walked around the class". Mental processes comprise four subtypes of actions occurring within the self, including visual perceptions ("I saw that a smile really helps"), thoughts ("First, we analyzed the topic"), desires ("I wanted to speak") and emotions ("Presenting for me is something I love"), differentiating kinds of interiority (Shinzato 2004). Verbal processes depict the action as a negotiation or interaction ("We agreed on the topics") (Kärkkäinen 2003). Most typologies of transitivity distinguish purely syntactic from semantic process types (Dixon & Aikhenvald, 2000). In this study, purely syntactic process types such as the copular use of "be" ("the question is about good and bad practices...") have been excluded (Bowers, 2002). A semantic rather than syntactic understanding of the nature of participation in transitive events was used, typified by a "salient change-of-state" (Kitillä, 2002, p. 63). Thus, all finite, non-finite and inflected forms, modals and phrasals were tallied, but deverbaised forms, gerunds with articles, and auxiliaries were not (Sydserff & Weetman, 2002).

Data

Data was aggregated into a corpus of 15,893 words, 855 sentences and 2928 clauses, and analysed for content, appraisal, and transitivity.

Content analysis

The corpus contained 2,928 clauses. For the first coding frame, 2319=79.20% of clauses contained relevant content, as in Figure 2.

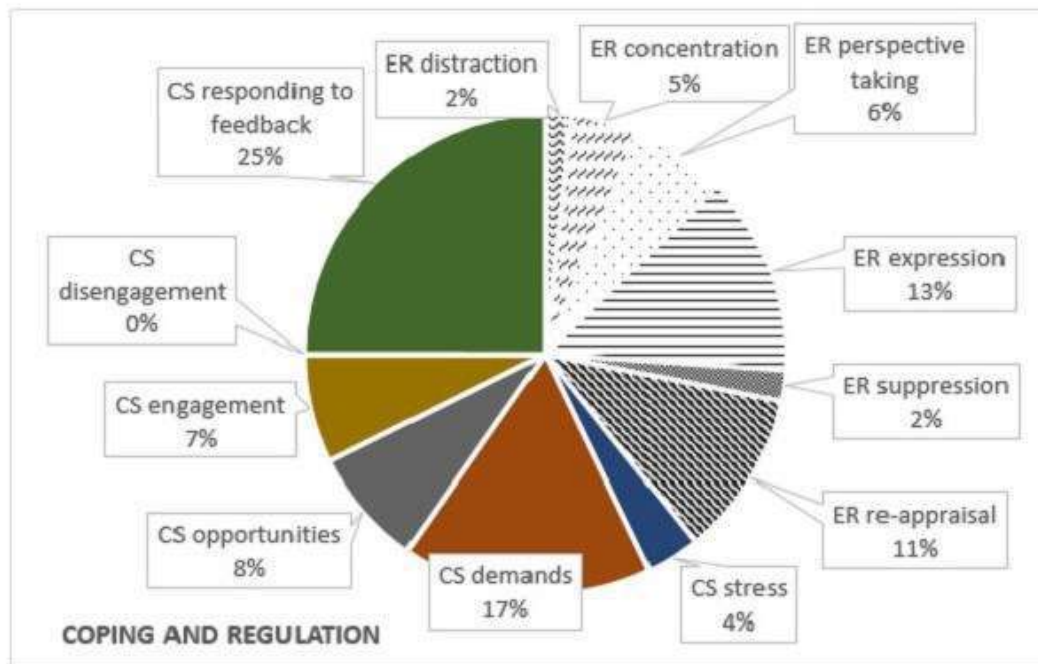


Figure 2. Theme and subunit frequency scores: Emotional Regulation (ER), Coping Strategies (CS)

The 609=20.80% of clauses containing irrelevant content (“we all know the devil is in the details”) were excluded from analysis.

For the second coding frame, 2,535=86.56% of clauses contained relevant content, as in Figure 3.

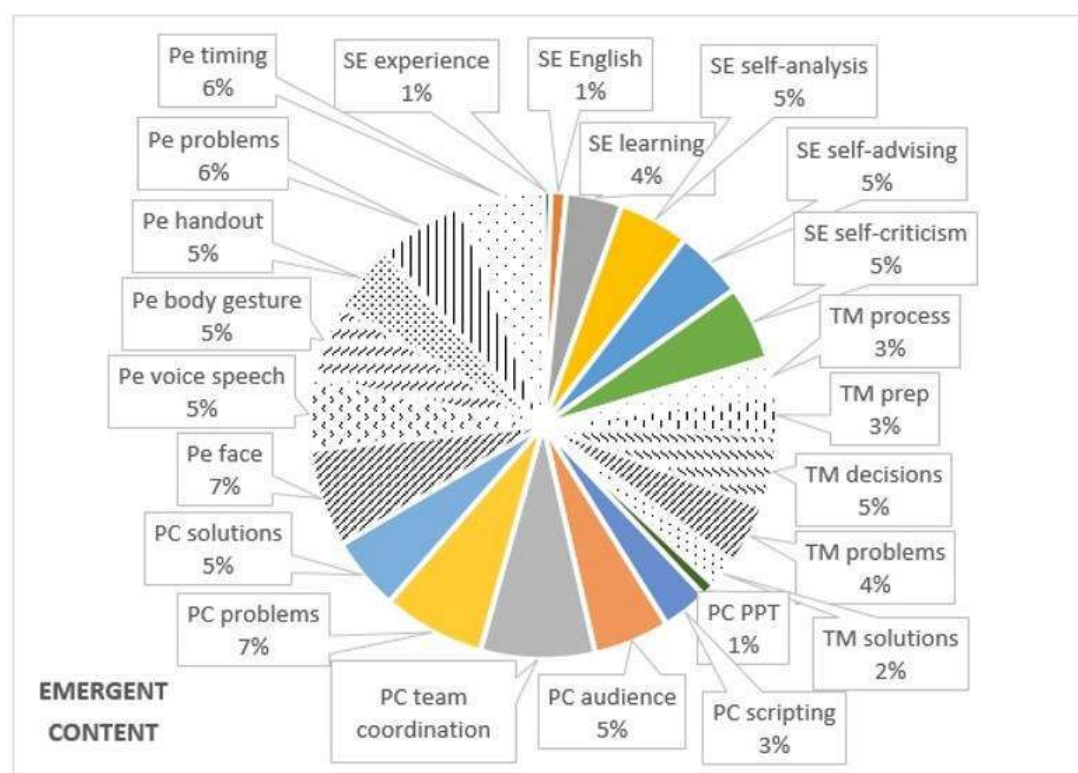


Figure 3. Theme and subunit scores: Frequently-realised content

The 393=13.42% of clauses containing irrelevant content (“Bingo!”, “Thank you sincerely”, “I will answer this question in short, summarized points”) were excluded from analysis.

Appraisal analysis

The corpus of 15,893 words was also analysed for subjectivity, using the Attitude system. Of 641 attitudes realised, 370=57.72% were positive and 271=42.28% negative, with an attitudinal density of 40.33 per thousand words, as in Figure 4.

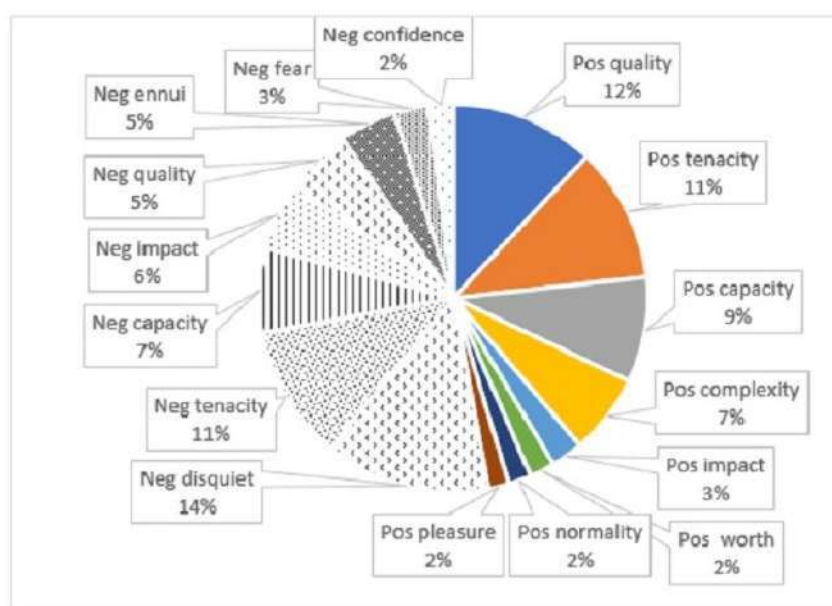


Figure 4. Frequently-realised positive and negative attitudes.

Of these, most (450=70.20%) were realised in eight positive and eight negative subcategories, as in Table 2.

FREQUENTLY-REALISED ATTITUDES						
	SYSTEM	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY	N	%+VE	EXAMPLES
1	Appreciation	Reaction	quality	63	17.03	important, clear, obvious, successful
2	Judgment	Social esteem	tenacity	59	15.95	keep, keep on, always have to
3	Judgment	Social esteem	capacity	46	12.43	can, able to, figured out, know how to
4	Appreciation	Composition	complexity	35	9.46	complicated, intricate, not simple
5	Appreciation	Reaction	impact	14	3.78	amazing, attractive, friendly
6	Appreciation	Valuation	worth	11	2.97	valuable, value, worth, fulfil
7	Judgment	Social esteem	normality	10	2.70	always, sometimes, usual, mostly
8	Affect	Dis/satisfaction	pleasure	9	2.43	like, pleased with, pleasant, fun, glad
				247	66.76	
	SYSTEM	CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORY		%-VE	
1	Affect	In/security	disquiet	53	19.56	anxious, anxiety, worried, stress
2	Judgment	Social esteem	tenacity	43	15.87	didn't spend enough time, unprepared
3	Judgment	Social esteem	capacity	27	9.96	don't know how, can't, am not skilled at
4	Appreciation	Reaction	impact	22	8.12	horrible, fatal, robotic, monotonous
5	Appreciation	Social esteem	quality	21	7.75	inefficient, awful, poor, mistaken
6	Affect	Dis/satisfaction	ennui	18	6.64	bored, lose attention, losing interest, dull
7	Affect	Dis/inclination	fear	11	4.06	panic, panicked, afraid of, fear of
8	Affect	In/security	confidence	8	2.95	not sure about, unsure, not confident
				203	74.91	

Table 2. Most frequently-realised positive and negative attitudes

Relatively few positive as compared to negative attitudes were realised in Affect categories.

Transitivity analysis

Of 2,298 processes contained in the corpus, most were material actions (749=32.59%), as in Figure 5.

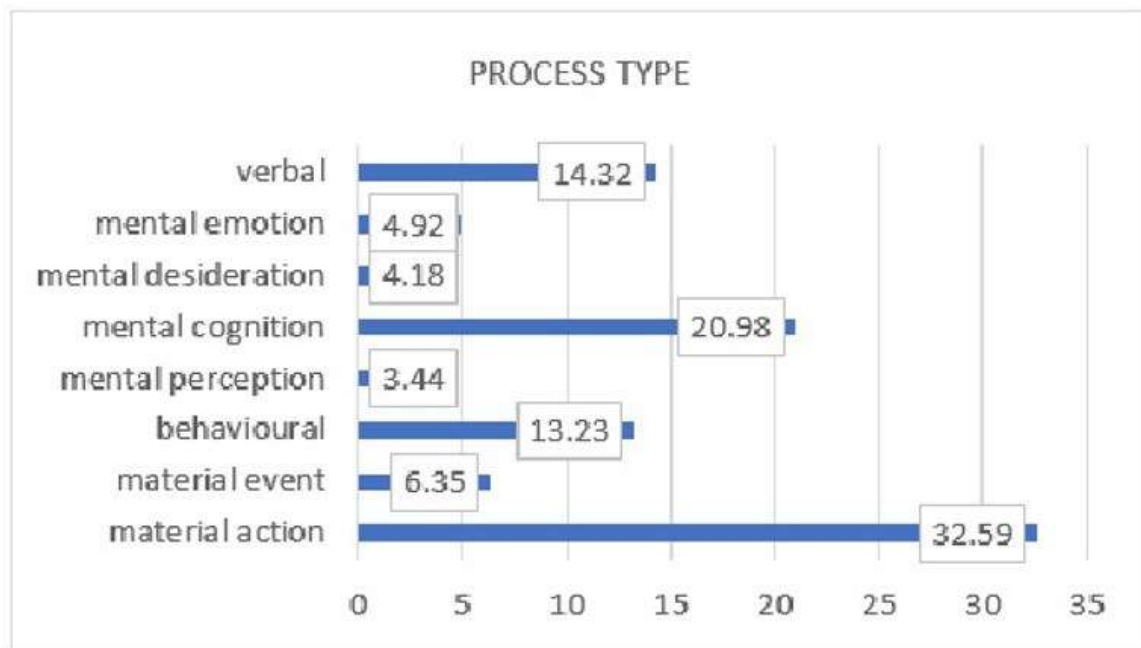


Figure 5. Process types realised (%)

Mental-cognitive (482=20.98), verbal (329=14.32%) and behavioural (304=13.23%) processes were also frequently-realised.

The most common agents were self (1099=47.82%) and team (684=29.77), as in Figure 6.

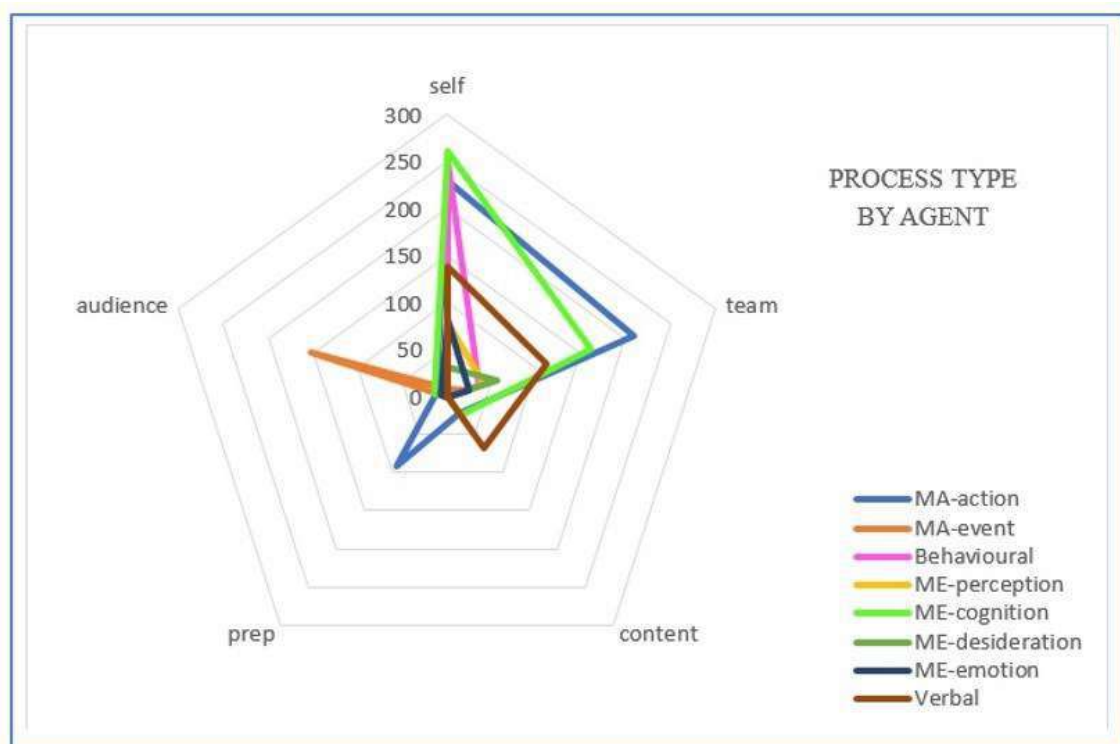


Figure 6. Process types for eight frequently-realised agents

Participants and teams were the most common agents. Participants enacted more thought (“I think it is good to ask questions”). Teams were more materially active (“we met several times for training”). Participants, teams and presentation content were frequently characterised as verbal agents: (“I need to talk about complex information”, “These were issues we discussed through the process”, “Our web sources said this was essential”).

Discussion

This exploratory study has generated four results. First, talented L2 programmers handle stress by focusing on meeting immediate demands in their context. Content analysis data showed that participants realised context sensitivity (63.61%) about twice as often as emotion regulation (36.39%) strategies, and realised perceiving demands more than twice as often as other strategies. Their most frequently-realised regulation strategy was expressing emotion. There were no realisations of suppressing emotion in the corpus. Five subunits accounted for 1735=74.82% of all realisations in this frame, as in Table 3.

THEME	SUBUNIT	N	%T	EXAMPLE
emotion regulation	reappraisal	239	10.31	It would have been solved in a minute, I thought. I was wrong. Not only it took a lot of time, some had done it incorrectly
	emotion expression	287	12.38	I hate the process in the beginning but after doing it for three sessions I liked it and started to enjoy it.
context sensitivity	perceiving demands	634	27.40	All technical things should also be rehearsed before presentation.
	perceiving opportunities	298	12.85	Through repetition, you can control the whole process.
	engagement	277	11.94	If you go deep into the field you can always answer any question.

Table 3. Frequently-realised themes and subunits in the Coping and Regulation frame

This finding provides initial support for the idea that talented L2 learners are able to both modulate the strength of negative emotions and alleviate the intrusion of negative emotions into task performance, in the manner known as “expert performance” among high-achieving scientists in the work world (Araújo, & Almeida, 2017).

Second, the interior states of talented programmers seem focused on identifying, understanding and solving external contextual problems. Of twenty-four subunits in the

emergent frame, the six most frequently-realised focused on physical performance challenges, team coordination and related problems, as in Table 4.

THEME	SUBUNIT	N	%T	%T	EXAMPLE
performance	face	162	20.35	6.39	Smiling tricked my brain into believing that something great was happening.
	problems	142	17.84	5.60	As always, I understood my mistakes and mistakes of our team only after the performance.
presentation content	timing	138	17.34	5.44	
	team	188	26.82	7.42	As a speaker in a group, I had to listen attentively to my colleagues, and connect what they are saying.
	coordination problems	168	23.97	6.63	When you have a text, you start to look at it very often. To overcome this problem, I did not include everything in my notes.
team membership	rehearsal	159	28.65	6.27	When I rehearsed, the words started to fall out of my head. It took a lot of concentration.
		957		37.75	Despite the fact that at rehearsals, each person fit into his time, the performance took longer.

Table 4. Frequently-realised themes and subunits in the emergent frame

When the subunit “problems” within three themes are aggregated, they comprise 411=16.21% of all realisations. Many subunits of the second coding frame seem to reflect regulatory strategies within self-efficacy theory. In the self-evaluation theme, experience (“Previously, I have never paid attention to the eye contact”), English (“in my case I worked with people from another culture, which added to my experience of working on something in English”), and learning (“My teammate has a great experience of performing in front of people and I can learn from him”) may be understood as showing context sensitivity (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2012). The subunits self-analysis, self-criticism and self-advising comprised 353=73.08% of realisations, and can be seen as forms of motivational self-guidance (“Understanding these things does not mean I can do it”, “I should have looked less robotic”, “I would like to change my words to be more natural and alive”) (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009). All subunits of the second theme could be interpreted as demonstrating “regulatory flexibility” as contrasted with “haphazard attempts at regulation” (Aldao, 2013, p. 163). Motivational self-guidance is known to operate within successful L2 learners (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009). This result suggests that L2 learning may actively contribute to the success of talented learners in STEM fields.

Third, participants realised positive emotions as evaluations of contexts and behaviours, but negative emotions as personal experience. The Appraisal data showed that about half of frequently-realised positive attitudes clustered in Appreciations (123=49.80%). These subjective responses rework statements of emotion indirectly as

evaluations of objects outside the self (Martin & White, 2005). For example, “We selected an attractive but strict design for the presentation, which grabs attention, but keeps the focus on content”, attributes the quality of being attractive to a specific ensemble of colours and patterns. Clearly, the experience of attraction must be the author’s own response to that ensemble. Positive judgments comprised the other half (115=46.56%) of frequently-realised subjective responses. Judgments of esteem reframe subjective responses as evaluations of persons, behaviours and situations with reference to social and personal norms. Among these, modals of possibility indicate active potentials likely to be instantiated in future action (Stack, 2012). That is, “I learned that I can interest the audience by giving contradicting examples against the topic” implies that, having acquired this behaviour, the author will do it again. Judgments of tenacity assess how much effort is required (“it took much effort”), where Judgments of normality assess how usual an experience is (“you must always smile”). Participants realised substantial negative as well as positive emotions. Of frequently-realised negative attitudes, 90=44.33% were realised as affect (“it forced me to overcome my fear”). Of total realisations of negative affect, 108=39.85% were realised congruently, as compared to 64=17.30% realisation of positive affect. Congruent constructions are the most direct lexicogramamtical means of realising emotion, because they “bear a natural relation to the meanings they have evolved to express” (Halliday, 1985, p. xviii). This finding, that talented L2 learners ascribe their positive and negative emotions to different sources within and beyond the self, merits further investigation.

Fourth, transitivity analysis shows that participants were closely aligned with their team, as actors. While participants were more thoughtful, and teams more active, many clauses blurred the line between the two: “I think it makes us look simpler and connects with the audience”. Here, both author and team are the object of the material process “make” and indistinct due to the shared perceptual process “look”. Team actions were cast as collective even when representing participants’ embodied processes. In “[w]e tried to switch the volume of our voices to ensure maximum audience attention”, “switch” must be behavioural, yet the team is actor creating the intended change of state in the audience. Collectivity was also realised through typification, which reframes individual experience as an example of a general class or category (Biber, 2006). In: “When you talk to people about something you must believe in it; also this leads you to read a lot

about it, so in my case, me and my group studied the subject that was assigned to us”, the participant’s mental process “studied” has been characterised as a typical verbal process through the agency of the shared pronoun “you”. One can only interpret this sentence by understanding that all representations of self in this sentence (“you”, “my”, “me”, “us”) are meant to be taken as typical actors enacting typical verbal and cognitive processes (Graff & Birkenstein 2010). Of 139 instances where participants were the agents of verbal processes, many (58=41.73) used shared subjectivity, both “we” (31) (“If we talk about the difficulties, the main one is a large amount of text that must be remembered”) and “you” (27) (“you should have a good charisma to keep the audience’s attention”). Teams were represented as thinking collectively: “We thought it could happen that the attention on the serious and not entertaining part would be difficult after the relaxing part.” Here, the group takes a benign supervisory role, projecting potential audience experiences, and coordinating these with desired outcomes. Participants spoke only slightly more than teams did (“I usually do some grammar mistakes”, “My groupmates told me I need to raise my voice a bit because sometimes it was hard to hear me”). This finding coordinates well the research showing sociability as underwriting successful L2 learning.

Conclusion

This study has explored the ideational content, subjective attitudes, and agency of talented L2 programmers’ responses to a stressful learning task. It offers support for the view that talented programmers are focused on identifying and addressing external contextual problems, and while they freely express their negative emotions, they frame positive emotional experiences as elements of their social environment. Frequently-realised content themes and subunits are consonant with regulatory and coping insights, suggesting that they are highly aware of contextual problems, and use self-guides. They use contextual strategies, particularly perceiving demands and opportunities, and reappraisal. They use emotion regulation strategies, particularly expressing emotions and engagement. This is the particular blend of coping and regulation strategies which make them exceptionally effective learners. The findings of this study suggest that L2 learning may contribute substantially to talented learners developing these regulatory and coping strategies.

Results must be taken as provisional, as this is the first study of its kind. Further, this has limitations. First, as the sample size is small, results may not accurately represent the regulation and coping strategies of talented programmers more generally. Results for programmers may not generalise to STEM fields or beyond to other disciplines. However, while the small sample size at this time prohibits a systematic exploration of contextual factors, the numbers of talented programmers, and talented STEM students will continue to increase, and may make research into the synergies between language learning and other areas of learning more viable in future.

Second, as the stressful task chosen had to be acceptable within an educational program, it was perhaps not stressful enough to elicit coping strategies on par with those discussed in many coping studies, for example death of a close relative. On the other hand, participants were taking heavier course-loads than most students, all weeks in the semester contained multiple assessments, and participants took all assessments seriously, making them describe them as genuinely stressful. Finally, the well-known problems with self-reporting suggest that it would be useful to explore talented L2 learners' coping strategies with quantitative methods (Paulhaus & Vazire 2007). The short turn-around time for handing in a written reflection may lessen these potential errors. However, it is still possible that specific results, as well as their proportionality, would be different in different disciplines and context, and with different stressful tasks.

The value of this study lies in the effort to identify the sensitive, interior and emotional dimensions of effective learning, particularly in an L2, which has become more common, and will continue to be the norm for talented students in future. It is not simply that talented programmers may be type-cast as unemotional, or inexpressive, or members of various categories of neurodiversity. In fact, they may be the leading edge of a new norm for learning and handling the emerging demands of higher education and the workplace. We may be able to use today's talented programmers to identify a specific syndrome of coping strategies which allow us to train and support more ordinary learners to be more effective and more fulfilled, in a world which is becoming more complex, particularly in the integration of computing fields into every area of daily life.

References

- Aldao, A. (2013). The future of emotion regulation research: Capturing context. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 8(2), 155-172. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691612459518>
- Araújo, L. S., Cruz, J. F. A., & Almeida, L. S. (2017). Achieving scientific excellence: An exploratory study of the role of emotional and motivational factors. *High Ability Studies*, 28(2), 249-264. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13598139.2016.1264293>
- Argamon, S., Bloom, K., Esuil, A. & Sebastiani, F. (2007). Automatically determining attitude type and force for sentiment analysis. *Proceedings of the 3rd language and technology conference (LTC '07)*, Poznan, PL, 369-373. <http://nmis.isti.cnr.it/sebastiani/Publications/LTC07cExtended.pdf>
- Bandura, A. (2006). Toward a psychology of human agency. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 1(2), 164-180. <https://doi/abs/10.1111/j.1745-6916.2006.00011.x>
- Barfurth, M. A., Ritchie, K. C., Irving, J. A., & Shore, B. M. (2009). A metacognitive portrait of gifted learners. In Shavinina, L. V. (Ed.), *International handbook on giftedness* (pp. 397-417). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-6162-2_18
- Bazerman, C. & Prior, P. (2004). *What writing does and how it does it: An introduction to analysing texts and textual practices*. Erlbaum. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410609526>
- Berlingeri, M., Crepaldi, D., Roberti, R., Luzzatti, C. & Paulesu, E (2007). Brain areas underlying retrieval of nouns and verb: Grammatical class and task demand effects. www.boa.unimib.it/retrieve/handle/10281/4790/11927/Brain_areas_underlying_retrieval_of_nouns.pdf
- Beynon, M. (2009) Constructivist computer science education reconstructed. *Innovation in Teaching and Learning in Information and Computer Sciences*, 128(8/2), 73-90, <https://doi.org/10.11120/ital.2009.08020073>
- Biber, D. (2006), Stance in spoken and written university registers. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 5(2), 97-116, <http://doi.org/10.2016/j.jeap.2006.05.001>
- Biddick, M. (2009). Cluster grouping for the gifted and talented: It works. *Apex*, 15(4), 78-86, <https://doi.org/10.21307/apex-2009-003>
- Biedroń, A., & Szczepaniak, A. (2009). The cognitive profile of a talented foreign language learner. A case study. *Psychology of Language and Communication*, 13(1), 53-71, <https://doi:10.2478/v10057-009-0004-7>
- Boekarts, M. (2011) Emotions, emotional regulation, and self-regulation of learning. In Schunk, D., & Zimmerman, B. (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation of learning and performance* (pp. 408-425). Taylor & Francis.

- Bonanno, G. & Burton, C. (2013) Regulatory flexibility: An individual differences perspective on coping and emotion regulation. *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 8(6), 591-612, <https://doi/abs/10.1177/1745691613504116>
- Bowers, J. (2002). Transitivity. *Linguistic Inquiry*, 33(2), 183-224, <https://doi.org/10.1162/002438902317406696>
- Callahan, C. M., & Hertberg-Davis, H. L. (Eds.) (2012). *Fundamentals of gifted education: Considering multiple perspectives*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203848173>
- Carver, C. & Connor-Smith, J. (2010). Personality and coping. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 61, 679-704. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.093008.100352>
- Crepaldi, D., Berlingeri, M., Cattinelli, I., Borghese, N., Luzzatti, C. & Paulesu, E. (2013). Clustering the lexicon in the brain: A meta-analysis of the neurofunctional evidence on noun and verb functioning. *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 7(27 June 2013), 303-318, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnhum.2013.00303>
- Dixon, F., & Moon, S. (2014). *The handbook of secondary gifted education*. Sourcebooks.
- Dixon, R. & Aikhenvald, A. (Eds.). (2000). *Changing valency: Case studies in transitivity*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511627750>
- Dörnyei, Z. & Ushioda, E. (2009). *Motivation, Language Identity, and the L2 Self*. Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847691293>
- Drisko, J. & Maschi, T. (2016). *Content Analysis*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190215491.001.0001>
- Elfenbein, H.A. & Ambady, N. (2002). On the universality and cultural specificity of emotion recognition: a meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128(2) 203-235, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.128.2.203>
- Fontaine, J. R., Scherer, K. R., & Soriano, C. (Eds.). (2013). *Components of emotional meaning: A sourcebook*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199592746.001.0001>
- Franzosi, R. (Ed.) (2008). *Content analysis*. Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446271308>
- Freiman, V. (2010). Mathematically gifted students in inclusive settings: Case of New Brunswick, Canada. In B. Sriraman & K. H. Lee (Eds.), *Elements of creativity and giftedness in mathematics*. (pp. 161-172). Sense Publishers. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6091-439-3_11
- Geake, J. G. (2009). *The brain at school: Educational neuroscience in the classroom*. McGraw Hill.
- Geeraerts, D. & Cuyckens, H. (2007). *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*. Oxford University Press.

- George, D. (2013). *Gifted education: Identification and provision*. David Fulton Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315070155>
- Graff, G., & Birkenstein, C. (2010). *They say/I say: The moves that matter in persuasive writing*. Norton.
- Gregersen, T. (2019). Aligning positive psychology with language learning motivation. In Lamb, M., Csizér, K., Henry, A., & Ryan, S. *The Palgrave Handbook of Motivation for Language Learning* (pp. 621-640). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-28380-3_30
- Grover, S. & Pea, R. (2013). Computational thinking in K-12: A review of the state of the field. *Educational Researcher*, 42(1), 38-43. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X12463051>
- Halliday, M. A. K. & Matthiessen, C. (2004). *An introduction to functional grammar*. Hodder Education.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1985). *Spoken and Written Language*. Deakin University Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1994). *An introduction to functional grammar*. Arnold.
- Hockett, J. A. (2009). Curriculum for highly able learners that conforms to general education and gifted education quality indicators. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 32(3), 394-440. <https://doi/abs/10.4219/jeg-2009-857>
- Hopkins, D. J., & King, G. (2010). A method of automated nonparametric content analysis for social science. *American Journal of Political Science*, 54(1), 229-247. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2009.00428.x>
- Hymer, B., & Michel, D. (2013). *Gifted and talented learners: Creating a policy for inclusion*. David Fulton Publishers. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315070094>
- Izard, C. (2013). *Human Emotions*. Springer.
- Kärkkäinen, E. (2003). *Epistemic stance in English conversation: A description of its interactional functions with a focus on 'I think'*. John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/pbns.115>
- Kemmerer, D. & Gonzalez-Castillo, J. (2010). The two-level theory of verb meaning: An approach to integrating the semantics of action with the mirror-neuron system. *Brain and language*, 112(1), 54-76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bandl.2008.09.010>
- Kemmerer, D., & Eggleston, A. (2012). Nouns and verbs in the brain: Implications of linguistic typology for cognitive neuroscience. *Lingua*, 120(12), 2686-2690, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2010.03.013>
- Kitillä, S. (2002). Remarks on the basic transitive sentence. *Language Sciences*, 24(2), 107-130. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0388-0001\(00\)00043-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0388-0001(00)00043-7)
- Krippendorff, K., & Bock, M. A. (2009). *The content analysis reader*. Sage.

- Kulikov, L., Malchukov, A. & Swart, P. (2006). *Case valency and transitivity*. John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/slcs.77>
- Kuppens, P., Van Mechelen, I., Smits, D. J. M., De Boeck, P., & Ceulemans, E. (2007). Individual differences in patterns of appraisal and anger experience. *Cognition and Emotion*, 21(4), 689–713. <https://doi.org/1080/02699930600859219>
- Lee, I., Martin, F., Denner, J., Coulter, B., Allan, W., Erickson, J., Malyn-Smith, J. & Werner, L., (2011). Computational Thinking for Youth in Practice. *ACM Inroads*, 2(1), 32-37. <https://doi.org/10.1145/1929887.1929902>
- Lee, S. Y., Olszewski-Kubilius, P., & Thomson, D. T. (2012). Academically gifted students' perceived interpersonal competence and peer relationships. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 56(2), 90-104. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0016986212442568>
- Leikin, M., Paz-Baruch, N., & Leikin, R. (2013). Memory abilities in generally gifted and excelling-in-mathematics adolescents. *Intelligence*, 41(5), 566–578. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intell.2013.07.018>
- Lewis, S. C., Zamith, R., & Hermida, A. (2013). Content Analysis in an Era of Big Data: A Hybrid Approach to Computational and Manual Methods. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, (57)1, 34-52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2012.761702>
- Linnenbrink, E. & Pintrich, P. (2010) The role of self-efficacy beliefs in student engagement and learning in the classroom. *Reading and Writing Quarterly: Overcoming Learning Difficulties*, 19(2) 119-137. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10573560308223>
- Little, C. (2012). Curriculum as motivation for gifted students. *Psychology in the Schools*, 49(7), 695-705. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21621>
- MacArthur, C., Graham, S., & Fitzgerald, J. (Eds.) (2008). *Handbook of writing research*. Guilford Press.
- Malchukov, A. (2006). Transitivity parameters and transitivity alternations. Case, valence and transitivity. In Kulikov, L, Malchukov, A. & deSwart, P. (Eds.), *Case, valency and transitivity: A cross-linguistic perspective* (pp. 392-357). John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/slcs.77.21mal>
- Martin, J. & White, P. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation; Appraisal in English*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- McCormick, K. M., & Plucker, J. A. (2013). Connecting student engagement to the academic and social needs of gifted and talented students. In Kim, K., Kaufman, J., Baer, J. & Sriraman, B. (Eds.), *Creatively gifted students are not like other gifted students: Research, theory and practice*. (pp. 121-135). Sense Publishers. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-149-8_9

- Moors, A., Ellsworth, P. & Scherer, K. (2013). Appraisal theories of emotion: State of the art and future development. *Emotion Review*, 5(2), 119-124.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073912468165>
- Moseley, R. & Pulvermüller, F. (2014). Nouns, verbs, objects, actions, and abstractions: Local fMRI activity indexes semantics, not lexical categories. *Brain and Language*, 13(2), 28-42. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bandl.2014.03.001>
- Næss, Å. (2007). *Prototypical Transitivity*. John Benjamins.
<https://doi.org/10.1075/tsl.72>
- O'Donnell, M. (2008). Demonstration of the UAM CorpusTool for text and image annotation. *Proceedings of the ACL-08: HLT Demo Session (Companion Volume)*.
<https://doi.org/10.3115/1564144.1564148>
- Page, J. S. (2010). Challenges Faced by Gifted Learners in School and Beyond. *Inquiries Journal*, 2(11), 1-12. <http://www.inquiriesjournal.com/a?id=330>
- Paulhaus, D. & Vazire, S. (2007). The self-report method. In Robins, R., Fraley, R. & Krueger, R. (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods in personality psychology* (pp. 224-239). Guildford Press.
- Perfetti, C., & Stafura, J. (2014). Word knowledge in a theory of reading comprehension. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 18(1), 22-37.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10888438.2013.827687>
- Perfetti, C., Yang, C. L., & Schmalhofer, F. (2008). Comprehension skill and word-to-text integration processes. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 22(3), 303-318.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/acp.1419>
- Pfeiffer, S. I. (2012). *Serving the gifted: Evidence-based clinical and psychoeducational practice*. Routledge.
- Polanyi, L. & Zaenen, A. (2006). *Computing attitude and affect in text: Theory and applications*. Springer.
- Read, J., & Carroll, J. (2010). Annotating expressions of Appraisal in English. *Language Resources and Evaluation* 46, 421-447. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10579-010-9135-7>
- Schunk, D. & Zimmerman, B. (2011). *Handbook of self-regulation of learning and performance*. Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203839010>
- Seth C. Lewis, Zamith, R. & Hermida, A. (2013). Content Analysis in an Era of Big Data: Hybrid Approach to Computational and Manual Methods. *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 57(1), 34-52.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08838151.2012.761702>
- Shinzato, R. (2004). Some observations concerning mental verbs and speech act verbs. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36(5), 861-882. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166\(03\)00002-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(03)00002-X)

- Singer, F. M., Sheffield, L. J., Freiman, V., & Brandl, M. (2016). *Research on and activities for mathematically gifted students*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-39450-3>
- Snyder, L. (2014). *Fluency with Information Technology: Skills, Concepts, & Capabilities*. Pearson.
- Stack, G. (2012). The language of possibility and existential possibility. *The Modern Schoolman*, 50(2), 159-182. <https://doi.10.5840/schoolman19735026>
- Steenbergen-Hu, S., & Moon, S. M. (2011). The effects of acceleration on high-ability learners: A meta-analysis. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 55(1), 39-53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0016986210383155>
- Stemler, S. (2015). Emerging trends in content analysis. In Scott, R. & Kosslyn, S. (Eds.), *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioural Sciences* (pp. 1-14). Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118900772.etrds0053>
- Sydserff, R. & Weetman, P. (2002). Developments in content analysis: A transitivity index and diction scores. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, 15(4), 523-545. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513570210440586>
- Taboada, M., Brooke, J., Tofilovsky, M., Voll, K. & Stede, M. (2011). Lexicon-based methods for sentiment analysis. *Computational Linguistics*, 1(1), 1-42. https://doi.org/10.1162/COLI_a_00049
- Tedre, M. (2014). *The Science of Computing: Shaping a Discipline*. CRC Press/Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.1201/b17764>
- Tedre, M., & Denning, P. J. (2016, November). The long quest for computational thinking. In *Proceedings of the 16th Koli Calling International Conference on Computing Education Research* (pp. 120-129). ACM. <https://doi.org/10.1145/2999541.2999542>
- Thompson, G. (2004). *Introducing functional grammar*. Hodder Education.
- Webb, T., Miles, E. & Sheeran, P. (2012). Dealing with feeling: A meta-analysis of the effectiveness of strategies derived from the process model of emotion regulation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 138(4), 775-808. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027600>

Reviewers:

1. Anonymous:
2. Anonymous

Handling Editor:

Boris Naimushin, PhD,
New Bulgarian University

THE EFFECT OF USING WHATSAPP ON EFL STUDENTS' MEDICAL ENGLISH VOCABULARY LEARNING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Saud Alenezi¹ and Elias Bensalem²

^{1,2} Northern Border University, Arar, Saudi Arabia



Abstract

The role of social networking mobile applications such as WhatsApp in enhancing second language vocabulary learning among English language learners continues to be a subject of interest for many scholars. The current study aimed at examining medical English vocabulary learning among undergraduate students using WhatsApp compared to learning vocabulary via Blackboard platform during the Covid-19 pandemic. To this end, 108 medical students (51 males, 57 females) enrolled in a first semester English for a specific English course participated in the study. A quasi-experimental design was adopted for two groups. Fifty-three students were assigned to the WhatsApp group and 55 students were assigned to the Blackboard group. Data were collected using pretest-posttest design. Results of t-test scores revealed no significant difference between the WhatsApp and Blackboard groups on a vocabulary test. Results of survey that gauged students' perception of the use of WhatsApp as a platform for learning new vocabulary showed positive perceptions since participants thought that WhatsApp enhanced their learning experience.

Keywords: English for specific purpose, Mobile-assisted language learning, vocabulary learning, WhatsApp

Article history:

Received: 10 November 2021
Reviewed: 15 February 2022
Accepted: 17 February 2022
Published: 30 June 2022

Contributor roles

Conceptualization, Investigation, Validation S.A. (lead)
Supervision, Project Administration, Data Curation, Formal
Analysis S.A. (lead); Methodology, Visualization, Writing –
original draft, Writing – review and editing S.A, E.B. (equal)

Copyright © 2022 Saud Alenezi and Elias Bensalem



This open access article is published and distributed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at bensalemelias@gmail.com. If you want to use the work commercially, you must first get the authors' permission.

Citation: Alenezi, S. & Bensalem, E. (2022). The Effect of Using Whatsapp on EFL Students' Medical English Vocabulary Learning During the Covid-19 Pandemic. *English Studies at NBU*, 8(1), 29-42.
<https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.22.1.22>

Saud Alenezi, PhD is an assistant professor of English in the Department of Languages and Translation at the Northern Border University in Saudi Arabia, where he teaches in the BA English program. His research interest centers on issues related to second language learning.

E-mail: alfalah.saud@gmail.com

Elias Bensalem is an Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics in the Department of Languages and Translation at the Northern Border University in Saudi Arabia, where he teaches in the BA English program. His research centers on issues related to second-language learning, individual differences and emotional variables in SLA, and CALL. Dr. Bensalem is the author of articles on language learning and teaching, and he is a reviewer for several peer-reviewed journals.

E-mail: bensalemelias@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6018-0897>

The integration of mobile technologies, especially instant messaging (IM) applications, has increased in the field of language teaching (Chai, Wong, & King, 2016; Duman et al., Gedik, 2014; Liu, 2016). Such technologies could provide a wide range of second language learning opportunities, especially in acquiring vocabulary, which is a key element in learning a foreign language since "without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (Wilkins, 1972, pp. 111-112). For foreign language learners, vocabulary knowledge is considered the most significant element (Chen & Chung, 2008) since it is one of the building blocks of a language (Nation, 2001). Researchers found that many foreign language learners face difficulty in learning new vocabulary (Oxford, 1990; Schmitt, 2010). Therefore, it is worthwhile to explore the efficiency of a tool that could facilitate vocabulary learning. Mobile technologies have the potential of enhancing language learning skills (Shih, 2011; López, 2010; Miyazoe & Anderson, 2010). They can play a role in boosting vocabulary acquisition (e.g., McGlinn & Parrish, 2002).

Instant messaging (IM) is one of the commonly used functions among smart phone users. This has prompted researchers to examine its impact on teaching various aspect of vocabulary such as English collocation (Motallebzadeh & Daliry, 2011). According to Lu (2008), IM applications could improve the learners' vocabulary size since they are accessible anytime and anywhere (Cavus & Ibrahim, 2009). WhatsApp is the most used social-networking application on mobile phones (Yeboah & Ewur, 2014). Most of the research that examined using WhatsApp as a platform for learning new vocabulary compared its efficiency with the pen-and-pencil traditional methods. None of the previous studies investigated the use of WhatsApp as compared to the Blackboard platform. In addition, most of the previous studies focused on academic English vocabulary. To the researchers' best knowledge, there is no study that focused on the impact of using applications such as WhatsApp on learning medical English vocabulary. Therefore, the current study set out to contribute to this line of research by investigating the impact of WhatsApp on medical English vocabulary among Saudi medical students who are enrolled in English for Specific Purpose (ESP) courses.

Literature review

Many scholars compared the use of Short Message Service (SMS) in teaching and learning vocabulary to traditional approaches (i.e., using a dictionary or in the classroom).

For example, Lu (2008) investigated the potential impact of SMS messages on vocabulary acquisition in an experimental study that involved vocational high school students in Taiwan. During the first week 15 students who were from the experimental group learned a list of 14 words using mobile phones. A second group of 15 students from the control group learned the same list using printed materials. During the following week, participants switched groups. Members of the control group learned another list of 14 words using mobile phones. During the first week, students from the experimental group learned the new list of words using printed materials. A posttest was conducted to measure students' vocabulary gain. Statistical analysis revealed that students who used mobile phones learned more new words than students who only had access to printed materials. However, results of the delayed tests showed that both groups retained the same rate of words.

In another study that involved Chinese students, Zhang et al. (2011) explored the impact of SMS on vocabulary learning. A group of 78 participants two intact classes participated in the study. The experimental group received a list of 130 words via SMS. The paper group received a hard copy of the same list in class over the course of 26 days. Results showed that the SMS group significantly outscored the paper group. However, no differences were found in the delayed posttests. These results are consistent with Lu's (2008) findings.

Following the same line of research, Song (2008) examined the usefulness of SMS in helping a small group of ten students in Hong Kong to improve their English vocabulary learning. Her study integrated SMS into web-based vocabulary learning. Data revealed that SMS helped students significantly improve their vocabulary knowledge. Open-ended questionnaire interviews reported a positive attitude among participants towards using SMS as a tool to learn vocabulary. The same positive results were reported by Cavus and Ibrahim (2009). In their experiment, which involved forty-five undergraduate students, they investigated the use of SMS to learn new vocabulary over the course of nine days. Researchers reported a significant difference between the scores of pretest and scores of posttest. Students were able to achieve score higher on the posttest. The researchers concluded that using SMS is an effective tool vocabulary. They also reported that students enjoyed their experience and showed interest in further receiving notes and summaries for other lectures via SMS.

In the Iranian context, Jafari and Chalak (2016) examined the impact of WhatsApp on vocabulary learning among 60 high school EFL students. Participants from the experimental group received their vocabulary instructions and assignments via WhatsApp four days a week over the course of four weeks. Participants from the control group learned target vocabulary in the classroom. Results showed that students who learned new vocabulary via WhatsApp outperformed their peers who learned the same list of vocabulary in the classroom. Male and female students scored equally on vocabulary tests.

In a more recent study, Bensalem (2018) investigated the effectiveness of employing WhatsApp as a vocabulary learning tool among forty EFL Saudi students. The study also aimed to gauge learners' perceptions about the use of WhatsApp in developing their vocabulary. The participants of the study divided randomly into experimental (WhatsApp group) and control group (paper and pencil group). Participants from the WhatsApp group were instructed to complete and send their vocabulary homework assignments via WhatsApp, while participants from the control group were instructed to submit a hard copy of their assignments in class. Statistical analysis revealed that the WhatsApp group were able to score higher than their peers in the control group on a vocabulary test. Participants from the WhatsApp group reported having a pleasant experience learning new words using WhatsApp as a platform.

One of the limitations of these studies is that they were rather short-term. Therefore, there was a need to conduct other experiments that lasted longer in order to get more accurate results. In this regard, Alemi, et al. (2012) attempted to determine whether the use of SMS would help university students increase their vocabulary learning and boost word retention over a period of sixteen weeks. A group of 28 students were assigned to two learning conditions. The SMS group received 320 words via SMS. The control group learned the same list of vocabulary using a dictionary. The two groups scored equally well on the posttest. However, on the retention test, the SMS group had scored higher than the control group. In other words, the SMS group was able to retain more vocabulary than the dictionary group. These findings corroborate the results reported by previous studies.

In the Saudi context, Fageeh (2013) conducted an experiment to examine the effectiveness of WhatsApp as a vocabulary learning tool during one semester. It involved

58 ESL students. The students were divided into two groups. Thirty-one students were placed in the control group, while the remaining were placed in the experimental group. Each week, students of the WhatsApp group were sent a list of words through WhatsApp. Participants' main task was to define the new vocabulary items with the aid of a dictionary app and build a sentence using each target word. Conversely, students in the control group were given the same list of words on paper and had to complete the same homework assignment as the WhatsApp group. The researchers reported that the WhatsApp group had statistically significant higher scores than the paper-based group on the post-tests.

None of the previous studies compared the effect of two online platforms namely, WhatsApp and Blackboard on vocabulary learning among ESP students. Blackboard software, a component of Learning Management System, has been adopted by all higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia and in many countries around the world. The current study was conducted during a unique educational situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic, which forced all classes to be held online.

This study seeks to address the following questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between university EFL students' learning of vocabulary items provided via WhatsApp and those learnt using Blackboard?
2. How do learners perceive the use of WhatsApp for learning vocabulary?

Methodology

Participants

The participants in this study were 103 medical students enrolled at first-semester English for specific purposes (ESP) course at a public university in Saudi Arabia. These students achieved an intermediate level of English following an intensive English course at the preparatory year school. They were all aged between 18 and 20. Because the campus is gender segregated, the female students were taught in separate classes. They were from four sections of the same course. Two sections were randomly assigned to assigned to the experimental group (WhatsApp) with a total of 53 students (26 males and 27 females) and two sections were assigned to the control group (Blackboard) with a total of 55 students (25 males and 30 females). Participants were instructed to build sentences using new vocabulary and submit them to their instructor as an assignment.

Students from the experimental group submitted their assignments via WhatsApp, while students from the control group submitted their work via Blackboard. All students owned a mobile device, which allowed them to use the WhatsApp application and log in to Blackboard.

Materials

Vocabulary Test. A vocabulary test was developed by the researchers to measure students' knowledge of the target words prior to the onset of the study (pre-test) and after the treatment (post-test). The test consisted of 60 medical English words where the students were asked to provide the Arabic translation of each word item. Each item was worth one point. The total sixty items were taken from the vocabulary lists (120 words) that students were exposed to during the semester. Two ESL professors who had experience in assessment checked the test validity. The test reliability was calculated using Cronbach Alpha. The alpha value was .89. The test length was similar to tests used in previous studies (Bensalem, 2018). The test was piloted with a group of 11 students who took the same English course in a different class. Necessary adjustments were made to the test.

Questionnaire. Participants of the WhatsApp group completed a questionnaire consisting of six items adopted from Bensalem (2018). The scale had a very good internal reliability (coefficient alpha = .927). Item response was given on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree), to 5 (strongly agree). The survey was in Arabic because students feel more comfortable answering surveys in their native language. A link to a Google form containing the survey was made available to students. Data collection was conducted in the spring semester of 2021. Analyses were performed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Procedures

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Northern Border University. Prospective participants were briefed about the purpose of the study. Students granted their consent to participate before the start of the study. Participants took a vocabulary test during the first week of the semester before receiving any vocabulary instruction. All students learnt 120 words over the course of

the semester (10 weeks). All classes were held online because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Students had class once a week for two hours. The experimental group received their weekly word list and submitted their assignments via WhatsApp. The instructor of the control group posted the word list on Blackboard and received students' submission in the same platform. Students were instructed to complete all the assignments in order to get full credit for their work. The assignment consisted of writing a sentence of their own using each word from the list they received. After the completion of 10 homework assignments, participants took a vocabulary test. The posttest which was identical to the pretest in terms of format aimed at measuring learners' rate of vocabulary learning. After the completion of the test, participants of the WhatsApp group filled out a questionnaire that measured their perception of learning vocabulary using WhatsApp.

Data analysis

A quasi-experimental pretest/posttest design was adopted. A t-test was carried out on the data gathered from the pretests and posttests. An initial t-test was performed to determine whether there was a significant difference in means of pretests between the two groups before treatment. Another t-test was carried out after the conclusion of the study to measure any significant difference between the means of the posttest scores of the WhatsApp and Blackboard group.

Descriptive statistics (i.e., means and standard deviations) were used to summarize participants' responses. The questionnaire was pilot tested with a small group of ESP students.

Results

The first research question aims at determining if there is a significant difference between students' learning of vocabulary items provided via WhatsApp and those learnt using Blackboard as measured by a vocabulary test. As Table 1 shows, the Blackboard group ($M = 24.47$, $SD = 16.68$) outscored the WhatsApp ($M = 22.64$, $SD = 17.30$) on the pretest. To determine whether the control and experimental groups differed in their knowledge of the vocabulary items, a t-test was applied to their pretest scores. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was performed to check the assumption of homogeneity which was satisfied, $F(106) = .07$, $p = .792$. The independent samples t-test was associated with a statistically non-significant effect, $t(106) = .56$, $p = .58$, $d = 0.11$. These findings

suggest that the experimental group and control group were not different in their knowledge of the vocabulary items before the experiment.

Table 1. Comparison of Pre-test Scores between WhatsApp Group and Blackboard Group

Group	Test	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
WhatsApp	Pretest	53	22.64	17.30	1.31	106	.58
Blackboard	Pretest	55	24.47	16.68			

In order to examine whether there was a significant improvement from pretest to posttest in terms of scores for the experimental group and the control group, a t-test was performed. As Table 2 indicates, the independent-samples t-test indicated that the Blackboard group ($M = 24.91$, $SD = 15.70$) outscored the WhatsApp group ($M = 24.53$, $SD = 17.91$); however, the scores were not significantly higher, $t(106) = .19$, $p < .90$, $d = .02$. These results suggest the experimental group did not significantly learn more new words than the control group.

Table 2. Comparison of Post-test Scores between WhatsApp Group and Blackboard Group

Group	Test	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
WhatsApp	Posttest	53	24.53	17.91	.19	106	.90
Blackboard	Posttest	55	24.91	15.70			

The second research question aimed at gauging students' vocabulary learning experience using WhatsApp. Students' reactions to the use of WhatsApp as a platform to learn new vocabulary are reported in Table 3. Results show that the majority of students who participated in the survey had positive attitudes towards the use of WhatsApp in learning vocabulary. In fact, 70.2% of students believed that learning new words using WhatsApp was an interesting method of learning (see Fig.1). Even though 72.4% of students' thought that WhatsApp increased their motivation to complete course assignments (see Fig.2), only 65.9% of the respondents enjoyed learning new vocabulary using that application (see Fig.3). Most students valued the convenience of using WhatsApp. In fact, 72.4% of students reported that WhatsApp motivated them to complete their vocabulary assignments. The fact that they had the option to work anywhere and at any time was appreciated by participants. Despite the flexibility that

Blackboard can offer, 70.3% of students preferred WhatsApp as a better platform to use for future courses (see Fig. 4).

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for participants' perception about the use of WhatsApp

Item Statement	Mean	SD
1. Learning new words using WhatsApp is an interesting method of learning.	3.94	.942
2. I feel more motivated to complete my vocabulary assignments using WhatsApp because it is convenient: I can complete it anytime anywhere.	3.94	.919
3. I enjoyed learning new vocabulary using WhatsApp.	3.77	.865
4. If given the choice between using WhatsApp and Blackboard method of learning new words in future courses I would choose using WhatsApp.	3.85	.978
5. Using WhatsApp helped me remember the new words.	3.77	.914
6. Writing sentences including the new words and sending them to the instructor via WhatsApp is a useful activity.	3.96	.977

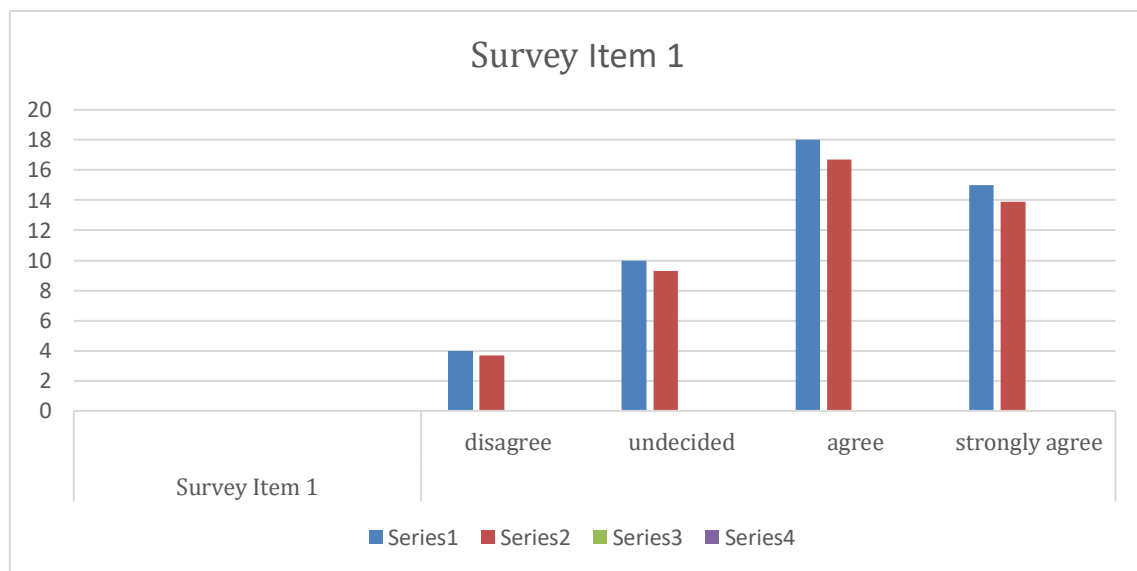


Fig. 1. Students' responses to the first survey item

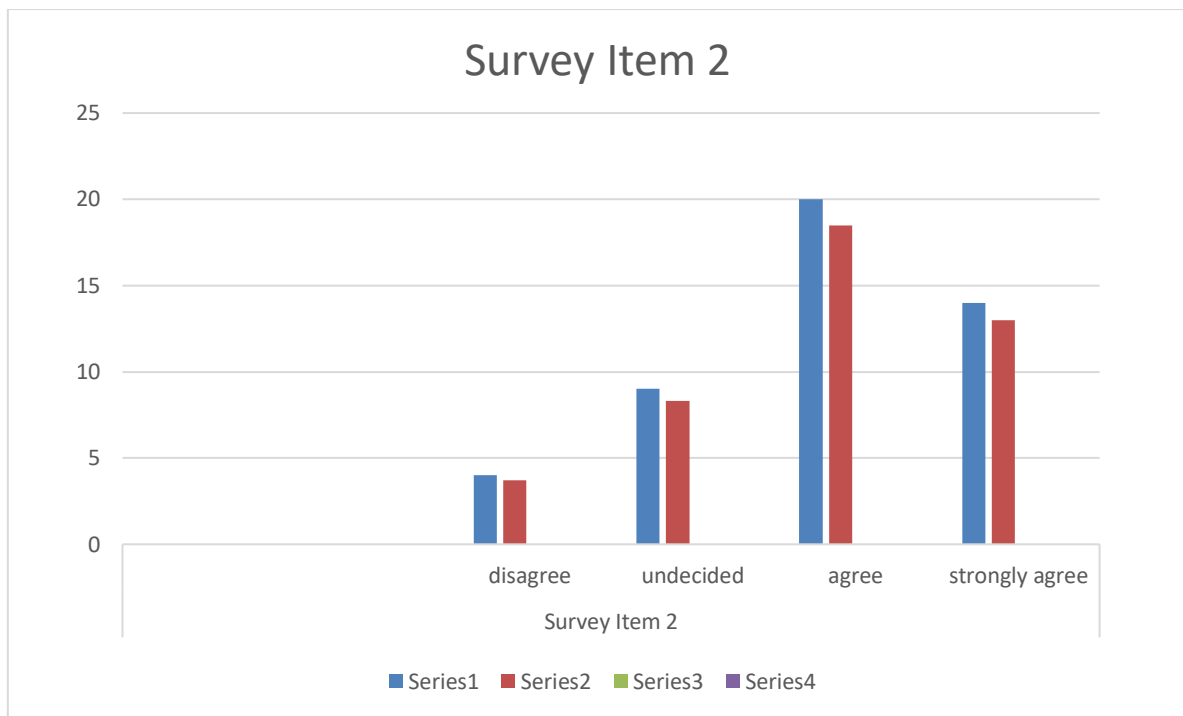


Fig. 2. Students' responses to the second survey item

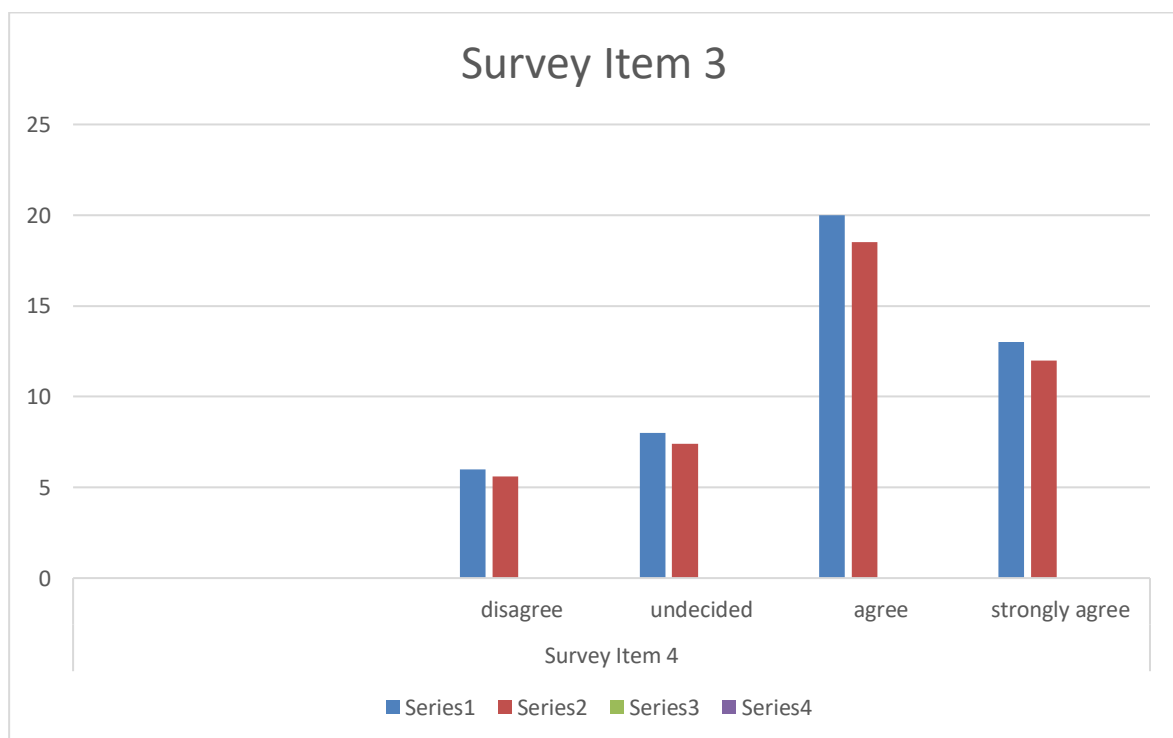


Fig. 3. Students' responses to the third survey item

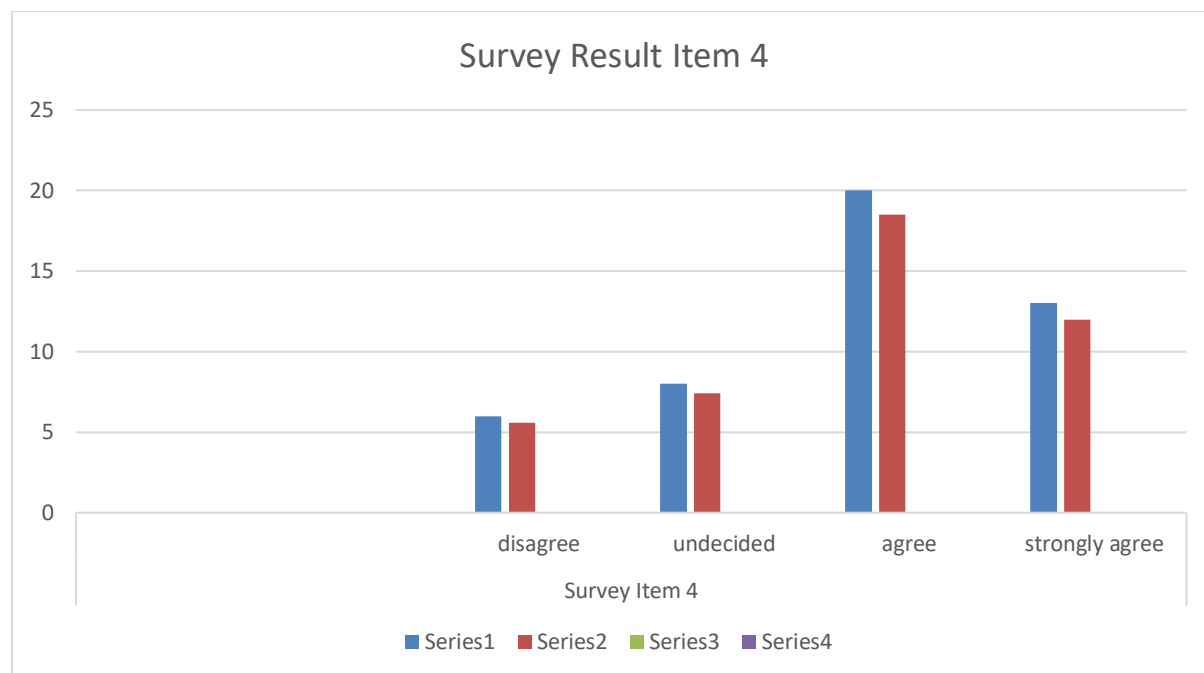


Fig. 4. Students' responses to the fourth survey item

Discussion

The current study did not provide empirical evidence for the efficiency of WhatsApp compared to Blackboard platform. The results are aligned with the outcomes reported by Dehghan, et. al. (2017) who found that students did not think WhatsApp played an effective role in enhancing their vocabulary learning. Dehghan, et. al. (2017) argued that their participants were not committed to the assigned tasks, which may have neutralized the impact of WhatsApp as a useful learning tool.

The non-significant difference between the efficiency of using WhatsApp and Blackboard that is reported in this study can be attributed to several factors. First of all, the study was conducted during Covid 19 crisis when all students had to use Blackboard. All classes shifted to online mode. Perhaps the novelty of the learning experience increased students' motivation and increased their involvement in the learning process (Bensalem, 2018). Students had to be logged in for long hours in order to interact with their instructor and classmates. Second, Blackboard gives the instructor the option of keeping track of students' completion of assignments, flag those who did not finish or started working on the assignments may have put students under pressure to take their homework

more seriously. Another Blackboard feature that may have increased the motivation of students is the creation of a forum where students can exchange opinions and the instructor can answer queries. Such forum could have created a learning community where students became more engaged in the learning process (Bensalem, 2018), which may have impacted the quality of their submitted assignments (Awada, 2016). Furthermore, Saudi students seem to hold positive perceptions toward the use of Blackboard as documented by previous research (e.g. Fageeh & Mekheimer, 2013); Pusuluri, 2017)

The current study reports positive perceptions on the part of students regarding the use of WhatsApp. This result is aligned with the findings reported by previous studies (Alhadhrami, 2016; Awada, 2016; Basal et al., 2016; Fageeh, 2013; Lawrence, 2014) which found that the use of WhatsApp enhanced students' learning experience. In a similar context, Bensalem (2018) found that Saudi EFL students appreciated the use of WhatsApp as a tool to learn new vocabulary since its their mostly used application.

Conclusion, Limitations and Potential Future Research

This study sought to examine the impact of WhatsApp on medical ESP students' vocabulary learning compared to the Blackboard platform. Results show that there was no significant difference between the efficiency of the two platforms. However, students from the experimental group thought that using WhatsApp as a learning tool enhanced their learning experience. The current study is not without limitations. First, the study was conducted during outbreak of Covid 19 which caused a sudden shift from face-to-face to online learning. These special circumstances may have affected students' overall performance and readiness to receive instructions. In other words, the results could have been different if the study was conducted during normal circumstances. Second, the study involved only students from one level (first semester course). Therefore, the results should be taken with caution. Future studies should involve students from different levels in order to be able to generalize the findings. Third, the researchers could not control for individual differences such as high achievers vs. low achievers, students' GPA, linguistic background (knowledge of additional languages), etc. Future studies could compare the performance of students in terms of individual differences and levels of study.

References

- Alemi, M., & Lari, Z. (2012). The effects of SMS on university students, vocabulary learning. In *The First Conference on Language Learning and Teaching: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, ILT-IA. Mashad, Iran.
- Alhadhrami, M. (2016). Using Mobile phone apps inside and outside the English language classroom by undergraduate students at Sultan Qaboos University: Attitudes, practices and challenges. *The Journal of Teaching English for Specific and Academic Purposes*, 4(1), 61-74.
- Awada, G. (2016) Effect of WhatsApp on critique writing proficiency and perceptions toward learning. *Cogent Education*, 3(1), 1264173.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1264173>
- Basal, A., Yilmaz, S., Tanriverdi, A., & Sari, L. (2016). Effectiveness of Mobile Applications in Vocabulary Teaching. *Contemporary Educational Technology*, 7(1), 47-59.
<https://doi.org/10.30935/cedtech/6162>
- Bensalem, E. (2018). The Impact of WhatsApp on EFL students' vocabulary learning. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(1), 23-28.
<https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no1.2>
- Cavus, N. & Ibrahim, D. (2009). M-learning: an experiment in using SMS to support learning new English language words. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 40, 78-91. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2007.00801.x>
- Chai, C. S., Wong, L. H., & King, R. B. (2016). Surveying and modeling students' motivation and learning strategies for mobile-assisted seamless Chinese language learning. *Educational Technology & Society*, 19(3), 170-180.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/t59396-000>
- Chen, C. M., & Chung, C. J. (2008). Personalized mobile English vocabulary learning system based on item response theory and learning memory cycle. *Computers & Education*, 51, 624-645. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2007.06.011>
- Dehghan, F. (2017). Social networks and their effectiveness in learning foreign language vocabulary: A comparative study using WhatsApp. *CALL-EJ*, 18(2), 1-13.
- Duman, G., Orhon, G., & Gedik, N. (2014). Research trends in mobile assisted language learning from 2000 to 2012. *ReCALL*, 27(2), 197-216.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344014000287>
- Fageeh, A. & Mekheimer, M. (2013). Effects of blackboard on EFL academic writing and attitudes, *The JALT CALL Journal*, 9(2), 169-196.
<https://doi.org/10.29140/jaltcall.v9n2.154>
- Fageeh, A. A. I. (2013). Effects of MALL applications on vocabulary acquisition and motivation. *Arab World English Journal*, 4(4), 420-447.
- Jafari, S., & Chalak, A. (2016). The role of WhatsApp in teaching vocabulary to Iranian EFL learners at junior high school. *English Language Teaching*, 9(8), 85-92.
<https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n8p85>
- Liu, P. L. (2016). Mobile English vocabulary learning based on concept-mapping strategy. *Language Learning & Technology*, 20(3), 128-141.
- López, O. S. (2010). The digital learning classroom: Improving English language learners' academic success in mathematics and reading using interactive whiteboard technology. *Computers & Education*, 54(4), 901-915.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2009.09.019>

- Lu, M. (2008). Effectiveness of vocabulary learning via mobile phone. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 24, 515-525. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2729.2008.00289.x>
- McGlinn, J. & A. Parrish (2002) Accelerating ESL Students' Reading Progress with Accelerated Reader. *Reading Horizons*, 42(3), pp. 175-189.
- McGlinn, J. M., & Parrish, A. (2002). Accelerating ESL Students' Reading Progress with Accelerated Reader. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 42(3). https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol42/iss3/2
- Miyazoe, T. & Anderson, T. (2010). Learning outcomes and students' perceptions of online writing: Simultaneous implementation of a forum, blog, and wiki in an EFL blended learning setting. *System*, 38(2), 185-199. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2010.03.006>
- Motallebzadeh, K., & Ganjali, R. (2011). SMS: Tool for L2 vocabulary retention and reading comprehension ability. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(5), 1111-1115. <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.2.5.1111-1115>
- Nation, I. S. P. (2001). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CB09781139524759>
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House.
- Pusuluri, S., Mahasneh, A., & Alsayer, B. A. M. (2017). The application of Blackboard in the English courses at Al Jouf University: Perceptions of students. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 7(2), 106-111. <https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0702.03>
- Schmitt, N. (2010). Review article: Instructed second language vocabulary learning. *Language Teaching Research*, 14(4), 347-349. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168810375360>
- Shih, R. C. (2011). Can Web 2.0 technology assist college students in learning English writing? Integrating Facebook and peer assessment with blended learning. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 27(5), 829 - 845. <https://doi.org/10.14742/ajet.934>
- Song, Y. (2008). SMS enhanced vocabulary learning for mobile audiences. *International Journal of Mobile Learning and Organisation*, 2(1), 81-98. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJML0.2008.018719>
- Wilkins, D.A. (1972). *Linguistics in Language Teaching*. Australia: Edward Arnold.
- Yeboah, J., & Ewur, G.D. (2014). The Impact of Whatsapp Messenger Usage on Students Performance in Tertiary Institutions in Ghana. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 5, 157-164.
- Yongqi Gu, P. (2003). Vocabulary Learning in a Second Language: Person, Task, Context and Strategies. *TESL-EJ*, 7, 1-26.
- Zhang, H., Song, W., & Burston, J. (2011). Reexamining the effectiveness of vocabulary learning via mobile phones. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 10(3), 203-214.

Reviewers:

1. Anonymous:
2. Anonymous

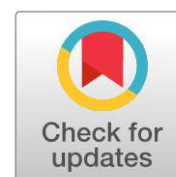
Handling Editor:

Boris Naimushin, PhD,
New Bulgarian University

EXPLORING TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER TRAINING IN THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CONTEXT: AN OVERVIEW

Antony Hoyte-West

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland



Abstract

This article provides an overview of the current provision of translator and interpreter training in the English-speaking Caribbean nation of Trinidad & Tobago. In contextualising the country's current linguistic and geopolitical situation, including the growing prominence of Spanish in the country's society, present conditions regarding the need for translational services are outlined. The overview adopts a literature-based approach which involves analysing the websites of tertiary institutions in Trinidad & Tobago where translation and interpreting-related training provision is currently on offer. Through examination of the relevant course syllabi and the pertinent degree and diploma programmes available, available course offerings are presented and discussed, thus giving a solid panorama of the present landscape regarding translator and interpreter training options in the country. Finally, although interpreter training seems well-established in the country, suggestions are offered regarding possible future steps for translator training in the Trinidad & Tobago context, as well as pointers for subsequent empirical research in the future.

Keywords: Trinidad and Tobago, Anglophone Caribbean, translator training, interpreter training, certification

Article history:

Received: 11 December 2021

Reviewed: 05 January 2022

Accepted: 06 January 2022

Published: 30 June 2022

Copyright © 2022 Antony Hoyte-West



This open access article is published and distributed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at antony.hoyte.west@gmail.com. If you want to use the work commercially, you must first get the authors' permission.

Citation: Hoyte-West, A. (2022). Exploring Translator and Interpreter Training in the Trinidad and Tobago Context: An overview. *English Studies at NBU*, 8(1), 43-52. <https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.22.1.3>

Antony Hoyte-West is an assistant professor (post-doc) at the Faculty of English at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. His research focuses on multilingualism and translation studies, with his interdisciplinary interests including historical and contemporary language policy, sociological aspects of the translation and interpreting professions, and the institutional translation and interpreting of minority languages. He is the author of several peer-reviewed publications.

E-mail: antony.hoyte.west@gmail.com



<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4410-6520>

Situated close to the Venezuelan coastline, Trinidad & Tobago is a resource-rich twin-island republic, with a land area of just over 5,000 square kilometres and a population of around 1.3 million (Robinson, Watts, & Brereton, 2021). Despite its diminutive size, the country is the second largest member of the Anglophone Caribbean, a status which belies its former multilingualism. Although English is the nation's only official language – commonly spoken in its demotic variant of Trinidad & Tobago Creole English (Romaine, 2017, p. 390) – current geopolitical factors mean that there is growing awareness of the translational professions in the domestic context, which is a key component of the author's project on translation, interpreting, and multilingualism (for more information, see Hoyte-West, 2021). Accordingly, this overview focuses on the current training options available for translators and interpreters in Trinidad & Tobago, building on Bogle's (2016) overview of the translation-related environment in the wider English-speaking and French-speaking Caribbean, which considered literary, Bible, and practical translation as well as relevant professional aspects.

To date, comparatively little research has been conducted regarding the translation and interpreting of spoken languages in Trinidad & Tobago, although considerable work has been conducted on historical and educational aspects relating to signed languages (for example, see Braithwaite, Draycott, & Lamb, 2011; Braithwaite, 2018). Hence, though small in scale, the present study aims to provide a snapshot of current translator and interpreter training opportunities in the country, examining the availability and structure of the training programmes presently available. Indeed, several similar studies exploring general and specific aspects of translator and/or interpreter training in a given market have been conducted in a range of countries, including China (Xu, 2005; Zhan, 2014), Japan (Giustini, 2020), Latvia (Silis, 2009), Montenegro (Lakić & Pralas, 2016), Spain (Baxter, 2014), Tunisia (Salhi, 2011), and the United States (Mikkelsen, 2014), as well as the author's recent overview of the interpreter training context in the Republic of Ireland (Hoyte-West, 2020). To this end, it is intended that the current study will not just provide a foundation for future empirical work regarding relevant education and training models for the translational professions in Trinidad & Tobago, but could also lead to the possibility of comparative work with other small states in the Caribbean and beyond.

The language situation in Trinidad & Tobago

As also summarised elsewhere (Anonymous, 2021), Trinidad & Tobago became an independent nation in 1962. As with every country in the Western Hemisphere, however, the islands had been subject to colonial rule for several centuries beforehand. Originally inhabited by Arawak and Carib tribes, Trinidad and Tobago were claimed for Spain by Christopher Columbus in 1498. In terms of its colonial history, Tobago's was the more chequered of the two islands, passing between British, Baltic, Dutch, and French control before remaining in British hands after the Napoleonic Wars. Trinidad remained a colony of Spain – though with a notable influx of French plantation owners and their slaves in the late eighteenth century – until it was conquered by the British in 1797, who later brought indentured workers from the Indian subcontinent to work on the plantations after the slaves were emancipated in the 1830s (Robinson, Watts, & Brereton, 2021).

This complex history has meant that, unlike many other countries in the Anglophone Caribbean, no one single ethnicity is dominant. As such, the legacy of colonisation has meant that modern Trinidad & Tobago is composed primarily of people of African, East Indian, and mixed heritage, with smaller groups of people of European, Chinese, and Amerindian origins (Robinson, Watts, & Brereton, 2021). Over the course of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the influx and mixing of various peoples meant that at one time many different languages could be heard; however, this linguistic diversity has now almost disappeared.

As noted previously, Trinidad & Tobago has English as its only official language, but in 2004, the country's government embarked on the Spanish as the First Foreign Language (SAFFL) policy to promote the role of Spanish in public life, with the intent that widespread bilingualism would be in place by 2020. Described more extensively elsewhere (Anonymous, 2021), the SAFFL initiative met with comparatively little success. In spite of visible policies such as bilingual signage, the policy originally centred on deepening trade and commercial relations with Latin America. This cooperation, however, was stymied by poor global economic conditions, including low oil and gas prices, as well as by geopolitical factors such as the ongoing economic and humanitarian crisis in neighbouring Venezuela.

As such, the Venezuelan crisis has resulted in a considerable number of Spanish-speaking migrants arriving in Trinidad & Tobago, a controversial situation which has impacted the country's politics and its social composition (for more information, see Mohan, 2019; Anatol & Kangalee, 2020; Wallace & Mortley, 2020). As such, the issue of providing translation and interpreting services has reached wider public consciousness, including an increased demand for qualified practitioners (Fraser, 2020). Hence, given this state of affairs, this overview of the training options available for translators and interpreters in the Trinidad & Tobago context is both relevant and necessary.

Methodology and research question

Building on the overview provided above, it was decided to conduct a literature-based study of the current provision of translator and interpreter training in Trinidad & Tobago. Consequently, the following research question was advanced:

- What are the current options regarding training for translators and interpreters in Trinidad & Tobago?

The main sources that were consulted comprised the websites of the relevant tertiary-level institutions in the country, including the University of the West Indies at St Augustine (UWI St Augustine), and the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAAT), as well as a professional training institution, the Caribbean School of Languages. Although the methodological limitations of literature-based studies focused on online resources are clearly evident, and the project would clearly have benefitted from empirical qualitative input, nonetheless, as Snyder (2019, p. 334) notes, such literature-based studies can still be valuable when assessing the state of knowledge on a given topic. In this context, given the lack of prior research available on translator and interpreter training in Trinidad & Tobago, it was felt that the data collected and analysed would still prove to be useful, especially within the scope of the author's wider project. In addition, this literature-based approach is similar to several of the studies mentioned in the introductory section of this article (for example, Silis, 2009; Baxter, 2014; Mikkelsen, 2014; Zhan, 2014; Anonymous, 2020). Furthermore, it was intended that the information obtained would provide a solid foundation for potential

empirical work in the future, once international travel resumes freely following the end of the COVID-19 coronavirus-related travel restrictions.

Results

The analysis of the relevant institutions in Trinidad & Tobago uncovered that two of the nation's tertiary institutions offer translation-related training – COSTAAT and UWI St Augustine – together with one professional training institute, the Caribbean School of Languages.

Founded in 2000, COSTAAT is a public third-level institution offering vocational and technical courses (COSTAAT, 2021a). There, translation and interpreting-related training falls under the auspices of the Department of Languages, Literature and Communication Studies. At present, two separate introductory modules in translation and in interpreting form a compulsory part of the second year of the Associate in Applied Science (AAS) two-year undergraduate degree in Foreign Language for Business: Spanish (COSTAAT, 2021b). These two modules are also compulsory within the BA in Spanish for Business, where the introductory training is supplemented by a further third-year module combining translation and interpreting techniques (COSTAAT, 2021c). In addition, COSTAAT also has a professional Translation and Interpreting Services Unit; however, this unit focuses on providing relevant translational services for the public and private sectors, rather than offering further education or training possibilities (COSTAAT, 2021d).

UWI St Augustine is the leading tertiary institution in Trinidad & Tobago. Founded in 1948, it forms part of the wider University of the West Indies, which includes five main campuses located across the Anglophone Caribbean (UWI St Augustine, 2021a). Building on Bogle's (2016, p. 52) observation that translation exercises form part of the final-year undergraduate curriculum in French and Spanish, an examination of the course catalogues at the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics noted that two specialist translation modules have been developed for advanced undergraduate students reading for BA degrees majoring in Spanish. The first of these modules introduces students to the theory and practice of translation within the Caribbean context, working primarily with texts relating to tourism, commerce, and journalism

(UWI St Augustine, 2021b). The follow-up course deepens the theoretical and practical skills acquired in the previous semester, and focuses on the thematic areas of literature, media, environment, and the law (UWI St Augustine, 2021c). An analysis of the relevant course catalogues for the undergraduate degrees in French and Portuguese, however, did not find any stand-alone translation modules currently available for either of those languages.

Turning to interpreter training and to the postgraduate level, UWI St Augustine has offered a Postgraduate Diploma in Interpreting Techniques since 2008. Based on a short-lived certificate programme that originally ran during the 1990s, the Postgraduate Diploma aims to adhere to global best-practice standards in the domain of interpreter training, emulating prestigious institutions such as those in Geneva and Paris, as well as the renowned course which formerly ran at the University of Westminster in London (Best, 2008, p. 6). Selective in its recruitment, the programme accepts prospective candidates with proficiency in English with French and/or Spanish as additional languages. It includes intensive coursework in consecutive and simultaneous interpreting, as well as practical training in internet and IT skills relevant for interpreters. This is supplemented by optional modules covering areas such as economics, the international organisations, and sociolinguistics (UWI St Augustine, 2021d).

Notably, the Postgraduate Diploma also includes a compulsory interpretation practicum. As noted in Best (2008, p. 6), the course has fostered strong links with the Caribbean Interpreters and Translators Bureau (CITB). In a similar vein to COSTAAT's Translation and Interpreting Services Unit, the CITB is based at UWI St Augustine and provides professional language services to the public and private sectors (UWI St Augustine, 2021e). Therefore, as part of the postgraduate training programme, interpreting students gain experience working at multilingual conferences and events, utilising their consecutive and simultaneous interpreting skills in real-life situations (UWI St Augustine, 2021f).

Moving away from the university setting, the third institution offering translator training in Trinidad & Tobago is the Caribbean School of Languages, a private enterprise which offers language courses as well as translation and interpreting services. In terms of its educational offering, it provides preparation courses and is an examination centre

for both the Spanish-English and the English-Spanish variants of the Diploma in Translation (DipTrans), an internationally-recognised postgraduate-level qualification which is awarded by the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL) in the United Kingdom (Caribbean School of Languages, 2021). However, unlike the degree programmes offered by universities, it is important to note that the DipTrans represents a certification aimed at professional translators, rather than a traditional course of learning and study. Indeed, to this end the CIOL notes that “it is the responsibility of each candidate to ascertain that they are sufficiently prepared for the examination and competent in both the source and target languages, have good writing skills, and the ability to translate at a professional level” (CIOL, 2021a), as well as stating that “CIOL Qualifications does not officially endorse or recommend any particular course” (CIOL, 2021b).

Concluding remarks and suggestions for further research

The current study has provided a panorama of the current landscape regarding the provision of translator and interpreter training in Trinidad & Tobago, and provides a good foundation for empirical work at a later date involving interviews with practitioners, students, and policymakers. As such, the data gleaned through the above overview has illustrated that, of the three institutions that provide translator and/or interpreter training in Trinidad & Tobago, COSTAAT provides introductory level and advanced undergraduate training in both translation and interpreting, whereas UWI St Augustine offers training in translation for its advanced undergraduates as well as full postgraduate training in interpreting. The Caribbean School of Languages offers preparation for an international professional qualification in translation offered by an external organisation.

The data also illustrate that English-Spanish is the dominant language pairing among training institutions in Trinidad & Tobago. This is perhaps unsurprising given the SAFFL policy, which has foregrounded Spanish as the country’s first foreign language in primary and secondary education. In addition, current market requirements – given the omnipresent Venezuelan crisis, as well as demand from the public and private sectors – may also lead to a need for an increased number of Spanish-speaking translators and interpreters.

Despite the presence of a postgraduate training programme in interpreting, the translational landscape in Trinidad & Tobago is marked by the absence of a full and independent degree programme in translation, either at the undergraduate or the postgraduate level. Where it is taught, translation remains something of an addendum to existing undergraduate provision in modern languages, unlike at the UWI campus at Mona in Jamaica, where a full MA degree in Translation is currently available (UWI Mona, 2021). This is despite the presence of university-linked translation and interpreting agencies such as the CITB at UWI St Augustine and the Translation and Interpreting Services Unit at COSTAAT, which demonstrate that there is indeed a viable need for qualified translators at the domestic level. Although the ties between the CITB and the Postgraduate Diploma in Interpreting Techniques appear to be close, it is notable that CITB's links with putative translators do not seem to be so strong. This may explain, in some regard, the local availability of external and foreign certification programmes such as the CIOL's DipTrans qualification.

In terms of potential future developments, the SAFFL programme remains ongoing, as does the situation regarding migration from Venezuela, which means that demand for Spanish-English translation and interpreting services will presumably continue. In terms of other language pairs, China's increasing economic interests in the Caribbean could potentially lead to wider needs for Chinese-English translation and interpreting, with implications for the provision of necessary training programmes. However, although UWI St Augustine does indeed have a Confucius Institute, at the time of writing it does not appear to offer any translation or interpreting-related courses (UWI St Augustine, 2021g). What is clear, however, is the general need for translators and interpreters in Trinidad & Tobago – and by extension, the need for high-quality translator and interpreter training programmes – will continue to develop over time. It is to be hoped that, in the coming years, a full degree programme will be developed for translators alongside the existing provision for interpreters, thus giving the translational professions there added validation and visibility.

References

- Anatol, M., & Kangalee, Q.-M. (2020). Crime in Trinidad and Tobago: the possible impacts of increased crime due to migration from Venezuela. *Migration and Development*, 10(2), 260-272.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21632324.2020.1809281>

- Baxter, R.N. (2014). Undergraduate interpreter training in the Spanish state: An analytical comparison. *Sendebarr*, 25, 219–246.
- Best, G. (2008, April 13). Found in translation. *UWI Today*, 6.
- Bogle, D. (2016). Translation in the Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean: Facts and Figures. *Sargasso: Journal of Caribbean Literature, Language & Culture*, 2015-16 (I & II), 49–58.
- Braithwaite, B. (2018). Language contact and the history of sign language in Trinidad and Tobago. *Sign Language Studies*, 19(1), 5–39.
- Braithwaite, B., Drayton, K.-A., & Lamb, A. (2011). The history of Deaf language and education in Trinidad and Tobago since 1943. *History in Action*, 2(1).
- Caribbean School of Languages (2021). *Preparation Course / Diploma in Translation / Institute of Linguists*. <https://csltt.net/diploma-in-translation-diptrans/>
- CIOL (2021a). *CIOL Qualifications – Level 7 Diploma in Translation (DipTrans)*. <https://www.ciol.org.uk/diptrans>
- CIOL (2021b). *Find a centre or course*. <https://www.ciol.org.uk/centres>
- COSTAAT (2021a). *Who we are*. <https://www.costaatt.edu.tt/about-2/>
- COSTAAT (2021b). *AAS Foreign Language for Business: Spanish*. <https://www.costaatt.edu.tt/course/aas-foreign-language-for-business-spanish/>
- COSTAAT (2021c). *BA Spanish for Business*. <https://www.costaatt.edu.tt/course/ba-spanish-for-business/>
- COSTAAT (2021d). *Translation and Interpreting Services Unit*. <https://www.costaatt.edu.tt/about-2/translation-and-interpretation-unit/>
- Fraser, N. (2020, May 12). Communications Ministry seeks Spanish translators. *Trinidad & Tobago Newsday*. <https://newsday.co.tt/2020/05/12/communications-ministry-seeks-spanish-translators/>
- Giustini, D. (2020). Interpreter training in Japanese higher education: An innovative method for the promotion of linguistic instrumentalism? *Linguistics and Education*, 56, 100792. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2019.100792>
- Hoyte-West, A. (2020). Interpreter training in the Republic of Ireland: An overview. *Verbum*, 11(8). <https://doi.org/10.15388/Verb.19>
- Hoyte-West, A. (2021). A return to the past? The Spanish as the First Foreign Language policy in Trinidad and Tobago. *Open Linguistics*, 7(1), 235–243. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opli-2021-0018>
- Lakić, I., & Pralas, J. (2016). Translation training for the EU: The case of Montenegro. *Current Trends in Translation Teaching and Learning E*, 3, 87–118.
- Mikkelsen, H. (2014). Evolution of public service interpreter training in the U.S. *FITISPos International Journal*, 1(1), 9–22. <https://doi.org/10.37536/FITISPos-IJ.2014.1.0.6>

- Mohan, S.S. (2019). A 'Migrant Registration Framework': Counting Venezuelan immigrants in Trinidad and Tobago. *Oxford Monitor of Forced Migration*, 8(1), 41–45.
- Robinson, A.N.R., Watts, D., & Brereton, B. (2020). Trinidad & Tobago. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/place/Trinidad-and-Tobago>
- Romaine, S. (2017). Pidgins and Creoles. In Bergs, A., & Brinton, L.J. (eds.) *The History of English. Volume 5: Varieties of English* (pp. 385–402). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Salhi, H. (2011). Translator training in Tunisia today: Market challenges and available opportunities. *Comparative Legilinguistics*, 5, 35–50. <https://doi.org/10.14746/cl.2011.5.03>
- Silis, J. (2009). Training of translators and interpreters in Latvia. *Mutatis Mutandis: Revista Latinoamericana de Traducción*, 2(2), 244–262.
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines. *Journal of Business Research*, 104, 333–339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>
- UWI Mona (2021). *M.A. in Translation*. <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/modlang/ma-translation-studies>
- UWI St Augustine (2021a). *About UWI*. <https://sta.uwi.edu/about>
- UWI St Augustine (2021b). *SPAN 3504 Spanish Translation I*. <https://sta.uwi.edu/fhe/dml/SPAN3504.asp>
- UWI St Augustine (2021c). *SPAN 3505 Spanish Translation II*. <https://sta.uwi.edu/fhe/dml/SPAN3505.asp>
- UWI St Augustine (2021d). *Postgraduate Diploma in Interpreting Techniques*. <https://sta.uwi.edu/fhe/dml/PGInterpreting.asp>
- UWI St Augustine (2021e). *Caribbean Interpreting and Translation Bureau*. <https://sta.uwi.edu/fhe/dml/citb.asp>
- UWI St Augustine (2021f). *INTE 5004 Practicum*. <https://sta.uwi.edu/fhe/dml/INTE5004.asp>
- UWI St Augustine (2021g). *The Confucius Institute at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine*. <https://sta.uwi.edu/confucius/>
- Wallace, W.C., & Mortley, N.K. (2020). (De)constructing our migrant neighbours: regional and international impacts of the Venezuelan crisis in the Caribbean. *Migration and Development*, 10(2), 173–180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21632324.2020.1809276>
- Xu, J. (2005). Training translators in China. *Meta*, 50(1), 231–249. <https://doi.org/10.7202/010671ar>
- Zhan, C. (2014). Professional interpreter training in mainland China: Evolution and current trends. *International Journal of Interpreter Education*, 6(1), 35–41.

Reviewers:

1. Anonymous:
2. Anonymous

Handling Editor:

Boris Naimushin, PhD,
New Bulgarian University

MAKING ROOM FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN TRANSLATOR TRAINING

Seda Taş İlmeç

Trakya University, Edirne, Turkey



Abstract

This study examines how the integration of social responsibility into translator training contributes to the learning and development of translation students. To this end, an action research design and an innovative situated learning project were implemented in an existing Bachelor's course in Translation and Interpreting. Students voluntarily performed two types of authentic translation tasks for a non-profit foundation and wrote project reports. The reports suggest that the integration of social responsibility into translator training raises the awareness of social responsibility among translation students and thus contributes to the improvement of their knowledge. It also has the potential to offer translation students a real experience and develop their translator competences. Therefore, this study proposes linking social responsibility with different learning environments in translator training because making room for social responsibility allows students to develop as socially responsible translators.

Keywords: social responsibility, situated learning project, translator training, translation students

Article history

Received: 29 October 2021

Reviewed: 20 December 2021

Accepted: 03 March 2022

Published: 30 June 2022

Copyright © 2022 Seda Taş İlmeç



This open access article is published and distributed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at sedatas@trakya.edu.tr. If you want to use the work commercially, you must first get the authors' permission.

Citation: İlmeç, S. T. (2022). Making Room for Social Responsibility in Translator Training. *English Studies at NBU*, 8(1), 53-72. <https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.22.1.4>

Seda Taş İlmeç is an Associate Professor at the Department of Translation and Interpreting in Trakya University, Edirne, Turkey. She obtained her MA in teaching English at Trakya University and completed a PhD in Interlingual and Intercultural Translation Studies at Yıldız Technical University, İstanbul, Turkey. Her research interests include translation theories, literary translation, translation criticism and intercultural communication.

E-mail: sedatas@trakya.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-00023819-7254>

Social Responsibility in Education

Social responsibility has become a globally significant concept defined as the duty of an individual or an organization to contribute to a balanced and sustainable life in the society in which we live. It has developed into a term "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR) in the business world and is defined as a relationship between institutions or corporations and society. CSR has increasingly become a necessity for the survival of corporations as many of them use social responsibility as a strategic approach to doing good and helping the society to which they belong, while creating a positive socially friendly image for the general public and, in particular, their potential customers. İsmail (2009, p. 199) stresses that 'a range of activities such as working in partnership with local communities, socially sensitive investment, developing relationships with employees, customers and their families, and involving in activities for environmental conservation and sustainability' could be carried out as social responsibility.

As one of the institutions in society, 'educational institutions have significant roles as supporting and sustaining the systems and spheres towards the quality-of-life standards and building capacity with integrating social responsibility efforts' (Toprak Kahraman, 2016, p. vi). Such a view apparently requires that students be taught an understanding of social responsibility in the context of their learning process at the undergraduate levels, because developing a responsible attitude implies that students learn to behave as good members of society and ultimately socially responsible persons contribute to social, environmental, technical and economic changes in society. Therefore, 'there is a need to move away from a measured, linear curriculum to a 'transformatory' curriculum which will lead to change in the belief and attitudes and in turn help to lead to a perspective transformation in the long run' (de Jongh & Prinsloo, 2004, pp. 118-119). To ensure such a change, educational institutions have begun to incorporate social responsibility into their curricula in order to increase students' social sensitivity and to do community service through projects implemented in their courses (Droms Hatch & Stephen, 2015; Castilla-Polo et al. 2020). Although different names such as "Service-learning" (S-L) or "Community Service Learning" (CSL) are used for such courses, their common goals include a kind of experiential learning that promotes students' commitment to social responsibility, strengthens their social cohesion and raises their awareness of current social issues. Since these courses create experiential

learning laboratories for students, they act as ‘a powerful pedagogy of engagement that extends beyond methods of teaching and learning, recognizing that democracy is a learned activity and that active participation in the life of a community is a bridge to citizenship’ (Heffernan, 2001, pp. 5-6). As a “scholarship of engagement” (Shulman, 2004), they foster collaboration between students, academicians and non-profit organizations, increase critical inquiry and reflective practice among students, strengthen skills learned in the classroom and transfer them outside the classroom. From this perspective, learning comes from lived experience in a real environment. Heffernan (2001, p. 2) notes that ‘perhaps the most important benefit of service-learning is the motivation and opportunity it can provide for students to connect to a community and identify their civic role in that community’. It is clear that when learning is situated in this way, students’ engagement and learning in the community broadens.

The idea of situating learning attaches great importance to the experiences of translation students because they learn by translating in real-life situations during their training. This type of learning could also be associated with S-L models, which are characterized by Heffernan (2001, pp. 2-7) as “Pure Service-Learning”, “Discipline-Based Service-Learning”, “Problem-Based Service-Learning (PBSL)”, “Capstone Courses”, “Service Internships” and “Undergraduate Community-Based Action Research”. Among these models, the Capstone courses are widely used in higher education as well as translator and interpreter training. They are designed as major or minor subjects and are usually offered to students in their final years of the training to combine theory and practice. They aim to empower students with real-world personal experience to prepare them for their careers:

They ask students to draw upon the knowledge they have obtained throughout their course work and combine it with relevant service work in the community with the goal of exploring some new topic or to synthesize their understanding of the discipline. (Heffernan, 2001, p. 4)

In this sense, the Capstone courses have some similarities to situated learning, which offers simulations of real work practices and professional contexts. In a way, it can be seen as a “disciplinary Capstone course” or “internship” aimed at student growth and the common good through translation practice:

By involving students in projects that may lead to social change (even if only at micro-level) the seed will have been sown and, as professionals, these translators will envisage their work as a purposeful endeavour, possibly even as a service to the community they interact with. (Cravo & Neves, 2007, p. 100)

Among the higher institutions adopting S-L's and CSL's transformative pedagogy and integrating these courses into their programs, the main ones worldwide are departments of agriculture, food and natural resources, arts and natural sciences, economics, education, engineering, health professions, human sciences, journalism and nursing. As far as Turkey is concerned, the curricula of the Faculties of Education at all universities were revised in 2006, and since then, CSL courses have become an integral part of their curriculum in line with the work of the Turkish High Education Board. Apart from these faculties, CSL courses are currently offered in the fields of economics, engineering, fine arts, etc. However, such courses are rarely found in the curriculum of translation and interpreter training programs in Turkey. Some courses are offered under the name of "Social Work Practice" (SWP) and CSL in the translation and interpreting programs of Marmara University¹ and Ege University², but they lack the integration of students' translation skills and knowledge.

On the other hand, the theme of social responsibility has recently been discussed among scholars of Translation Studies. For instance, a special issue of the journal *The Translator* was devoted to social responsibility because it is regarded as a "neglected topic for Translation Studies research" (Drugan & Titon, 2017, p. 120). The articles in this issue underline the importance of social responsibility in Translation Studies and offer different perspectives on the link between social responsibility and ethics in translation and interpretation practice. "These perspectives help to enhance our understanding of what translators and interpreters do to promote social and procedural justice in relation to vulnerable groups and relevant inter-professions" (Drugan & Titon, 2017, p. 123). While it is understandable that this issue approaches social responsibility from a professional focus, how to make room for social responsibility in translator training

¹For further details, see. Bologna Education Information System, Marmara University. <https://meobs.marmara.edu.tr/Ders/social-work-practices/swp100-36919-4010>. (9.09.21)

²For further details, see. Bologna Education Information System, Ege University. <https://ebp.ege.edu.tr/DereceProgramlari/Ders/1/2711/279998/763080/1>. (9.09.21)

seems unexplored. Therefore, this study³ aims to provide insights into the integration of social responsibility through situated learning projects into translator training and to understand its contributions to the learning and development of translation students.

Methodology

This study uses an action research design to combine research, observation, action and practice. Action research is a type of research that promotes transformative action and refers to ‘the systematic collection of information that is designed to bring about social change’ (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 223). Since the present study aims to understand how the integration of social responsibility into translator training contributes to student learning and development, action research is used to ‘understand, improve and reform practice’ of translation students (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 297). Given the initial focus of this ‘participatory and cyclical’ action research (Cravo & Neves, 2007, p. 94), this study includes several steps such as observation, action, participation, practice, data collection, analysis and reflection as shown in the following sections.

As part of this action research, a seminar was organized in the observation and action phases to familiarize students with “autism spectrum disorder” (ASD) prior to the integration phase of social responsibility in collaboration with the advisor and the non-profit Foundation. In the participation and practice phases, translations were provided by the students in two semesters and regular feedback was given by the advisor and editor of the Foundation. Finally, the students presented their learning projects and reports and then they received a “certificate of thanks” from the Foundation for the recognition of their volunteering experience. In the stages of data collection and analysis, the students’ reports were examined to answer the question of how the integration of social responsibility into translator training contributes to future translators. Based on the findings of the students’ reports, it seeks to provide insights into the contributions made by integrating social responsibility into translator training. To this end, this study

³ The initial steps of this study were shared in the “International Congress on Social Sciences for Sustainability 2021” organized by INARS Congress in cooperation with Yıldız Technical University (YTU) held on 22-23 May 2021, in Turkey with the title “Integrating Social Responsibility through Situated Learning into Translator Training”.

illustrates the integration of social responsibility through situated learning projects into translator training in the following part.

Procedure

The study was conducted in the annual "Translation Project" (English-Turkish) course⁴, which is a prerequisite for completing the BA program at the Department of Translation and Interpreting at Trakya University. It consists of 28 sessions for two semesters and four hours per week. It is designed as a one-to-one meeting and feedback session with the advisor and the student per week. This independent study is conducted in regular consultation with the advisor who teaches the course. The advisor monitors the student's progress and gives feedback and suggestions to guide the student correctly.

The course, which covers the fourth year, requires authentic translation projects carried out by translation students. The main objective of the course is to improve the expertise of the translation students by using their translation skills and reflecting on their translation practices. In line with this goal, students must complete authentic translation projects by translating at least 40 pages of any text of their choice identifying the text that has not yet been translated into Turkish or English. In addition to translating, they focus on the theoretical aspects of their translations and write a project report on their research and translation processes. As they translate the texts and write their project reports, they follow the "Translation Project Guide⁵" prepared by the members of the department. Once the completed projects are evaluated by the advisor, students who have successfully completed the course can graduate. However, the project is not a real translation experience, as student translation projects are neither published nor made public. This type of project reflects the traditional way of learning, which is largely instructional or product-oriented. There is no link between the academy and the sector, which makes it unrealistic for students, as the course advisor, who is also the researcher of the present study, observed.

⁴For further details, see. Bologna Education Information System, Trakya University. <https://eos.trakya.edu.tr/Pages/CourseDetail.aspx?lang=en-US&academicYear=2021&facultyId=12&programId=7&menuType=course&catalogId=101900&dersIdNo=15520403734381> (9.09.21).

⁵For further details, see. "Translation Project Guide". Trakya University. <https://bys.trakya.edu.tr/file/open/79752911>.

A situated learning project based on social responsibility was integrated into the course, as confronting students with real life situations would improve their active learning and participation. Such a learning methodology is often used to reduce the gap between the training of translators and the professional world and to make translator training more realistic, practical, functional and professional since situated learning with projects, tasks and case studies offers process-oriented learning opportunities in different contexts.

Pioneered by Vygotsky's social constructivism which is seen as 'an epistemological and educational stance' (Klimkowski, 2019, p. 37) and later introduced into translator training by Kiraly (2000) as a part of social constructivist outlook, situated learning suggests a shift from traditional, teacher-centered or transmissionist approaches in translator training to learner-centered, authentic, project-based learning. It has been used and proposed by several researchers in the translator and interpreter training (Kiraly 2000, 2005; Risku 2002, 2016; Kelly 2005; Birkan Baydan & Karadağ 2014; Calvo 2015; González Davies & Enríquez Raidó 2016; Prieto-Velasco & Fuentes Luque 2016; Montse Corrius & Espasa 2016; Chouc & Conde 2016; Pan 2016; Oleksandra & Clas 2021). Situated learning practices focus primarily on the development of translator and interpreter competence and not translation and interpreting competence as Kiraly (2000, 2005) noted in his work, *A Social Constructivist Approach to Translator Education. Empowerment from Theory to Practice*. It promotes the instrumental and professional competences of student translators (Prieto-Velasco & Fuentes-Luque, 2016) because it 'seeks to enhance learners' capacity to think and act like professionals' (González Davies & Enríquez Raidó, 2016, p. 1). In addition, it develops "social competences" and "interpersonal skills" of students (Yıldız, 2020) and has 'the potential to improve the expertise of the students as both researchers and reflective practitioners' (Risku, 2016, p. 12). In short, taking into account these advantages mentioned above, this study has used the situated learning project to impart the social responsibility to translation students by placing them in a real and professional context of translation.

Participants and translation tasks

Initially, 9 students aged 20-25 who enrolled in the course were informed and invited to participate in the study during the first week of the academic year 2020-2021.

They were asked about the integration of social responsibility into the course and were given information about the non-profit Foundation, *The Tohum Autism Foundation*, which works on a voluntary basis to raise awareness of ASD in Turkey and needed Turkish translations of several tool kits and articles into English. A student who preferred to translate a psychological book into Turkish out of her own interest was excluded from the project; another student who was irregular was not included in the study. Participant translation students noted that they had not previously involved in any social responsibility-based project and were clearly unaware of its goals or outcomes. Therefore, before the translation process began, the researcher familiarized three female and four male translation students with the process of social responsibility integration, the texts to be translated, the skopos, feedback processes, the Foundation as the commissioner, and their expectations. Furthermore, the students were informed that their translation products would be available to the public. After obtaining the participation consent of the translation students, the study was carried out.

There were two types of authentic translation tasks with different formats and sizes in the situated learning projects. The first type of authentic translation task was the tool kits produced by the non-profit organization *Autism Speaks*, which ‘is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families⁶’. The Foundation published them to contribute to the understanding and acceptance of people with autism and raise awareness of ASD and related conditions in the society to which they belong. To give a few examples of these publications: *A Grandparent’s Guide to Autism an Autism Speaks Family Support Tool Kit*, *An Early Childcare Provider’s Guide to Managing Challenging Behaviors*, *Haircutting Tool Kit*, *Healthy Bodies – for Boys*, *Healthy Bodies – for Girls*, *A Sibling’s Guide to Autism*, *An Autism Speaks Family Support Tool Kit*, *Strategies to Improve Sleep in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. The necessary consent and copyrights to these tool kits were taken by the non-profit organization *The Tohum Autism Foundation*⁷, which places great emphasis on the early diagnosis of children with ASD. This Foundation has a similar mission to *Autism Speaks* and undertakes a variety of projects or activities with educational institutions, private or public corporations and

⁶ For further details, see. Autism Speaks about us, <https://www.autismspeaks.org/about-us>

⁷For further details, see. The Tohum Autism Foundation, <https://www.tohumotizm.org.tr/en/about-us>

even celebrities to draw the attention of society to ASD. It mainly tries to promote the diagnosis of this disorder and the integration of persons with ASD into society through special training courses in Turkey. Turkish translations of these tool kits would be published and made available specifically for families with autistic children and caregivers.

The second type of translation task was selected from texts published in the form of precis writing on the webpages “Sciencedaily”, “Spectrumnews” and “Autismresearchcentre”. The webpages were proposed by the Foundation and the students chose the texts based on the length they wanted to translate. The advisor and the editor of the Foundation examined the identified texts of the students in terms of their subject, language use and length, as the Foundation planned to publish them online. These texts had to be suitable for the online platform with informative features, distinctive topics and fluent sentences in order to address general readers in Turkish.

When it comes to the importance of these translation tasks, one could see that they were part of a real translation project involving a real client, the skopos and the commission. Since an effective learning process is strongly linked to the production of authentic and situated project work, rather than students’ absorbing an accumulation of knowledge and skills (Kiraly, 2016), ‘it is of paramount importance that teachers of translation and interpreting integrate authentic or near-authentic translation tasks into their teaching’ (Risku, 2010, p. 101).

The texts involved in the authentic translation tasks were shared with the translation students and they jointly selected the text they wanted to translate and carried out translation-oriented text analysis. After completing the selection process in collaboration with the advisor, the students and the Foundation, the advisor drew up a weekly schedule so that the students could carry out the project properly (see Appendix A). As a first step, the students translated their first texts and received weekly feedback, participated in class discussions and then revised their translations in the first semester. In addition, they received feedback from the Foundation before submitting their final translations. In the second step, they selected texts from the other authentic translation task, sought feedback and suggestions from the advisor, revised the translated texts and presented project reports in the second semester. In the last two weeks, the Foundation

gave feedback and presented its “certificate of thanks” for the appreciation of the efforts of the students.

A seminar to raise awareness

Taking action requires observation, planning, implementation, and reflection by analyzing the data collected during the action. Before social responsibility was integrated, the Foundation organized a seminar to familiarize students with aspects of ASD and its prevalence in Turkey and the world. A psychologist and a coordinator of its translation department explained the scope of the translations they published. In addition, the Foundation presented its fields of activity and the translations it has made for families of autistic children. The seminar was intended to sensitize the students, as the advisor noticed that the students had not participated in such situated translation projects and were not aware of this type of disorder and of the non-profit organizations operating in these areas. Therefore, the organization of the seminar prior to carrying out the action was helpful in conveying information about ASD and building the interaction between the students, the Foundation and the advisor (see Appendix B). After the seminar, the Foundation shared the tool kits and articles that were protected by copyright and had to be translated from English into Turkish.

Data collection

Students were asked to write down their experiences with the project in their reports (in about 500-1500 words). As they were familiar with the "Translation Project Guide", there was no other guidance. Students provided a wealth of details about their translation process, their research and their experiences of participating in social responsibility. In order to find answer to the research question in this study, anonymized student reports were first examined by two lecturers. Secondly, statements from student reports that were related to the research question were identified. Third, they were grouped into categories to summarize the students' views on the project.

Findings and discussion

The main objective of this study was to understand how the integration of social responsibility through situated learning projects contributes to the learning and

development of translation students. After the student projects were completed, the project reports were submitted and then were examined by the advisor and two other lecturers. The findings from the students' reports were grouped as follows:

Awareness of social responsibility

Two of the students emphasized in their reports that the project has opened different doors for them with the integration of social responsibility because they have learned that they themselves can do something to support the society. It was clear from their reports that they have recognized that there are people with different disabilities in society:

S-2: Although the project was integrated into our course, because it offered an opportunity to get to know another world, we didn't feel like doing a project or a task of the course. I learned that there is a lack of research and educational resources for ASD. Researchers working in this area and especially families with autistic children face many such difficulties. Therefore, anyone in society can do something for people with disabilities as we have done thanks to this project⁸.

S-3: I personally feel lucky to be part of this project of social responsibility. I am proud to be able to do something for them. Our courses are meant to touch the real world and society in order to develop socially, help people and become good individuals. It would not be wrong to say that this project has broadened my horizons in terms of social responsibility.

It is clear that active participation in social responsibility taught students what it means to have social responsibility. Besides understanding the importance of taking on social responsibility, two other students reported that the translation process actually became a learning process about ASD, a widespread developmental disorder in their country. Translating texts related to ASD meant reading and searching for this type of disorder. Therefore, it was observed that the entire process not only enabled them to take

⁸ Students' reports were written in their native language, and all quotations from their reports were translated into English by the researcher of this study. Students' consent was obtained for the use of their statements, and few grammatical corrections were made.

on social responsibility, but also expanded their knowledge and promoted their understanding of ASD:

S-1: I think that every translation student should participate in such projects of social responsibility by translating voluntarily. If I had not participated in the project, I would never have heard of the needs, preferences, experiences of autistic people in our society and the diagnoses of ASD. Translating the tool kits and research on this disability was so revealing that I blindfolded.

S-4: As I was translating, I learned about the signs, symptoms, characteristics and became aware of the prevalence of autism, which made me realize that ASD is widespread in our society and in the world and that we have insufficient knowledge about it. I wish such courses had been more frequent in our curriculum.

While the students shared the opinion that the integration of social responsibility into their course created awareness towards ADS, they highlighted the need for such courses in their curriculum. Furthermore, it could be concluded from their statements that taking on social responsibility purports to offer students the chance to strengthen their social cohesion.

Real translation experience

Students mostly pointed out that situating the project was beneficial for them mainly because it was a real translation experience with the commission, skopos and the commissioner. In their opinion, this was a work experience that offered them reflection:

S-1: The project was a real experience that gave me the chance to see my skills and develop myself further. I benefited from various software programs in the translation process and did research to deliver a good translation to a real customer.

S-2: This is the first time I have translated something to be published. I have learned what the real profession is like. I think this experience has prepared me for my future work and possible tasks.

Some students also expressed how motivating and meaningful learning is for students when it is a real practice. They emphasized that such realistic projects gave them a sense of professionalism:

S-3: It was the first time in our four-years of training that we had carried out such a comprehensive project in a real and professional sense. It worked because there were requirements and expectations that we had to fulfil.

S-7: As my translations were going to be published, I felt like I was hired. Knowing that I was translating for the people with ASD and had to reflect my professionalism, I was more motivated and cautious in my translation process.

As the students' reports show, situating their learning in the context of a project based on social responsibility was crucial from their point of view, because real experiences could help them to see themselves as professional and socially responsible translators.

Translator competence

The emphasis on translator competence⁹ took a prominent place in the students' reports, when they expressed what they had learned in carrying out a situated learning project that aimed at achieving social responsibility. The students often remarked how they dealt with translation problems and explained how the solution process contributed to their development. Moreover, the students' statements suggested that the project gave them the chance to see themselves as professional translators who could take responsibility and decisions, and this process in turn enabled them to understand their potential role as future translators and to increase their translator competence:

S-5: We knew what, why and for whom we were translating. Texts contained information about health and social life and burdened us with terminology and required the use of academic language and various software programs that I had

⁹ Although the terms "translation competence" and "translator competence" are sometimes differentiated (Király 1995, 2000, 2013; Echeverri 2015), the term "translator competence" is used in this study in order to be more inclusive as professional competence and translation competence are seen interrelated.

not experienced before. I think I felt for the first time like a translator with important tasks.

S-4: In two semesters, I used different translation strategies and searched for many terms. I even talked to a doctor about some concepts because I wanted to do my best to deliver high-quality translations. By participating in this project, I have above all developed my self-confidence and my competence as a translator. I have seen that I can translate well and can imagine myself as a future translator meeting deadlines.

In summary, the students' opinions in the reports indicated that the integration of social responsibility through situated learning project was effective because it made a significant contribution to their learning and development. Firstly, the translation students pointed out in their project reports that the project helped to develop an awareness of social responsibility and to gain knowledge about ASD. Secondly, they noted that it gave them a translation experience that created a different learning laboratory in real contexts. Furthermore, the students found the creation of social benefits and the support of society through taking on social responsibility to be valuable and motivating. In addition, it helped to strengthen their knowledge and skills as future translators, thereby enhancing their translator competences because real translation experiences with authentic translation tasks in professional contexts contributed to the learning and development of students.

Conclusions

This paper presents action research aimed at understanding how the integration of social responsibility through situated learning projects in translator training contributes to students' learning and development. The course "Translation Project", which is a prerequisite for completing the BA program at the Department of Translation and Interpreting, was designed in particular by the principles of situated learning. The purpose of this situated learning project was to enable students to learn through lived experience, and not through the transfer of knowledge as is practiced in traditional learning environments. From this perspective, the integration of social responsibility through situated learning project used in this study aimed to engage students in social

responsibility through translation for a non-profit Foundation. There are a few findings worth noting in the present study.

First, the translation students reported that the integration of social responsibility through a situated learning project was an opportunity for them to do good and help people in society, thereby raising awareness of social responsibility. More specifically, they found that they had insufficient knowledge of ASD, but thanks to this project, they were greatly informed about it during the translation process. Thus, using their translation skills in a situated context increased their awareness about ASD and gave them an understanding towards it.

Second, the students regarded taking social responsibility through situated learning as a real experience. Translating for a real client and with a *skopos* was motivating for them. In other words, realistic and functional learning was more encouraging and satisfying for the translation students because this project offered them a practical practice that enabled them to get to know the professional market and experience the real world.

Third, this experience enabled students to overcome translation problems, find solutions and apply different strategies, negotiate with the client, work on the texts to meet the expectations or requirements, and receive regular feedback. For this reason, the students stated in their reports that they acted as professional translators and assumed responsibility for their translations which enabled students to develop their translator competence.

In light of these findings, it could be argued that social responsibility is applicable to the curriculum of translator training and making room for social responsibility in translator training could offer translation students a variety of opportunities to adopt socially responsible behavior, thereby facilitating their learning and development in their BA programs. At the same time, the integration of social responsibility through situated learning projects creates an experiential learning environment in which professional contexts are simulated with the main objective of helping students to practice professional work and develop their translation skills. Therefore, this study proposes to include social responsibility in the curriculum of translator and interpreter training with

situated learning projects in order to develop socially responsible translators. In particular, this type of learning could be beneficial for translator and interpreter programs without internships, in order to encourage students to be socially responsible and contribute to sustainability in society.

Although this study provides important insights into the integration of social responsibility through situated learning into translator training, its findings may not be generalized to a broader context given the limited sample size of the study. Therefore, future research could examine the integration of social responsibility into translator and interpreter training with different implementations and the involvement of a large group of participants. Other assessment techniques such as surveys and think aloud protocols could also be used to describe in more detail the impact of social responsibility on student learning. Furthermore, it could be examined whether lecturers or advisors in translator and interpreter training are prepared to integrate social responsibility into the curriculum.

References

- Autism Research Centre. (n.d.). <https://www.autismresearchcentre.com>
- AutismSpekas About us (n.d.) <https://www.autismspeaks.org/about-us>
- Birkan Baydan, E. & Karadağ, A. B. (2014). Literary Translation Workshop: Social Constructivist Approach Classroom Activities. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 152, 984–988. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.354>
- Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative Research for Education an Introduction to Theory and Methods*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Bologna Education Information System (n.d.). Ege University.
<https://ebp.ege.edu.tr/DereceProgramlari/Ders/1/2711/279998/763080/1>
- Bologna Education Information System (n.d.). Marmara University.
<https://meobs.marmara.edu.tr/Ders/social-work-practices/swp100-36919-4010>.
- Bologna Education Information System, Trakya University.
<https://eos.trakya.edu.tr/Pages/CourseDetail.aspx?lang=en-US&academicYear=2021&facultyId=12&programId=7&menuType=course&catalogId=101900&dersIdNo=15520403734381>

- Calvo, E. (2015). Scaffolding Translation Skills through Situated Training Approaches: Progressive and Reflective Methods. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 9(3), 306-322. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2015.1103107>
- Castilla-Polo, F., María C. R.-R., Moreno, A., Licerán-Gutiérrez, A., de la Fuente, M. C., Rufián, C.E. and Cano-Rodríguez, M. (2020). Classroom Learning and the Perception of Social Responsibility amongst Graduate Students of Management Accounting. *Sustainability*, 12(17), 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12177093>
- Chouc, F. & Conde, J. M. (2016). Enhancing the Learning Experience of Interpreting Students outside the Classroom. A Study of the Benefits of Situated Learning at the Scottish Parliament. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 10(1), 92-106. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2016.1154345>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203029053>
- Cravo, A. & Neves, J. (2007). Action Research in Translation Studies. *JoSTrans*, 7, 92-107.
- de Jongh, D. & Prinsloo, P. (2004). Why Teach Corporate Citizenship Differently? *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, 18, 113-122. <https://doi.org/10.9774/GLEAF.4700.2005.su.00014>
- Droms Hatch, C. & Stephen, S. (2015). The Effectiveness of Social Responsibility Courses in Higher Education. *Scholarship and Professional Work - Business*, 11(2), 12-21.
- Drugan, J. & Tipton, R. (2017). Translation, Ethics and Social Responsibility. *The Translator*, 23(2), 119-125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2017.1327008>
- Echeverri, A. (2015). Translator Education and Metacognition: Towards Student-centered Approaches to Translator Education. In Y. Cui, & W. Zhao (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Teaching Methods in Language Translation and Interpretation* (pp. 297-323). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-6615-3.ch016>
- González-Davies, M. & Enríquez-Raído, V. (2016). Situated Learning in Translator and Interpreter Training: Bridging Research and Good Practice. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 10(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2016.1154339>
- Heffernan, K. (2001). *Fundamentals of Service-Learning Course Construction*. Campus Compact. https://doi.org/10.1300/J107v10n02_07
- İsmail, M. (2009). Corporate Social Responsibility and its Role in Community Development: An International Perspective. *The Journal of International Social Research*, 2(9), 199-209.
- Kelly, D. (2005). *A Handbook for Translator Trainers*. St. Jerome.

- Kiraly, D. (1995). *Pathways to Translation*. Kent State University Press.
- Kiraly, D. (2000). *A Social Constructivist Approach to Translator Education*. St. Jerome Publishing.
- Kiraly, D. (2004). Preparing Students Today to Meet Market Demands Tomorrow. In M. Forstner. & H. LeeJahnke (Eds.), *Internationales Ciuti-Forum: Marktorientierte Translationsausbildung* (pp. 101-118). Peter Lang.
- Kiraly, D. (2005). Project-based Learning: A Case for Situated Translation. *Meta*, 50(4), 1098–1111. <https://doi.org/10.7202/012063ar>
- Kiraly, D. (2012). Growing a Project-based Translation Pedagogy: A Fractal Perspective. *Meta*, 57, 82-95. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1012742ar>
- Kiraly, D. (2013). Towards a View of Translator Competence as an Emergent Phenomenon: Thinking Outside the Box(es) in Translator Education. In Kiraly, D., Hansen-Schirra, S. and Maksymski, K. (Eds.). *New Prospects and Perspectives for Educating Language Mediators* (pp. 197–224). Narr.
- Kiraly, D. (2016). Authentic Project Work and Pedagogical Epistemologies: A Question of Competing or Complementary Worldviews? In Kiraly, D. et al. (Eds.), *Towards Authentic Experiential Learning in Translator Education* (pp. 53-66). V&R Press. <https://doi.org/10.14220/9783737004954.53>
- Klimkowski, K. (2019). Educational Theory: From Dewey to Vygotsky. In Laviosa, S. and González-Davies, M. (Eds.). *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Education* (pp. 29-45). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780367854850-3>
- Montse Corrius, M. D. M. & Espasa, E. (2016). Situated Learning and Situated Knowledge: Gender, Translating Audiovisual Adverts and Professional Responsibility. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 10(1), 59-75. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2016.1154343>
- Pan, J. (2016). Linking Classroom Exercises to Real-life Practice: A Case of Situated Simultaneous Interpreting Learning. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 10(1), 107-132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2016.1154346>
- Prieto-Velasco, J. A. & Fuentes-Luque, A. (2016). A Collaborative Multimodal Working Environment for the Development of Instrumental and Professional Competences of Student Translators: An Innovative Teaching Experience. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 10(1), 76-91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2016.1154344>
- Risku, H. (2002). Situatedness in Translation Studies. *Cognitive Systems Research*, 3, 523-533. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1389-0417\(02\)00055-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1389-0417(02)00055-4)

- Risku, H. (2010). A Cognitive Scientific View on Technical Communication and Translation. Do Embodiment and Situatedness Really Make a Difference? *Target*, 22(1), 94-111. <https://doi.org/10.1075/target.22.1.06ris>
- Risku, H. (2016). Situated Learning in Translation Research Training: Academic Research as a Reflection of Practice. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 10(1), 12-28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2016.1154340>
- ScienceDaily (n.d.). https://www.sciencedaily.com/news/mind_brain/autism
- Shulman, L. (2004). *Teaching as Community Property*. Jossey-Bass.
- Spectrumnews (n.d.). <https://www.spectrumnews.org/news>
- The Tohum Autism Foundation (n.d.). <https://www.tohumotizm.org.tr/en/about-us>
- Toprak Kahraman, Z. (2016). Foreword. In Turker, D., Altuntas Vural, C. and Idowu, S. O. (Eds.), *Social Responsibility Education Across Europe a Comparative Approach* (pp. v-vi). Springer.
- Translation Project Guide, Trakya University (n.d.). <https://bys.trakya.edu.tr/file/open/79752911>
- Valtchuk, O. & Class, B. (2021). 'It Really Suits the Objectives of the Master's': How a Student Facebook Group Chat Contributes to Situated Learning in an Interpreter Training Programme. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 15(3), 378-394. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2021.1885231>
- Yıldız, M. (2020). A Case of Situated Learning and its Implications for the Development of Translator Competence. *RumeliDE Dil ve Edebiyat Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 8, 1000-1015. <https://doi.org/10.29000/rumelide.827642>

Appendices

Appendix A: Weekly schedule

Weeks	The advisor	The students
Week 1-2	Introduce social responsibility, the foundation and texts to be translated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research on social responsibility Decide texts for translation Translation-oriented text analysis
Week 3	The seminar of the Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interaction between the students, the Foundation and the advisor
Week 3-12	Weekly feedback and suggestions to student translations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation of selected texts into Turkish. Ask for feedback and revise translations
Week 12-14	Class discussion and feedback from the Foundation for translations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Present and submit translations
Week 14-15	Introduce texts for translation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translation-oriented text analysis Class discussion on texts to be translated
Week 15-22	Weekly feedback and suggestions to student translations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translate selected texts into Turkish. Ask for feedback and revise translations
Week 22-24	Feedback from the Foundation The certificate of thanks of the Foundation for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of translations and project reports Summary and submission of final project reports

Appendix B: The brochure of the seminar on raising awareness

"Sosyal Sorumluluk ve Gönüllülük Projesi"
kapsamında

"FARKINDALIK EĞİTİMİ"

Etkinlik Microsoft Teams üzerinden gerçekleşecektir.

11 KASIM 2020

SAAT: 10:00 -11 :00

Etkinlik Yöneticisi:
Doç. Dr. SEDA İLMEK
Mütercim Tercümanlık Bölüm Başkanı

Katılımcı:
PSK. NEHİR MERİNOĞLU
Tohum Otizm Vakfı
Sürekli Eğitim Birimi Koordinatörü

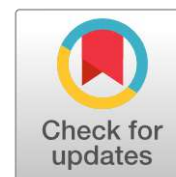
"Tohum Otizm Vakfı ve Trakya Üniversitesi Mütercim Tercümanlık Bölümü İş Birliğinde"



GENRE-SPECIFIC IRREALIA IN TRANSLATION: CAN IRREALIA HELP DEFINE SPECULATIVE FICTION SUB-GENRES?

Matej Martinkovič

Constantine the Philosopher University, Nitra, Slovakia



Abstract

Speculative fiction texts and their translation, particularly from English, have been gradually rising in prominence. However, not only do speculative fiction and its sub-genres remain only vaguely defined in general despite numerous attempts by both writers and theoreticians, but their specific features are often even less explored from the perspective of translation studies. This article aims to enrich translation studies understanding of irrealia as signature features of speculative fiction texts. It builds on existing conceptions of both irrealia and realia in order to propose the concept of genre-specific irrealia. Hence, it discusses how irrealia relate to individual sub-genres of speculative fiction and how such distinctions can help the recipient or translator realise the specificity of these elements. The paper has a particular focus on science fiction, although it also discusses fantasy and supernatural horror specific irrealia. The article then illustrates the concept of genre-specific irrealia and discusses its implications for translation on examples drawn from the novel *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and its Slovak translation by the translator Jozef Klinga.

Keywords: speculative fiction, science fiction, irrealia, genre-specific, translation, *Fahrenheit 451*

Article history:

Received: 07 February 2022

Reviewed: 27 February 2022

Accepted: 14 April 2022

Published: 30 June 2022

Copyright © 2022 Matej Martinkovič



This open access article is published and distributed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at matej.martinkovic@ukf.sk. If you want to use the work commercially, you must first get the authors' permission.

Citation: Martinkovič, M. (2022). Genre-Specific Irrealia in Translation: Can Irrealia Help Define Speculative Fiction Sub-Genres? *English Studies at NBU*, 8(1), 73-92.
<https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.22.1.5>

Funding: This paper was supported by the Scientific Grant Agency VEGA under the project No. 2/0166/19.

Matej Martinkovič, MA in Translation Studies, is a PhD candidate at the Department of Translation Studies at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. He is also an active translator. His main research interests lie in literary translation with a particular focus on translation of speculative fiction, in the practice of editing of translations and its sociological aspects, as well as the implementation of technologies into both interpreting and translation training.

E-mail: matej.martinkovic@ukf.sk

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4848-1782>

Across all kinds of media, speculative fiction has been building in popularity, even arriving at the forefront of popular culture in recent years with the mass success of television series such as *Game of Thrones* (and the *Song of Ice and Fire* book saga on which it is based), many superhero comic-book films, etc. Popularity among recipients leads to an increase in production, and both inevitably lead to an increased volume of translation of texts of such type. Yet, a definition of speculative fiction and its sub-genres has proven elusive, leaving their many specificities, literary and translation alike, at best loosely defined, if at all. Anonymous (2021) explore irrealia as the connective tissue of all speculative fiction texts from the perspective of translation studies, and the implications and impact irrealia have on translation of such texts in general terms. This article builds on their understanding of irrealia and explores irrealia and their translation in the context of the three arguably chief sub-genres of speculative fiction: supernatural horror, fantasy and science fiction, with a particular focus on the latter. The article aims to propose a new classification of irrealia based on the genres they help define and that would be viable in terms of translation studies. It argues that a genre-based classification of irrealia may help the translator or even just the reader to better realize the specificities and function of irrealia in the individual genres including their intertextual potential. Besides the theoretical, the article also explores this conception in practical terms via a discussion of Ray Bradbury's classic science-fiction novel *Fahrenheit 451* (2013) and a targeted analysis of its Slovak translation *451 stupňov Fahrenheita* (2015) by the translator Jozef Klinga. Let us also note that while the practical discussion is focused on a novel, our understanding of 'literary text' or 'work' is not limited to merely books. Instead, due to transmediality becoming increasingly common, our understanding is rooted in the polysystem theory of a 'literary text' as a product – 'any performed (or performable) set of signs, i.e., including a given 'behaviour' – of a literary system that internalizes all factors involved with literature as a socio-cultural activity (Even-Zohar, 1997, p. 43).

Science fiction as a genre, its characteristics, and irrealia

To consider *Fahrenheit 451*, the text which will be the focus of the practical portion of this article, a science-fiction story is easy – obvious even. However, despite this ease, upon further consideration such a categorization begs a misleadingly difficult question – what is science fiction? First of all, it is a part of a broader genre of imaginative fiction often referred to as speculative fiction. Speculative fiction is commonly understood as an

umbrella genre that includes science fiction and two other chief sub-categories – fantasy and supernatural horror (cf. Herec, 2008, p. 40; Loponen, 2019, p. 1). Providing a true definition of any of these three genres is nigh on impossible as the boundaries between them are unclear, and all include their own sub-genres combining elements of two or even all three of them. Nevertheless, numerous attempts at defining these genres have been made. Perhaps the most accurate or representative of the elusiveness of any true definition is the summation – albeit directed at science fiction, it is very much applicable to fantasy and, to a lesser extent, horror – by Damon Knight, who claims that science-fiction ‘means what we point to when we say it’ (1951, p. 1). However, we find such a summation unsatisfactory, since it does not in any way narrow down anything at all. A basic differentiation of the three can be inferred from the relevant entries in *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* (Clute and Grant, 1999). Horror is defined by and named after the effect it is supposed to have on the recipient. Fantasy is described as a self-coherent narrative presenting a story which is either impossible in the real world, or in an otherworld, which is itself impossible, although the story presented may be possible within the confines of this otherworld. Science fiction is then defined in opposition to fantasy as presenting worlds and stories extrapolated from real scientific or historical premises. However, several standalone definitions of science fiction exist as well.

First, let us take a look at Prucher’s definition:

...a genre (of literature, film, etc.) in which the setting differs from our own world (e.g. by the invention of new technology, through contact with aliens, by having a different history, etc.), and in which the difference is based on extrapolations made from one or more changes or suppositions; hence, such a genre in which the difference is explained (explicitly or implicitly) in scientific or rational, as opposed to supernatural, terms. (Prucher, 2007, p. 171)

It is in principle rather similar to the above-mentioned definition by opposition, merely explicating and expanding on examples of the various possible divergences between our and science-fiction worlds. Suvin (1979) considers what he calls a ‘novum’ as the defining feature of science fiction, provided that the novum is confirmed by cognitive logic. The novum is the feature of the presented world by which it is differentiated, set apart from the real world, and to Suvin, it is what allows science-fiction authors to comment in a

round-about way on their context and real-world phenomena. Dick (1995) similarly believes that a science-fiction narrative must be set in a fictitious world with a society in some way derived from our real society, and this fictional society must differ from all known societies past and present in such a way that it allows for events which would not be otherwise possible, that it must include a new idea. Dick also adds that the presented society must be coherent and conceptual. He adds that a science-fiction narrative needs not be set in the future, nor does it need to focus on advanced technologies, which are often considered as hallmarks of the genre.

All four discussed definitions think of science fiction along similar lines with two seemingly defining features of the genre arising: science-fiction worlds must differ from the real world past or present and do so in a way that can be explained either logically or scientifically, rather than supernaturally, or in short, Suvin's novum confirmed by cognitive logic or science seems to encompass the other definitions' thoughts quite succinctly. While we believe that the novum works quite well as a science-fiction marker¹ from the literary perspective, it seems to be of little use in the context of translation, since as a general category it carries almost no useful information regarding the translation specifics of neither science-fiction texts, nor any other speculative fiction texts. Thus, we would like to propose using an alternative to it, which we believe to be more useful in the context of translation (studies) – the *irrealis*, or more often *irrealia*.

Loponen considers *irrealia* as elements of the very fictional cultures that they serve to define (cf. Loponen, 2009). This places them in opposition to *realia*, that is 'objects and concepts that exist as 'culture bound' – i.e., whose denotative or connotative significance is tied to their source culture' (ibid., p. 166-7). However, for our intentions, it must be pointed out that even Loponen sees *irrealia* not only as fictional counterparts to *realia*, but more broadly as the breaking points, the differences between the fictional and the real world, whatever they may be. Anonymous (2021) further expand on Loponen's understanding of *irrealia*, claiming they can also serve as the counterpart to all of Vilikovský's culture- or ontology-dependent specifics that comprise his *specifics* model of foreign phenomena present in a text (cf. Vilikovský, 1984, p. 130), in which *realia* are but

¹ Although it could easily be expanded to include fantasy or perhaps even horror by simply dropping the cognitive logic prerequisite and using the novum to denote any ideas and concepts that distinguish the presented fictional world from the real one.

one element. Anonymous also see irrealia as the elemental markers of speculativeness of expression, ‘the general quality of diverging from the constitutive rules of the real world within the text’s fictional world common for all’ speculative fiction (Anonymous, 2021, p. 39). They argue that the presence of even a single explicit irrealis in a text indicates the presence of speculativeness in the text as a whole, that the text falls firmly within the boundaries of speculative fiction, and that any assumptions on how the fictional world functions made on the basis of real-world functioning can be challenged by the text at any time. In short, all other elements, including realia, gain the aspect of the unreal, becoming a mirror reflection of the real that can be warped and altered at any point. This works quite well with our proposal to replace Suvin’s novum with the irrealis, but being common to all speculative fiction texts, it is without further specification much too broad a concept. Anonymous (2021) already propose not seeing irrealia as homogeneous, but rather distinguishing two types that present the translator with different translation issues – irrealia *sensu stricto* that are pure figments of imagination, i.e. with no real-world counterpart (in science-fiction terms, e.g. alien races), and irrealia (or pseudorealities) rooted in reality but altered, i.e. with an existing real-world counterpart (in terms of science fiction, e.g. real companies and organizations placed in a future setting). This distinction, however, can be made in all speculative fiction genres, thus necessitating another to be made, rooted perhaps in the three core genres of speculative fiction. In such a conception, genre irrealia could be defined based on the characteristics of the genre they define. Supernatural horror irrealia would then be, much like the genre itself, defined mainly by the response they (help) elicit within the recipient (be it horror, terror, unsettlement, etc.) while also being unnatural. Fantasy irrealia on the other hand would not be defined by their effect on the recipient, but their very nature, their impossibility, lack of external logic (which of course does not preclude internal logic and adherence to rules established within the fantasy world) and basis in reality and/or science. In relative – but not necessarily absolute – opposition to fantasy irrealia would be science-fiction irrealia, those derived from scientific knowledge, compliant with external, i.e. real-world logic and functioning, defined by their plausibility. A fourth type of irrealia may be needed for those that do not necessarily fall within the boundaries of the above categories – generic irrealia that are not meant to affect the recipient (horror), or to defy logic (fantasy), nor are they merely plausible (science-fiction), i.e. they are genre-independent. This could also include elements that would in non-speculative fiction be considered

realia or other cultural specifics, e.g. real character names, suggesting their real/irreal duality. General irrealia may be the things and items that could currently exist, but simply do not, and that are simultaneously attributed to a fictional culture – their function being the enriching of the presented world (e.g. fictional meals, toys, statues, etc.). However, it would be an oversimplification to assume that the mere presence of one type or another of genre irrealia means the entire text is of the same genre. Instead, it is arguably the prominence of a given type of genre irrealia and the overall conception of the text together than determine the genre. Furthermore, it is necessary to mention that within the scope of the Nitra School of Translation a central role is played by the totality or completeness of literary and translation communication (cf. Popovič, 1983). This conception demands the participation of all communication relationships between the author, text, reality (context), tradition and reader. Hence, a translation cannot be divorced from the context of the original text and neither can be irrealia. Instead, the type under which an irrealis – much like the text and its genre themselves – falls must be judged in the context of the original text's creation, or much of science fiction could eventually become merely fiction, horror may cease to be scary, etc.

Distinguishing four different types of irrealia based on their relation to various genres may seem pointless and superfluous, but we do believe that an irrealis of each type carries the potential to present the translator with different kinds of translation issues, thus requiring different approaches. Consider that if any lexical unit can be stylistically charged, marked with expressive qualities that need to be preserved in translation, then the same must apply to irrealia. Irrealia, however, especially irrealia *sensu stricto*, are not regular lexical units – one, they denote items and concepts that need not exist, and two, their very form may be unusual and original – the author's own invention. This asks of the translator to be nearly as creative as the original author, particularly in the latter case, in translating irrealia as equivalent to the original in such a way as to create something new in the target language and to preserve the stylistic particularities of the original. The translation of a fearsome monster in a horror text needs to be as fearsome as in the original, and the name of a new technology in a science-fiction text rooted in science – or at least intended to appear scientific – must carry the same qualities in translation, etc. Of course, all of this comes with the caveat that with irrealia it is not always the case that the lexemes of which the irrealis is composed are stylistically charged themselves – the

expressive qualities, and indeed the quality of speculativeness, can instead be imbued by the context. Consider for instance a *fireman*, a stylistically neutral everyday word that is in the context of Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* twisted and moulded into something utterly new and changed, gaining new unreal dimensions. Even then, the new meaning impacts the translation. The fireman can be translated into Slovak either as *hasič*, or *požiarnik*. The former is derived from the verb *hasiť* – to put out fires, meaning *hasič* is *one who puts out fires*. However, the firemen in *Fahrenheit 451* do not put out fires; instead, they start fires. This completely rules out the first option and forces the translator to reach for *požiarnik*, derived from *požiar*, meaning *a fire*.

With the above in mind, we argue that a genre-based categorisation of irrealia may help the recipient, especially one who engages with a text critically such as a translator, better realize that each type of irrealia is different, has its own specificities, and is employed for a different purpose. A fantasy irrealis intended to (help) create a fantastical, mystical, or magical tone and world is in its construction and intertextual connotation vastly different from one designed to convey the sense of plausible reality rooted in science in a science-fiction text. Hence, the categorisation can aid in a more precise interpretation of a text, in choosing an appropriate translation strategy, and perhaps even provide clues or help narrow down the intertextual potential – as outlined by Anonymous (2021) – seemingly common in irrealia.

Let us take the lexeme *warp* as an example. *Warp* can, of course, be used as a regular word in any text, but it can also appear in unreal contexts, e.g. as a method of travel in science-fiction or a warp spell that enables teleportation in fantasy (but it naturally is not limited to these two examples). Realising whether the irrealis is of the science-fiction or fantasy variety is likely to impact the appropriate translation approach; the translation of the former is likely to need to sound scientific, whereas the latter will likely benefit from seeming mystical and apart from science. Additionally, as the lexeme has been used in both contexts, determining the type of irrealis will point the translator to relevant texts to compare whether securing proper intertextual continuity is possible and needed. At first sight, it may seem that merely checking the overall genre of the text could lead to the same result as employing the concept of genre-specific irrealia. However, a text needs not to be homogeneous in its use if irrealia types and spells may appear in a science-fiction text and technologies may appear in fantasy texts, and that is not even accounting for the

various science-fiction, fantasy, and supernatural horror sub-genres and hybrid genres. Hence, we argue that focusing on a level lower than a whole-text genre, i.e. on the irrealia themselves is beneficial to translation and beyond and that, perhaps ironically for a concept of genre-specific irrealia, it opens the possibility of better and more accurately linking irrealia across texts from different genres.

To sum up the proposed categories of genre-specific irrealia, we propose distinguishing four different categories:

- supernatural horror irrealia defined chiefly by their intended effect on the recipient (horror, fear, etc.), and to a lesser extent their unnatural origin and context;
- fantasy irrealia defined by their impossibility, lack of adherence to real-world logic and natural laws;
- science-fiction irrealia defined by their plausibility, adherence to real-world logic and functioning, by being derived from scientific knowledge;
- general irrealia that do not but could presently exist and that Diogenes do not fall under the above categories, i.e. they are not meant to affect the recipient (horror), or defy logic (fantasy), nor are they merely plausible (science-fiction).

Each of the three main sub-genres of speculative fiction can then be defined by the most prominent type of irrealia present in the text, and their ratios could perhaps even offer ways to characterize various hybrid sub-genres of speculative fiction.

Given all of the above, for translation purposes, science fiction could be defined as a text presenting a speculative world, i.e. one different from our own, in which irrealia are most prominently derived from and based on known functioning of the real world and scientific knowledge, and are thus at least theoretically plausible and conceivable. The main translational challenge therein lies on one hand in the translation of irrealia, the explicit and implicit differences between the real and the speculative, and on the other in the fact that until explicitly stated or shown in the text itself, any elements presumed to work in the same way as in the real world may not in fact function as they do in the real world.

Fahrenheit 451 and its translation

The primary subject of the remainder of the article is the novel *Fahrenheit 451* written by the American writer Ray Bradbury and a targeted analysis of its Slovak translation by the translator Jozef Klinga with a focus on the translation of irrealia present in the text. However, before we can truly turn attention to the translation and its analysis, we must first discuss the original text.

The novel *Fahrenheit 451* was originally published in the United States in October 1953 by the publishing house Ballantine Books. Upon publication, the novel was met with predominantly positive critical reception and continues to be considered one of Bradbury's finest works (cf. Reid, 2000, p. 53). The book's success is further proven by the fact it has received a number of awards, including the Hugo Award, and it has also been the subject of numerous adaptations – a television series, radio play, comic book, video game, and twice even film. Nowadays, the novel is often considered a classic of the science-fiction genre and, more specifically, the dystopian genre along with such works as George Orwell's *1984* and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

The novel presents the reader with a fictional future United States, where people have not only entirely stopped reading – instead watching large televisions and listening to radio – but even the ownership of books has been banned by the authorities; thus censorship, the importance of books, and the dangers of easy entertainment become the novel's central themes. As all houses in Bradbury's world are fireproof, it is the firemen who are in large part tasked with enforcing the ban on books by burning them and the houses where they are kept. The novel follows the story of Guy Montag, a fireman who gradually turns on his comrades and eventually escapes the city where he is being hunted as a criminal for reading books.

The *Fahrenheit 451* novel was for the first time translated into Slovak in 2015 by Jozef Klinga under the title *451 stupňov Fahrenheita*. The translation was edited by Tatiana Búbelová and published by the Citadella publishing house. While there is a significant lag (62 years) between the original publication of the novel and the publication of the Slovak translation, with its themes of censorship, dangers of ever-present mass-media offering content with no substance, avoiding negative feelings and difficult subjects the novel

remains ever relevant. It is also worth mentioning that the long gap between the two publication dates may have been exacerbated by another translation being present within the Slovak cultural space. Due to the close relationship and shared history between the Slovak and Czech nations, as well as the relative similarity between Slovak and Czech, Slovak readers have had access to the novel in a Czech translation published by the now closed Melantrich publishing house ever since 1957², albeit not in their native and national language.

The translation of (ir)realia in *Fahrenheit 451*

Let us begin our analysis with the translation of character names. Of course, one could argue names are a general translation issue and have nothing to do with irrealia whatsoever. However, we argue names are highly relevant even from the perspective of irrealia. Within the scope of Vilikovský's (1984, p. 130) specifics model of foreign phenomena, proper names fall under language specifics. As we stated previously, Anonymous (2021) posit that all culture- and ontology-dependent specifics as defined by Vilikovský (ibid.) can have irreal counterparts, and that the presence of even just one irrealis in a text imbues all other such specifics in the text with irreal dimensions. Thus, even seemingly ordinary names, sports, etc. are relevant to discussions of the translation of irrealia, as they at the very least exist on the boundary between the real and irreal, anchoring one to the other even if they themselves do not constitute full-fledged irrealia.

Characters, then, can be divided into different groups based on different criteria, be it main and side characters, static and dynamic, etc. However, within the context of realia and irrealia translation, most such criteria are not overly relevant. For our purposes, we are merely interested in whether a character has a speaking part and directly plays a role in the story, or whether the character is simply a name in the background without any dialogue or direct participation. Those familiar with standard Slovak translation practices will know that traditionally character names tend to retain their original form – the only exception are names and nicknames that carry a meaning

² It is notable that the then socialist Czechoslovak authorities that themselves censored books allowed the publication of a translation in which censorship and its condemnation play a central role, although the historical circumstances of the Czech translation nor the translation itself are not the subject of this paper.

in-and-of-themselves and thus are functional (cf. Ferenčík, 1982)³ – and at most are adjusted for the morphological features of Slovak. More often than not, that means a base suffix may be added to the name in the nominative declension. This largely affects female characters, as female surnames often have the -ová suffix. As such, in the table listing all the named characters in the novel below we have separated male and female characters into separate columns.

Table 1

Comparison of original and translated character names

Male characters		Female characters	
Original name	Translated name	Original name	Translated name
Black	Black	Anne	Anna
Bob	Bob	Clarisse McClellan	Clarissa McClellanová
Captain Beatty	Kapitán Beatty	Helen	Helena
Dr. Simmons	Doktor Simmons	Maude	Maude
Fred Clement	Fred Clement	Mildred Montag (Millie)	Mildred Montagová (Millie)
Granger	Granger	Mrs. Blake	Pán Blake
Guy Montag	Guy Montag	Mrs. Bowles	Pani Bowlesová
Harris	Harris	Mrs. Phelps	Pani Phelpsová
Hubert Hoag	Hubert Huba	Ruth	Ruth
Professor Faber	Profesor Faber		
Professor West	Profesor West		
Reverend Padover	Farár Padover		
Stoneman	Stoneman		
Winston Noble	Bernard Blaho		

As we can see, the translated names follow the above rule. Among the male characters, two are noteworthy – *Hubert Hoag/Hubert Huba* and *Winston Noble/Bernard Blaho*. Both characters fall into our second category, i.e. they are only mentioned and do not directly appear in the story. They are also both mentioned in the same context – they

³ It is worth noting that when it comes to texts intended for children, wholesale domestication is encountered much more commonly than in texts aimed at young adults and beyond.

are candidates for the presidency of the USA. It is easy to see why the translator chose to domesticate the names, as the surnames of both are meaningful. While *Noble* needs no explanation, *Hoag* is a bit trickier. The name can have multiple etymological origins, but we favour the origin as defined by Arthur (1857): 'Low in stature, small', because it fits with Bradbury's description of the character. The need to transform the names is further escalated by their function within the context in which they appear – they are used to illustrate that the people in Bradbury's world had been so dumbed down by not reading that they voted purely based on looks and the sound of names: '*Compare Winston Noble to Hubert Hoag for ten seconds and you can almost figure the results.*' (Bradbury, 2013). With all of this in mind, the transformation of *Hoag* to *Huba* and *Winston Noble* to *Bernard Blaho* is justified. *Huba* in Slovak, among other things, means 'big mouth', which carries fitting negative connotations and can be even more appropriate in a political context. However, the translation also introduces alliteration, making the name phonetically stand out. To counter this, Klinga chose to not only translate *Noble* as *Blaho* (meaning wealth, pleasure, etc.) to convey positive connotations, but also to transform *Winston* to *Bernard* to introduce another, subjectively more pleasant, alliteration. All that being said, the chosen translations are not without issue. As mentioned, all other names (more or less) retain their original English form, causing these two to somewhat negatively stand out.

When it comes to female character names, there are two points worth mentioning. The first is a minor matter; *Mrs. Blake*, a character also mentioned only in passing as a neighbour who reported a woman for having books in her house, undergoes a gender swap and becomes *pán Blake* [Mr. Blake]. Luckily, this minor shift does not really impact anything. The other point is the ending -a implemented in the following names: *Anne/Anna*, *Clarisse/Clarissa* and *Helen/Helena*. Both *Anne/Anna* and *Helen/Helena* are fully domesticated, since the ending is the only difference between the Slovak and English versions of the name. *Clarisse/Clarissa*, however, is not fully domesticated – for that it would have to be transformed into *Klarisa*. While this does not have a significant impact either, it is a curious choice by the translator, which with the male names above results in a somewhat strange case of characters with a mix of English and Slovak names in a fictional version of the United States.

As for how character names fit within our proposed conception of genre irrealia, all of these names can be viewed as examples of general irrealia. Not only are they not

bound to any specific genre, they are also not explicitly unreal. In genres outside of speculative fiction they would be merely fictional; only the two candidates for the presidency of the United States approach an unreal status not by their names, but their position in the presented world. Yet here all the names stand at the boundary between the merely fictional and the speculative, anchoring the speculative closer to the real, making it more relatable to the reader. This is in part why we find the elements of domestication troublesome – the domesticated names still function as connections between the real and unreal, but anchoring to the US is weakened. Admittedly, the domesticated names can be interpreted as anchoring the translation closer to its recipient, but that is a subjective matter and we believe that in order to achieve the domestication, the translator traded-in a more cohesive presentation of Bradbury's world.

There are more examples of such anchor points and general (ir)realia in the text, e.g. books, historical and literary personages, intertextual references, etc. Let us now take a brief look at just one more such example – a short dialogue mentioning various sports, which illustrates regardless of the (ir)real status of such specifics there is still freedom to be had in translation as with any other regular text element. First, however, one may ask here once again whether sports, similarly to names, are not merely realia. But as has been said, all cultural specifics in speculative fiction gain unreal dimensions, which for sports and other realia bears an additional implication. The unreal dimensions mean there is no guarantee that any sport, e.g. bowling, in a fictional world is the same sport with the same rules and aspects as the same sport in the real world. In other words, even sports and other realia in speculative fiction are imbued with semantic vagueness that can but does not have to be resolved in the relevant text. As long as the vagueness is not resolved, distinguishing sports as unrealia may seem superfluous as it seemingly does not impact translation approaches, but it would nevertheless be ill-advised to translate them too loosely; later resolution of the vagueness, if it shows the general unrealis is in some aspect altered from its real counterpart, may prove incompatible with a chosen loose translation. Imagine for instance cricket was in a translation of Adams' *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* series substituted for another sport before the narrative reveals the alien origin of the sport and its name.

Original	Translation
“You like bowling, don’t you, Montag?”	„Hrávaš rád kolky, Montag, všakže?“
“Bowling, yes.”	„Kolky, áno.“
“And golf?”	„A golf?“
“Golf is a fine game.”	„Golf je skvelý šport.“
“Basketball?”	„Basketbal?“
“A fine game.”	„Skvelý šport.“
“Billiards, pool? Football?”	„A čo biliard? Ragby?“
“Fine games, all of them.”	Skvelé športy, všetky do jedného.“
(Bradbury, 2013)	(Bradbury, 2015)

The majority of the sports are translated one-to-one (*baseball/bezjzbal*, *basketball/basketbal*, *billiards/biliard*,...), but there are a couple of exceptions. *Bowling* is translated as *kolky* [skittles], which is a similar enough game. The word *bowling* is present in the Slovak language and would have sufficed in the translation, but the solution chosen by the translator does not detract from the text overall and it is in-line with the domestication trend observed with character names. *Football* has also been domesticated into *ragby* [rugby], which is fairly reasonable. Direct translation would be *americký futbal* [American football], a solution that would feel clunky in the snappy dialogue and with the adjective out of place for two Americans. Thus rugby is the closest alternative, albeit one that is not associated with the US and once again weakens the link to the country. It is also worth noting that *pool* has been left out of the translation entirely. We believe the omission to be permissible, because Slovak doesn’t have fully developed terminology regarding the sport and *biliard* serves as the umbrella term for sports of that type. Although, of course, a simple substitution with any number of different sports, e.g. tennis, hockey, etc., would have also worked.

Of course, there is also a number of prominent decidedly science-fiction irrealia present in the novel. There are the technologies that help keep the population docile, such as the television walls referred to as *parlor walls*, *wall TV*, etc. As the name suggests, they are televisions that replace entire walls with screens, potentially – as the protagonist’s wife desires – all four walls of a room. People can even purchase attachments for these walls that will fill in their name where appropriate in the watched programme in order to make the viewer feel as if they are participating in the programme. In translation, a

television wall is called *telestena*, a portmanteau of *televízia* and *stena*, the Slovak words for *television* and *wall* respectively. This is a suitable solution that conveys the science-fiction nature of the irrealis in a concise form that does not disrupt the style of the original text.

Naturally, it is not feasible for people to be engaged and entertained by their TV walls at all times, which is where the little in-ear radios often called *thimble radio*, *Seashells*, or even *thimble-wasps*, as they are often compared to bees and wasps nesting in ears, come in. Characters can listen to these whenever they are not watching, including while they sleep, and be ‘flooded’ with a constant ocean of music and talk alike. The choice of what to call them in translation is as varied as in the original: *Seashells* become *Lastúry* (a direct translation) and *thimble wasps* turn into *náprstkové osy* (also a fairly direct translation). On the other hand, there is a case when the translation stylistically drifts away from the original and sounds overly professional.

Original: ...*apprenticeship at Seashell ear-thimbles*. (Bradbury, 2013)

Translation: ...*učňovstva počúvania rádia v slúchadlách modelu Lastúra*.
[apprenticeship at listening to radio in the Seashell model of headphones]
(Bradbury, 2015)

Both these irrealia further illustrate why it is necessary to judge what is and is not science fiction based on the context of the original publication. To our knowledge there are no televisions that literally replace entire walls, nor are there wireless in-ear headphones that function as a radio independently, i.e. without being connected to another device such as a mobile phone. They are, however, absolutely conceivable with our current level of technology, and, depending on how literal your interpretation of such devices is, they may soon become a reality, whereas at the time of the novel’s original publication, such things would be highly far-fetched, which in-and-of-itself is another factor and a potential challenge to be considered when translating science-fiction long after it was originally written. Once contemporary technology approaches the level of technology presented in the source text, how does one convey the speculativeness of expression that was apparent in the original irrealis and text as a whole? And should they? The answer is perhaps offered in the tenets of the so-called “Slovak translation school”

(Ferenčík, 1982, pp. 50-70), albeit indirectly. One of the sub-tenets of the school dictates that archaicity of an older text should only be transferred in a translation if it constitutes a conscious choice on the author's side, i.e. if it serves a function; not when it is merely a consequence of the original text's time/context. In the latter case, the translation should use appropriate modern language. From this we can extrapolate that the emphasis in translation should be placed on the effect the original text would have had on a reader when originally written. Irrealia age just as any other linguistic element, and science-fiction irrealia describing technologies can seemingly undergo the same process of ageing as real technologies, e.g.: futuristic → common → archaic⁴. Within the confines of both the Nitra School of translation and the Slovak translation school, the translator should not alter the conveyed meanings, thus there is little to be done to alleviate the ageing of described science-fiction irrealia. Nevertheless, a degree of speculativeness of expression can still be maintained by the translator intentionally choosing lexemes for the irrealia themselves and their descriptions that will differentiate them from existing technologies and avoid the mundane. In terms of the examples from *Fahrenheit 451* discussed above, the translator could have chosen the mundane solutions *televízne steny* [television walls] and *rádiové slúchadlá* [radio headphones] or similar, but, as shown, the translator correctly avoided such solutions. While *Fahrenheit 451* largely extrapolates its technologies from those already known at the time of writing and thus avoids further issues in translation, the avoidance of mundane solutions can become even more important when dealing with works that perhaps create entirely new lexical units to describe their technologies, and such technologies are later developed in the real life but are called differently. It may then be tempting for a translator to lean on the real technology and simply use its name in the translation, but that would be a mistake as it would deprive the irrealis of its speculative aspect. On the other hand, a delayed translation can also offer an advantage – if an irrealis and its name are based on an already existing but a niche technology available in the source country, but it has not yet been established in the target language, the delay may give the technology an opportunity to establish itself in the target language and thus save the translator the need to create a new lexeme.

⁴ Think for instance how the eighties science-fiction often envisioned future computers with often small screens and large chunky keyboards that from our modern perspective appear decidedly low-tech.

There are numerous other irrealia that are a fact of life in *Fahrenheit 451*, e.g. *jet cars* or *air-propelled trains*, all houses being fireproof, the fireman starting fires instead of putting them out as discussed in a previous chapter, the very idea of all books being banned, etc., but there is just one more irrealis we need to discuss in more detail – the *mechanical hound*. The *mechanical hound* is almost exactly what it sounds like – a robot with a function that mimics that of an actual dog. Its form may also be inspired by dogs, but with its eight spidery legs it certainly becomes its own thing. It is used by the firemen to search for and outright hunt fugitives with its impeccable ‘sense’ of smell, and it is capable of delivering lethal doses of morphine and procaine via a four-inch hollow needle. It is likely due to the hunting connotations of both the hound’s description and of the word *hound* itself, as well as to be linguistically economical that the translator chose to specify it more closely in translation. The translator turns to *mechanický stavač* [mechanical setter], a specific group of hunting dog breeds, rather than using *mechanický lovecký pes* [mechanical hunting dog], which would be the solution most faithful to the original, or weakening the translation’s descriptive power and use just *mechanický pes* [mechanical dog]. What is most interesting about this irrealis is that in isolation it is distinctly a science-fiction irrealis. Account, however, for the context(s) in which it is mentioned, how it is described, and it gains an undercurrent of horror, exemplifying one of the ways in which an irrealis can find itself on the boundary between two genres and carrying features of both:

The Mechanical Hound slept but did not sleep, lived but did not live in its gently humming, gently vibrating, softly illuminated kennel back in a dark corner of the firehouse. The dim light of one in the morning, the moonlight from the open sky framed through the great window, touched here and there on the brass and the copper and the steel of the faintly trembling beast. Light flickered on bits of ruby glass and on sensitive capillary hairs in the nylonbrushed nostrils of the creature that quivered gently, gently, its eight legs spidered under it on rubber-padded paws. (Bradbury, 2013)

Conclusion

Nowadays, science fiction is a common literary genre often associated with fantasy and certain kinds of horror, with all three genres falling under the speculative fiction

umbrella. In their 2021 article *On Translating Irrealia in Speculative Fiction*, Anonymous argue that irrealia – culture- and ontology-dependent specifics as well as all departures from reality in fictional, or rather speculative, worlds – are the essential markers of speculativeness of expression in a text. They posit even a single irrealis means that the rest of the presented world is implicitly unreal, different from the real world, unless explicitly stated otherwise in the text. This positions irrealia as the defining feature for all speculative fiction and its sub-genres. In this article, we discuss several definitions of science fiction while also touching on fantasy and supernatural horror, and we particularly focus on a definition of science fiction using Suvin's (1979) concept of novum. We believe the novum is a fine concept for a literary understanding of science fiction (and with a bit of generalization other speculative fiction sub-genres as well), but that it is somewhat limited in terms of its viability within translation studies. We thus propose replacing it with the irrealis. However, such replacement requires the general concept of the irrealis to be narrowed down and specified further, which leads us to the introduction of genre irrealia – supernatural horror irrealia that are intended to affect the recipient with feelings of horror, fear, etc., fantasy irrealia that defy scientific knowledge, real-world logic and functioning, and science-fiction specific irrealia that are in turn derived from scientific knowledge and do not break known real-world logic and functioning, as well as general irrealia that do not exhibit genre-specific qualities despite their unreal nature.

This article argues that each main speculative fiction sub-genre is defined not by the mere presence of a particular type of genre irrealia, as multiple types can appear within a single text or even a single irrealis can exhibit features of multiple types, but by the prevalence, or perhaps the prominence of a given type of genre irrealia. This accounts not only for the main three sub-genres, but also their own sub-categories and hybrid genres, and it also allows further specification of genre irrealia to accompany the specification of the genres themselves.

This article also argues that the concept of genre-specific irrealia can aid readers in interpretation and, more importantly, the translator in choosing appropriate translation approaches. Since each speculative fiction text can contain irrealia of different types and any given irrealis needs not be in agreement with the overall text genre, being able to categorize each irrealis allows the translator to fully realize its particular

specificities and function while opening the possibility of intertextually linking irrealia if each type across texts from different genres.

Using the novel *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and its Slovak translation, the article illustrates the various concepts of genre irrealia and how they can be approached in translation. We show that even something as mundane as regular English character names can fall under general irrealia, serve as anchors between the real and the speculative, and how such anchorage can be arguably weakened or altered via domestication. Some of the specific science-fiction irrealia, on the other hand, show the importance of classifying them and the text as a whole from within their original context, since tamer or more realistic science fiction can over time begin to lose its speculative nature and begin approaching reality, becoming mere fiction if viewed through a contemporary lens. While the novel does not provide us with a clear-cut example of genre irrealia other than science-fiction, it does include at least one science-fiction irrealis with horror undertones when taken together with its context – the *mechanical hound* – which illustrates the potential hybridity of genre irrealia.

References

- Adams, D. (2010). *The Ultimate Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Del Rey.
- Bradbury, R. (2013). *Fahrenheit 451*. Simon & Schuster.
- Bradbury, R. (2015). *451 stupňov Fahrenheita*. (J. Klinga, Trans.). Citadella.
- Clute, J. & Grant, J. (Eds.). (1999). *The Encyclopedia of Fantasy*. Orbit Fantasy.
- Dick, P. K. (1995). My Definition of Science Fiction. In L. Sutin (Ed.), *The shifting realities of Philip K. Dick: selected literary and philosophical writings* (pp. 99-101). Vintage Books.
- Ferenčík, J. (1982). *Kontexty prekladu*. Slovenský spisovateľ.
- Herec, O. (2008). *Z teórie modernej fantastiky*. Literárne informačné centrum.
- Kažimír, M. & Martinkovič, M. (2021). On Translating Irrealia in Speculative Fiction. *Bridge: Trends and Traditions in Translation and Interpreting Studies 2* (Special issue), 37-50. <https://www.bridge.ff.ukf.sk/index.php/bridge/article/view/53>
- Loponen, M. (2009). Translating Irrealia – Creating a Semiotic Framework for the Translation of Fictional Cultures. *Chinese Semiotics Studies 2*(1), 165-175. <https://doi.org/10.1515/css-2009-0117>.

Loponen, M. (2019). *The Semiospheres of Prejudice in the Fantastic Arts: The Inherited Racism of Irrealia and Their Translation* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Helsinki]. University of Helsinki Research Repository.
<http://hdl.handle.net/10138/299080>

Popovič, A. (1983). *Originál – Preklad Interpretačná terminológia*. Tatran.

Reid, R. A. (2000). *Ray Bradbury: A Critical Companion. Critical Companions to Popular Contemporary Writers*. Greenwood Press.

Suvin, D. (1979). *Metamorphoses of Science Fiction: On the Poetics and History of a Literary Genre*. Yale University Press.

Vilikovský, J. (1984). *Preklad ako tvorba*. Slovenský spisovateľ.

Reviewers:

1. Anonymous:
2. Anonymous

Handling Editor:

Boris Naimushin, PhD,
New Bulgarian University

CRITICAL THINKING AS AN INTEGRAL OUTCOME IN TRANSLATOR AND INTERPRETER TRAINING

Mesut Kuleli¹ and Didem Tuna²

¹Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, Bolu, Turkey

²İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, Istanbul, Turkey

Abstract



The aim of this study is to investigate the critical thinking attitudes of translator and interpreter candidates with a view to coming up with recommendations on curriculum development in Translation and Interpretation undergraduate studies. A "Critical Thinking Skills Scale" was administered to 354 translation and interpretation students from five universities in Turkey. Independent sample t-test, one-way ANOVA and post-hoc Scheffe test were used in data analysis. With the highest and lowest attitudes found for receptiveness and inquiry skills respectively, the total critical thinking attitudes of translator candidates are above the average. The class level of the students is inversely correlated with total scores for critical thinking attitudes, in addition to the flexibility and judiciousness subdimensions. Moreover, translator candidates of the Bulgarian language have the highest total scores for critical thinking attitudes as compared to those of English, French, Persian and German. The results show that innovative curricula involving related tasks and activities must be developed for translation and interpretation departments to enhance translator candidates' critical thinking skills, bearing in mind the very nature of the act of translation and interpretation.

Keywords: translation, interpreting, critical thinking skills, critical reading

Article history

Received: 20 January 2022

Reviewed: 20 February 2022

Accepted: 10 March 2022

Published: 30 June 2022

Copyright © 2022 Mesut Kuleli and Didem Tuna



This open access article is published and distributed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at mesut.kuleli@ibu.edu.tr. If you want to use the work commercially, you must first get the authors' permission.

Citation: Kuleli, M., Tuna, D. (2022). Critical Thinking as an Integral Outcome in Translator and Interpreter Training. *English Studies at NBU*, 8(1), 93-116. <https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.22.1.6>

Dr. Mesut Kuleli is Associate Professor at Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, School of Foreign Languages, Department of English Translation and Interpreting. His PhD is in the area of Interlingual and Intercultural Translation Studies. His research interests include literary translation, semiotics of translation, and translator and interpreter training. He is the co-author of a book on Semiotics of Translation and the co-editor of books including academic studies on language, literature, and translation studies.

E-mail: mesut.kuleli@ibu.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3477-0412>

Dr. Didem Tuna is Associate Professor at İstanbul Yeni Yüzyıl University, Faculty of Sciences and Literature, Department of English Translation and Interpreting and has a PhD in Interlingual and Intercultural Translation Studies Programme. Her research interests include literary translation, semiotics of translation, and translator and interpreter training. She is the co-author of a book on Semiotics of Translation and the co-editor of books including academic studies on language, literature, and translation studies.

E-mail: didem.tuna@yeniyuzyil.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1566-9503>

Note: Unless otherwise noted, all translations into English are made by the authors.

People survive by reading the signs surrounding them and producing signs that will enable them to be understood by others. Sign reading and producing skills are not limited to written texts since they operate with visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory messages. Each message produces a meaning or multiple meanings. Hence, "reading" can be defined as reaching a meaning based on what people perceive from the outside world. Any sign reading can be considered a critical reading if it goes through a thinking process to arrive at a judgment. All kinds of indiscriminate reading, if deficient in or devoid of discernment, are more open to manipulation and can be dangerous on both individual and social grounds.

Subject to various definitions, critical thinking can basically be defined as 'a very careful and thoughtful way of dealing with events, issues, problems, decisions, or situations' (Pirozi, 2003, p. 197). Among the many elements constituting its dynamics, 'activating cognitive processes, evaluating the data, analysis of data, application, decision-making, and problem-solving' stand out as the basic components (Halpern, 1999, p. 70-71). Critical thinking is a stance, a manner of approaching all areas of life; it is a way of being, an attitude of presence as a global citizen, a combination of 'fairmindedness, self-insight, and a genuine desire to serve the public good' (Paul and Elder, 2012, p. 5). The mental acts and events constituting a critical thinking process include 'analyzing, judging, hypothesizing, explaining, self-corrective thinking, thinking with criteria, thinking that is sensitive to the context, deciding, problem solving' (Lipman, 1987, p. 5-6) besides asking and answering questions for clarification, defining terms, analyzing arguments, and making inferences (Ennis, 1985, p. 44-48), all of which may also be listed as integral parts of translation. In the same vein, intellectual standards such as clarity, accuracy, relevance, logicalness, breadth, precision, significance, completeness, fairness, and depth are routinely applied to the elements of reasoning (Paul and Elder, 2020, p. 19-20), and all of these standards are essential in translation.

At this point, while thinking about the relationship between critical thinking and translation, it might be helpful to consider critical thinking in terms of its relationship with critical reading. In one sense, 'reading is thinking' (Daiek and Anter, 2004, p. 5), and this suggestion is further confirmed in the relevant literature (Commeyras, 1990, p. 201; Thistlethwaite, 1990, p. 587). Critical reading is 'an interactive process in which the reader actively produces meaning through a set of mental processes [...] involving

predicting, acknowledging, comparing, evaluating and decision-making' (Shihab, 2011, p. 209), which are processes in common with critical thinking. However, these common features do not mean that critical reading and critical thinking are the same phenomenon, particularly when the broader scope of critical thinking is considered; it stands thus to reason that critical reading should be a prerequisite for critical thinking. Accordingly, we can say that a source text could be "read" critically to discover its content and this process is followed by critical thinking when the translator evaluates it to decide how it can be best transmitted in the target language. Not restricted to written texts only, the concept of "reading" includes any message 'coming from a source external to the self' (Bartu, 2003, p. 1); hence critical "reading" is equally – and necessarily – applicable to interpretation, in addition to translation, followed by a "thinking" process to transmit the oral text.

One of the benefits critical reading and thinking confers upon translation and translators is that they allow different kinds of strategic and purposeful uses of language to be detected, thus enabling the translator to transmit the text into the target language without skipping its implicit qualities, also constituting its universe of meaning (Tuna, 2017, p. 143). Furthermore, critical reading 'may allow the translator to see how the choice of pronouns, active or passive voice, and wording may influence the overall meaning' (Tuna, 2017, p. 143), so that they can formulate the target text accordingly. In this sense, critical reading working together with critical thinking gives the translators the opportunity to analyze and evaluate their translation and 'avoid unintended meaning transformations. This awareness also provides students with the opportunity to stand up for their decisions as translators when they deliberately transform the meaning for a particular reason' (Tuna and Avaz, 2019, p. 548). In other words, critical reading does not only apply to the source text; it is also applicable to the target text so that the translators can compare their product to the author's and revise it to the extent they deem necessary, which is realised through a critical thinking process. At this point, if critical thinking involves 'analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it' (Paul and Elder, 2020, p. 9), it can readily be compared to the process of editing in translation, which is similarly based on analyzing and evaluating the target text with a view to improving it. This can also be explained by the 'self-monitoring and self-corrective' (Paul and Elder, 2020, p. 9) nature of critical thinking, which is also intrinsically the case for translation.

Herein we also witness the consecutive nature of critical reading and critical thinking working together in translation in sequence:

- a critical reading process to understand the source text
- a critical thinking process to create the target text
- a critical reading process to evaluate the target text in comparison to the source text,
- a critical thinking process to formulate the post-translation editing

Furthermore, uncritical and inefficient thinking is not compatible with translation, which, by nature, presupposes inquisitive, open-minded, and solution-oriented approaches as well as flexibility and mindfulness to cope with 'the segments of untranslatability [...] scattered through the text' (Ricœur, 2016, p. 5) and other potential challenges. Therefore, critical reading and thinking skills are crucial in translator training, and their impact is often clearly reflected in the target text.

Critical Thinking Skills

This study investigates the critical thinking skills of translator candidates to describe their critical thinking attitudes and find out any significant differences based on various demographic variables. To that end, the following research questions are addressed in this study:

- (1) What is the level of translator and interpreter candidates' critical thinking attitudes?
- (2) Is there a significant difference between translator and interpreter candidates' critical thinking attitudes based on such variables as;
 - a) gender
 - b) department (the language they study)
 - c) class level

Though the components of critical thinking skills vary across studies in the literature, those used in this study are provided in this part as problem-solving skills, inquiry skills, flexibility, judiciousness, receptiveness, open-mindedness, and mindfulness, and defined in relation to their contributions to critical thinking skills.

Problem-solving skills

Problem-solving is ‘the skill to be able to analyze complex phenomena’ (Whimbey, Lochhead, and Narode, 2013, p. 21) in its simplest definition, and can be further expanded to involve the steps of ‘identifying the problem, determining the relevant information and deepening understanding, enumerating the choices, assessing the situation and making a preliminary decision, and scrutinizing the process and self-correction’ (Facione, 2015, p. 27), which could guide translators and translator candidates throughout their critical thinking processes. Critical thinking followed by critical reading, on the other hand, ‘is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action’ (Scriven and Paul, 1987). Problem-solving as a guide to critical thinking, therefore, corresponds to the decision-making process that the translator goes through when faced with the challenges of the source text. As a result, problem-solving as a critical reading and thinking trait is an integral part of all processes concerning translation, from analysis to transmission and from transmission to editing and re-editing.

Inquiry skills

‘Critical thinkers ask questions of the message, breaking it into its individual components and examining each in turn. Critical thinkers dissect these components looking for sound logic and reasoning’ (Facione, 1990, p. 15). If we consider this definition in terms of any translation process, we should perhaps first reiterate the idea that translation is not possible without understanding – and in fact, in some cases, understanding alone may not render the transmission wholly possible. Therefore, analysis is an integral part of translation, through which understanding is more safely provided. As a critical reader, the translator asks questions of the text, breaks it into its individual components where necessary, and analyzes each, in turn, to ensure a better transfer into the target language. When the transfer is completed, the translators direct their critical approach to the target text, this time checking if it reflects the same signs with the same logic and reasoning as the source text.

Flexibility

Flexibility can be described as the ability, as well as the tendency, to adapt to new

or evolving insights; a willingness to (re)consider issues from more comprehensive and inclusive perspectives. Flexibility provides a panoramic approach, accompanied by or bringing about thorough examination, analysis and overview of different readings, thoughts, and reflections concerning a particular topic, problem, or argument. Flexibility can be considered a prerequisite for critical reading and thinking, as well as any kind of translation-oriented textual analysis, since understanding is the proviso for translation and can be ensured through in-depth deliberation. Moreover, translators tend to shift between various translation strategies because it is unanimously agreed that there is no strategy that fits all translation. Jaaskelainen (1999, p. 71) proposes that the strategies translators adopt are already flexible in nature. The act of translation being, itself, a flexible process, this skill is an indispensable quality for translators.

Judiciousness

Judiciousness, which refers to displaying the right behavior following a sound consideration of options, presupposes alertness, care, chariness, circumspection, and consideration. Translators as critical readers and thinkers are by nature judicious; after the critical reading and deciphering of the source text, they may sometimes find it necessary to 'read and think more, perhaps because there are more or different questions left unanswered' (Bartu, 2002, p. 3). Often, translating specific signs in the source text, such as intertextual references, requires further reading from other sources; and this reading process is accompanied by a thinking process in which decisions concerning the target text are shaped among many options. 'Judiciousness is central to translating, and to evaluating translations [...], it makes possible the balancing of different versions' merits. [...] They [translating and evaluating translations] are the activities we [translators] carry out as judiciously as possible' (Will, 1983, p. 214). This shows that while translators might not always be able to find a straightforward solution, they might also at times be faced with more than one solution, and it is in the latter situation that skill in judiciousness will come into play.

Receptiveness

Receptiveness can be defined as 'a willingness to expose oneself to, and to thoughtfully and fairly consider, the opposing views of others' (Minson, Chen, and Tinsley, 2020, p. 3070). Critical reading and thinking, by nature, imply alacrity in listening

to other people, analyzing their discourse, and reaching a conclusion, which may result in changing or confirming what one already knows or postponing decision making by deciding to read and think more (Bartu, 2002, p. 3). In accordance with this relationship between critical thinking and receptiveness, Minson, Chen, and Tinsley report that 'receptive individuals choose to consume more information; report less mind wandering when viewing a speech with which they disagree; evaluate supporting and opposing policy arguments more impartially; select a more balanced portfolio of news outlets for later consumption' (2020, p. 3069). Receptive individuals are thus open to new information from different media. Similarly, a translator also needs to interact with many people to find a way to better grasp and transmit the demanding parts of the source text.

Open-mindedness

Open-mindedness is one of the dispositions included in "The California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory" developed by Facione and Facione (1992) to refer to receptivity to opinions different from one's own without any prejudice. A critical reading process, by nature, may lead readers to reconsider what they already know in the light of new information (Bartu, 2002, p. 3), and this decision process is a critical thinking mechanism that requires open-minded evaluation 'within alternative systems of thought, recognizing and assessing, as need be, their assumptions, implications, and practical consequences' (Paul and Elder, 2020, p. 9), as in the case of the translator trying to cope with the source text as the product of another mind and culture. 'Critical thinkers look for alternatives, take a position when the evidence and reasons are sufficient to do so, and seek as much precision as the subject permits' (Facione, 1990, p. 102), and this is matched with the idea behind the analysis of source and target texts as well as the post-editing process, in which the translators are ready to revise the target text based on their subjective perception of the source text, which may later prove to have undergone some meaning transformations at different levels (Öztürk Kasar and Tuna, 2017, p. 172).

Mindfulness

Mindfulness as a characteristic of critical reading and thinking can simply be defined as 'awareness, circumspection, discernment, and retention' (Shapiro, 2009, p. 556). All these terms inevitably lead to a consciousness of other ideas and potentialities. Shapiro and Carlson (2009) further suggest that mindful beings can shape their minds in

an accepting manner. Here, "acceptance" refers to the awareness of other ideas irrespective of their origin. Kabat-Zinn (2001, p. 23) refers to "nonjudgmentally" and "momentariness" in mindfulness, implying with the latter that any particular case needs to be considered in its uniqueness. Considering "momentariness" in translation, a sign does not bear a permanent meaning but can be used with its associative or archaic meanings in a source text; therefore, the present meaning of any sign in relation to the neighbouring, or at times even to the far-away, signs in a source text needs to be pondered upon by a translator. These definitions and elaborations of "mindfulness" clearly show its relation to critical thinking. Mindfulness, in this sense, is also applicable to translation. Faced with the exigencies of the source text, the translator as a critical reader will stop to read and think further before acting – that is, translating.

Materials and Methods

This section deals with the research design, research sample, research instrument and procedures, validity and reliability, and data analysis.

Research design

This quantitative research aims to define and describe translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes without any treatment, thereby rendering this study a descriptive one (Karasar, 2005). As part of descriptive studies, single screening model is used in this study since different variables are identified and described in isolation, without any reference to correlation (Karasar, 2005).

Research sample

The universe of this study is composed of second, third, and fourth grade undergraduate students attending translation and interpretation departments in Turkey. First-grade students were deliberately excluded from the study since some of them could have been underage considering the standards of The Ethics Committee Approval requiring that the parents of those underage be officially consulted before data collection. The main working languages of translation and interpretation departments in Turkey are English, German, French, Arabic, or Bulgarian, with few cases of Chinese and Russian, restricted to two private universities. Not all universities with translation and interpretation departments offer courses or degrees in all of those languages. Therefore,

convenience sampling method, one of the nonprobability sampling techniques, was used in this study. Even if disadvantages like non-representation of the universe or selection bias are generally reported with convenience sampling, this type of sampling ‘involves engaging volunteers who are selected due to ease of recruitment and willingness to participate and [...] are selected to maximise the sampling of specific types of [demographic independent variables]’ (Brodaty et al., 2014, p. 63). ‘Accessibility [to translator candidates studying languages other than the popular language, that is, English], availability at a given time, and the [participants’] willingness’ (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 99) being the main criteria in line with the research questions in this study, convenience sampling method was employed. The present pandemic conditions also rendered the convenience sampling method essential since the scale could only be administered online to a purposive sampling group. To this end, students from four state universities (one offering only French T&I, one offering Arabic and English T&I departments separately, one offering English, German, and Bulgarian T&I departments separately, and one offering English, French, and Arabic T&I departments separately) and one private university (offering only English T&I) were selected as the sample group. Table 1 shows the demographic qualities of the participants.

Table 1. Demographic qualities of the participants in frequencies and percentages

Demographic Quality		f	%
Gender	Female	251	70.9
	Male	103	29.1
	Total	354	100
Department	English T&I	201	56.8
	French T&I	106	29.9
	Persian T&I	11	3.1
	German T&I	12	3.4
	Bulgarian T&I	24	6.8
	Total	354	100
Class Level	2	153	43.2
	3	109	30.8
	4	92	26.0
	Total	354	100

According to Table 1, while the female (251) translator candidates make up 70.9% of the sample group, the highest percentage of participants in the department variable is from English T&I (201), making up 56.8% of the sample group, and finally, the highest percentage of participants in the class level variable comes from second-grade students (153) who make up 43.2% of the sample. Considering the department variable, it is unsurprising that the highest number and percentage of participants come from the English T&I department since four of the five universities selected for this study have English T&I departments while Persian T&I and Bulgarian T&I departments are few in number in Turkish universities.

Research instrument and procedures

The "Critical Thinking Skills" scale developed by Özdemir (2005) through administration on university students was used as the data collection tool in this study. Following validity and reliability studies, Özdemir (2005) administered the scale with three options, while this scale was applied in the present study as a Likert type scale with 5 options from "totally disagree" to "totally agree," following consultation with Özdemir. While the original scale consists of 30 reverse items, the scale was reduced to 22 items divided into seven factors as a result of a validity test in this study. The titles of the factors are determined as problem-solving skills, inquiry skills, flexibility, judiciousness, receptiveness, open-mindedness, and mindfulness, based on the literature review for this study.

With Ethics Committee Approval obtained from Bandırma Onyedi Eylül University, Turkey, on 14.09.2020, decision number 2020-5, the online scale was sent to the General Secretariats of the five universities for initial approval, later to be channeled to students in online platforms due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the fall semester of the 2020-2021 academic year. The participants were asked for their informed consent, and they were assured that the data obtained from their answers would be kept anonymous and confidential, emphasizing the voluntary basis of participation in the study.

Validity and reliability

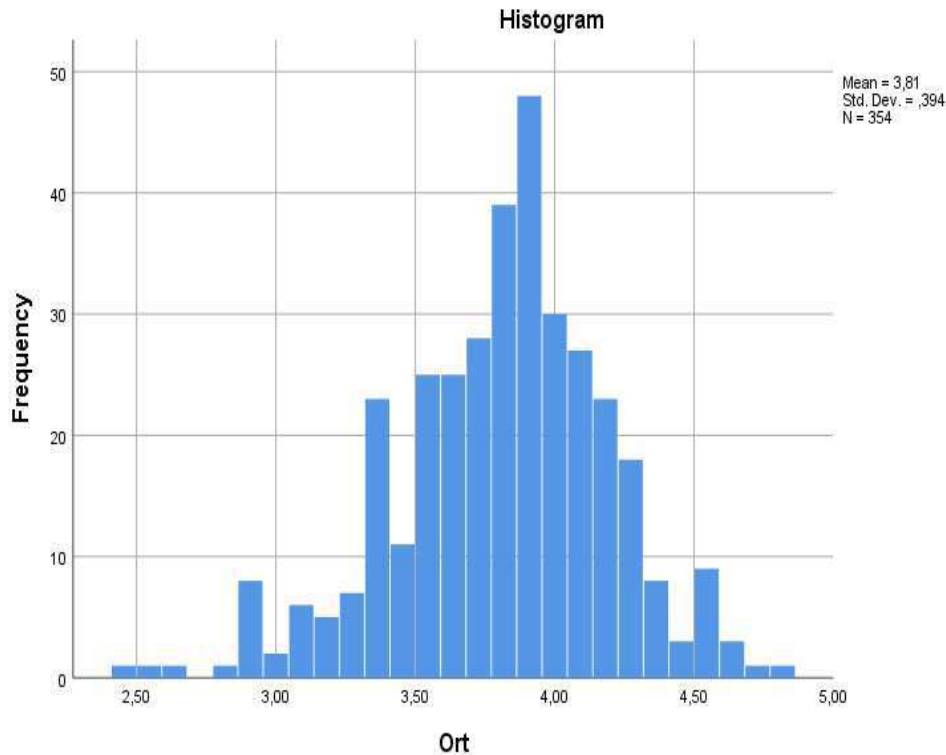
The reliability of the original scale was found to be .78 through cronbach-alpha analysis by Özdemir (2005, p. 305). As the scale was administered to the undergraduate students in a specific department, exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the scale

at the suggestion of the original developer of the scale. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy was found to be .707 while Barlett's Test of Sphericity was found to be .000, which points to the suitability of the scale for factor analysis, considering that the KMO index must be above .50, and the Barlett's Test of Sphericity must be significant ($p < .05$) for factor analysis (Hair et al., 1995; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). In the factor analysis for construct validity, items belonging to more than one factor were excluded. The analysis yielded seven factors. The factors above the eigenvalue of 1 could be considered significant (Kline, 1994; cited in Büyüköztürk, 2002, p. 479). Moreover, the higher number of factors obtained, the higher is the variance explained (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001; cited in Büyüköztürk, 2002, p. 479). As a result of factor analysis with varimax rotation, these seven factors explained 56.878% of variance. The cronbach alpha for the reliability of the scale was found to be .705, which is higher than the accepted cut-off point of .70 for reliability.

Data analysis

Following the reverse coding of all items due to the very nature of the scale, the data obtained from the participants was first tested for normality of distribution. Both Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests yielded significance with p values of .002 and .005, respectively, implying the data was not normally distributed ($p < .05$). When the sample size is large, significant results tend to be obtained; however, this might not denote a deviation from normality (Field, 2013, p. 170). Therefore, the histogram of the data was also analyzed. The histogram is given in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Histogram for Critical Thinking Skills Scale



The Histogram for the scale, as given in Figure 1, can be interpreted as the normal distribution of the data set obtained in this study. As another test of normality, skewness was found to be -.406, while Kurtosis turned out to be .310, both of which also point to normal distribution based on George and Mallery's (1999) suggestion that skewness and kurtosis values between -2 and +2 are acceptable, and on Tabachnick and Fidell's (2013) suggestion of above -1.500 and below +1.500 for acceptability. Therefore, paying particular attention to the large sample size, histogram and skewness and kurtosis, parametric tests were used in this study. While frequency and percentage statistics were used for demographic qualities, independent sample t-test was used to find whether translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes differed significantly in terms of their genders. To test the significance in terms of departments and class levels, one-way ANOVA test was applied. The root cause of significance emerging from the ANOVA test was found using the post-hoc Scheffe test, one of the most frequently employed post-hoc tests.

Results

This section deals with the findings based on the research questions. The first subheading is concerned with the level of translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes while the second is devoted to the differences between translator candidates' critical

thinking attitudes based on the independent variables such as gender, department, and class level.

Translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes

As the data collection tool used in this study is a Likert-type scale, scores between 5.00-4.20 are considered *totally agree*; 4.19-3.40 *agree*; 3.39-2.60 *neither agree nor disagree*; 2.59-1.80 *disagree*; 1.79-1.00 *totally disagree*. The mean score of translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes was found to be 3.81; therefore, their mean score of critical thinking attitudes can be considered above average. Regarding the subdimensions of the scale, translator candidates' problem-solving skills attitudes ($\bar{x}=4.11$), open-mindedness attitudes ($\bar{x}=3.90$), judiciousness attitudes ($\bar{x}=3.79$), flexibility attitudes ($\bar{x}=3.71$), and mindfulness attitudes ($\bar{x}=3.45$) are also above average. Inquiry skills ($\bar{x}=3.03$) are found to have the lowest mean score, despite being on the average. On the other hand, receptiveness attitudes are the highest, with a mean score of 4.54.

Differences between translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes

This subheading is further divided into three to demonstrate the differences between translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes based on the variables of gender, department, and class level.

Translator candidates' critical thinking skills scores based on gender

Table 2 shows whether translator candidates' genders make a difference in their total critical thinking skills and subdimensions.

Table 2. The results of independent sample t-test regarding gender variable in translator candidates' critical thinking skills

	Gender	N	\bar{x}	SD	Df	t	p
Subdimension							
problem-solving skills	Female	251	4.12	.64	352	.207	.836
	Male	103	4.10	.66			
inquiry skills	Female	251	2.93	.87	352	-3.292	.001*
	Male	103	3.28	.98			
flexibility	Female	251	3.73	.56	352	.523	.601
	Male	103	3.69	.64			
judiciousness	Female	251	3.74	.79	352	-1.734	.084

	Male	103	3.90	.70			
receptiveness	Female	251	4.62	.64	352	3.114	.002*
	Male	103	4.35	.78			
open-mindedness	Female	251	3.96	.86	352	1.969	.050
	Male	103	3.76	.97			
mindfulness	Female	251	3.38	.84	352	-2.261	.024*
	Male	103	3.61	.87			
total test	Female	251	3.80	.39	352	-.757	.450
	Male	103	3.83	.40			

Table 2 shows that there is no significant difference between females' and males' critical thinking skills in the total test and in subdimensions such as problem-solving skills, flexibility, and judiciousness. In the open-mindedness subdimension, the mean score of females ($\bar{x}=3.96$) is much higher than that of the males' ($\bar{x}=3.76$); however, the p value is .050, which is the threshold for the significance of statistical difference. Despite this, taking $p<.05$ as the criterion for significance, this higher score among females does not lead to a significant difference in the open-mindedness subdimension. On the other hand, there is significant difference in the inquiry skills ($p=.001$), receptiveness ($p=.002$), and mindfulness ($p=.024$) subdimensions. The significance of statistical difference favors males in the inquiry skills and mindfulness subdimensions while the mean score of females is significantly higher in the receptiveness subdimension. However, the significant difference in the latter subdimension does not point to a low score for males ($\bar{x}=4.35$) since their score in the receptiveness subdimension is already high.

Translator candidates' critical thinking skills scores based on department

Translator candidates in the Bulgarian T&I department were found to have the highest mean score in the total test while the lowest mean score belongs to the Persian T&I department. However, it is important to note that the translator candidates in all departments are above the average (between 3.40-4.19) in terms of their critical thinking attitudes. In the problem-solving skills subdimension, the highest mean score belongs to the Bulgarian T&I department ($\bar{x}=4.33$); however, the translator candidates of all other departments are also above the average, with the French ($\bar{x}=4.18$) and German ($\bar{x}=4.17$) T&I departments even approaching the highest reference value of 4.20-5.00. In the inquiry skills subdimension, the highest mean score is that of translator candidates in

English T&I departments ($\bar{x}=3.19$), while the Persian T&I department is found to have the lowest mean score ($\bar{x}=2.12$), rendering the latter the only department to be below the average score (with the reference point of 1.80-2.59). The translator candidates in the Bulgarian T&I department have the highest score in flexibility attitudes, yet all other departments were found to have mean scores above the average. In the judiciousness subdimension, the translator candidates in English T&I possess the highest mean score while the lowest mean score in that subdimension belongs to the Persian T&I department, rendering it the only department on the average. All the departments are within the highest reference value in the receptiveness subdimension, with the German T&I ($\bar{x}= 4.67$) department achieving the highest mean score. The translator candidates in all the departments are above the average in the open-mindedness subdimension, but the members of the Bulgarian T&I department ($\bar{x}=4.13$) have the highest mean score. Whereas the translator candidates in English T&I, Persian T&I, and German T&I departments have mean scores that correspond to the average, French T&I ($\bar{x}=3.64$) and Bulgarian T&I ($\bar{x}=3.58$) departments' mean scores are above the average in the mindfulness subdimension.

Table 3 presents the results of One-Way ANOVA test conducted to find out whether translator candidates significantly differ from each other in terms of critical thinking skills both in total score and subdimensions based on their departments.

Table 3. The results of ANOVA test concerning the difference between departments in total score and subdimensions of critical thinking skills

Subdimension		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Difference between
problem-solving skills	Between groups	2.299	4	.575	1.396	.235	---
	Within groups	143.681	349	.412			
inquiry skills	Between groups	18.661	4	4.665	5.913	.000*	Eng-Pers
	Within groups	275.371	349	.789			Eng-Bulg
flexibility	Between groups	.731	4	.183	.534	.711	---
	Within groups	119.453	349	.342			
judiciousness	Between groups	11.247	4	2.812	4.983	.001*	Eng-Pers
	Within groups	196.913	349	.564			

receptiveness	Between groups	1.497	4	.374	.779	.539	---
	Within groups	167.659	349	.480			
open-mindedness	Between groups	2.949	4	.737	.924	.450	---
	Within groups	278.439	349	.798			
mindfulness	Between groups	6.831	4	1.708	2.385	.051	---
	Within groups	249.952	349	.716			
total test	Between groups	1.222	4	.305	1.987	.096	---
	Within groups	53.645	349	.154			

Table 3 reveals no significant difference in the total test score besides subdimensions such as problem-solving skills, flexibility, receptiveness, open-mindedness, and mindfulness based on department. However, One-Way ANOVA test yields a significant difference between departments in the inquiry skills ($p=.000$) and judiciousness ($p=.001$) subdimensions. In order to find the root causes of this significant difference in the two subdimensions, Scheffe test is administered as a post-hoc test. The results of the Scheffe test show that the difference in the inquiry skills subdimension is attributed to the difference between English T&I-Persian T&I departments and between English T&I-Bulgarian T&I departments, favoring the English T&I department in both. The significant difference in the judiciousness subdimension is found to emerge from the difference between English T&I and Persian T&I departments, favoring the English T&I department, according to the Scheffe test.

Translator candidates' critical thinking skills scores based on class level

Translator candidates of all class levels involved in this study were found to be above average in their mean scores for problem-solving skills. On the other hand, the mean scores in the inquiry skills subdimension correspond to the average score based on the reference values, with the translator candidates in the second grade ($\bar{x}=3.09$) attaining the highest mean scores. The flexibility subdimension mean scores of all class levels involved in the study can be considered above the average, yet the second-grade participants ($\bar{x}=3.81$) stand out as the group with the highest mean score. Likewise, all class levels belong to the above-average interval with the second-grade participants ($\bar{x}=3.90$) achieving the highest mean score in the judiciousness subdimension. On the

other hand, the receptiveness subdimension mean scores of all class levels correspond to the highest (over 4.20 reference value) interval of critical thinking skills. When it comes to the open-mindedness subdimension, the translator candidates in the second grade ($\bar{x}=4.01$) have the highest mean scores while the other two class levels also fall into the above-average interval. While the participants in the second-grade generally excel in their mean scores for critical thinking skills (regardless of the significance or insignificance of the difference), they are found to be on the average interval in the mindfulness subdimension ($\bar{x}=3.39$), which is the lowest mean score in that subdimension, while the mean scores of the other two class levels are above the average. Finally, the mean scores of the total test show that the translator candidates in all class levels have above-average critical thinking skills, with those in the second-grade ($\bar{x}=3.85$) attaining the highest scores.

One-Way ANOVA test was used to determine if there is any significant difference between the translator candidates' critical thinking skills in terms of class level. The results of the ANOVA test to that end are given in Table 4.

Table 4. The results of ANOVA test concerning the difference between class levels in total score and subdimensions of critical thinking skills

Subdimension		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Difference between
problem-solving skills	Between groups	.011	2	.006	.013	.987	---
	Within groups	145.969	351	.416			
inquiry skills	Between groups	1.515	2	.757	.909	.404	---
	Within groups	292.517	351	.833			
flexibility	Between groups	2.392	2	1.196	3.564	.029*	2-4
	Within groups	117.792	351	.336			
judiciousness	Between groups	4.381	2	2.191	3.773	.024*	2-4
	Within groups	203.778	351	.581			
receptiveness	Between groups	.544	2	.272	.566	.568	---
	Within groups	168.612	351	.480			
open-mindedness	Between groups	3.439	2	1.719	2.171	.116	---
	Within groups	277.949	351	.792			
mindfulness	Between groups	1.354	2	.677	.930	.395	---
	Within groups	255.429	351	.728			
total test	Between groups	.410	2	.205	1.320	.268	---
	Within groups	54.457	351	.155			

As shown in Table 4, there is no significant difference between translator candidates' total test scores for critical thinking skills and for such subdimensions as problem-solving skills, inquiry skills, receptiveness, open-mindedness, and mindfulness based on class level. However, class level reveals a significant difference regarding the flexibility ($p=.029$) and judiciousness ($p=.024$) subdimensions. The Scheffe test, as a post-hoc test, shows that the significant difference in both subdimensions results from the difference between the second-grade and fourth-grade participants, favoring the second-grade in both.

Discussion and Conclusion

As a result of the data analysis, the total critical thinking attitudes of translator candidates were found to be above the average. This finding is in stark contrast with Saud's (2020, p. 24) finding that translation students reported low use of critical thinking skills. While the translator candidates displayed the highest attitude for the receptiveness subdimension, for the inquiry skills subdimension they showed the lowest. As inquiry skills could be considered one of the pivotal skills for translators due to the nature of the endeavor they are involved in, this skill needs to be addressed more closely, not only as an integral part of written or oral translation classes but also as a separate skill, with its importance emphasised in different tasks related to literary translation. Poetry, for instance, tends to be one of the most challenging endeavors for literary translators, requiring the employment of connotative and associative meanings of signs as efficiently as possible. 'Creating a new and innovative language that breaks the usual rules of the standard language with brand-new uses and meanings is probably one of the most important goals of the poet' (Öztürk Kasar and Tuna, 2018, p. 514). In line with this, literary translators are required to investigate the function of any sign in a literary text to reproduce "the foreign" in the local culture as devised by its author.

The significance of inquiry skills also holds true for specific text types such as legal texts. Legal texts can also create problems in translation even though they have specialised language and terminology (Altay, 2002). Inquiry skills could enable a legal translator to research the etymology and background of technical items, allowing the technical translation to overcome any difficulties at the terminological and sentential level. The use of inquiry skills can also be extended to diverse types of oral translation. For instance, a medical/community interpreter providing communication between

health workers and patients or their families needs to be able to first understand the cultural associations of discourses produced in medical settings, the absence of which could lead to failure in the medical procedure (Haffner, 1992, p. 255). As a result, inquiry skills must be a part of the oral translation course syllabus in addition to the specialised field translation syllabus.

The results of the independent sample t-test conducted to find out whether gender makes any significant difference in translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes reveal that male translator candidates' inquiry and mindfulness skills are significantly higher than those of females'. The inclusion of such courses as Discourse Analysis, Translation-Oriented Textual Analysis and Semiotics of Translation in the curriculum of Translation and Interpreting Studies departments would be an important step towards improving translator candidates' critical thinking skills. Group discussions or peer-work tasks within the framework of such courses could enable translator candidates to view their opinions more self-critically, based on the opinions of their peers, which could help enhance specific skills such as mindfulness. Group or peer discussions on the meanings of signs within the class would manifest the multiple perspectives in the reading of signs.

When it comes to the results of the One-Way ANOVA test to find out if translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes differ according to the language of study, it was found as a result of the post-hoc Scheffe test that there is a significant difference between English T&I and Persian T&I students, favoring the former in judiciousness skills. Moreover, there is a significant difference between English T&I students' inquiry skills and those of Persian T&I and Bulgarian T&I, favoring the former. Since the oral and written traditions of the Persian language date back to as early as the Achaemenid Empire, around the 500s BC (Melville, 2012, p. xx), and Bulgarian literature can be traced to the ninth century (Crampton, 2005, p. 15-16), it is no wonder that any written or oral discourse which is subject to translation from these languages should encompass contexts rich in narration. To address this issue, besides the contribution of the above-mentioned courses, which improve and consolidate critical thinking skills, courses such as those included in literary translation modules may also function in the same way. Being usually based on text analysis and literary criticism, these courses, by their very nature, enable students to extend their vision about multiple possible readings of a source text, be it written or oral, so that these potentialities can be preserved in the target text. The

critical thinking process in the analysis of these source texts operates on two aspects. On the first aspect, translators use their critical thinking skills in finding out the meanings of signs and the meaning universe of the source text. Once the translator candidates are given the task of analyzing a text for translation purposes, this could be followed by group discussions or peer-evaluation of the analysis in such courses, which would expose translator candidates to views other than their own.

Finally, the results of the One-Way ANOVA test and the post-hoc Scheffe test to find out whether translator candidates' critical thinking attitudes differ significantly according to their class level revealed a significant difference between the second-grade and fourth-grade students, favoring the former in judiciousness and flexibility. As flexibility involves consulting with others and considering their suggestions, the significant difference disfavoring the fourth-graders might result from their having more confidence in their knowledge of the text types and linguistic competence, and thereby not always deeming it necessary to consult with others. This confidence might be thought to have a consequence for judiciousness skills, which require self-criticism of one's own knowledge and cultural background. In this respect, courses like Sight Translation, Consecutive Interpreting, and Simultaneous Interpreting, which students generally take in the third or fourth grades, should also be designed with activities that involve interaction among peers or between the student and the instructor in charge of the course. These interactions would inevitably and favorably create an atmosphere in which translator candidates judge their own product and others' work within the class. Moreover, post-editing activities in Machine Translation courses, which naturally require critical reading of the translated text, could be designed in such a way as to foster peer-evaluation or group-discussion in order to extend this critical reading to one's own or others' work.

The results discussed so far demonstrate the importance of critical thinking for translators and point to the need for the inclusion of critical thinking skills as a learning outcome in T&I departments' curricula, as is also supported in the relevant literature (Kashirina, 2015; Moghaddas and Khoshsaligheh, 2019; Çetiner, 2018; Sriwantaneeyakul, 2018; Mohseni and Satariyan, 2011). Critical thinking can be taught and learned (Halpern, 1999, p. 70). In conclusion, it would be an asset for T&I students to

be provided with further chances of enhancing their critical thinking skills in line with the very nature of the act of translation.

References

- Altay, A. (2002). Difficulties encountered in the translation of legal texts: The case of Turkey. *Translation Journal*, 6(4).
<https://translationjournal.net/journal/22legal.htm>
- Bartu, H. (2002). *A Critical Reading Course*. Boğaziçi University Press.
- Birkan Baydan, E. & Karadağ, A. B. (2014). Literary Translation Workshop: Social Constructivist Approach Classroom Activities. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 152, 984–988. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.354>
- Brodaty, H., Mothakunnel, A., de Vel-Palumbo, M., Ames, D., Ellis, K., Reppermund, S. & Kochan, N. et al. (2014). Influence of population versus convenience sampling on sample characteristics in studies of cognitive aging. *Annals of Epidemiology*, 24(1), 63-71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annepidem.2013.10.005>
- Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2002). Faktör analizi: Temel kavramlar ve ölçek geliştirmede kullanımı. [Factor analysis: Key concepts and their use in scale development]. *Kuram ve Uygulamada Eğitim Yönetimi*, (32), 470-483.
- Çetiner, C. (2018). Analyzing the attitudes of translation students towards cat (computer-aided translation) tools. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 14(1), 153-161.
- Commeyras, M. (1990). Analyzing a critical-thinking reading lesson. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 6(3), 201-214. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X\(90\)90013-U](https://doi.org/10.1016/0742-051X(90)90013-U)
- Crampton, R. J. (2005). *A Concise History of Bulgaria*. Cambridge University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511996870>
- Daiek, D. & Anter, N. (2004). *Critical Reading for College and Beyond*. McGraw-Hill.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*. Oxford University Press.
- Ennis, R. (1985). A logical basis for measuring critical thinking skills. *Educational Leadership*, 43(2), 44–48.
- Facione, P. & Facione, N. (1992). *The California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory Test Manual*. The California Academic Press.
- Facione, P. (1990). *Critical Thinking: A Statement of Expert Consensus for Purposes of Educational Assessment and Instruction*. The California Academic Press.

- Facione, P. (2015). Critical thinking: What it is and why it counts. *Insight Assessment* 2015 (1), 1-29. [Original publication: 2007].
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering Statistics Using SPSS*. 4th ed. SAGE.
- George, D. & Mallery, P. (1999). *SPSS for Windows Step by Step: A Simple Guide and Reference*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Haffner, L. (1992). Translation is not enough. Interpreting in a medical setting. *Western Journal of Medicine*, 157(3), 255-259. <https://doi.org/10.1075/z.56.39har>
- Hair, J., Anderson, R., Tatham, R. & Black, W. (1995). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. 4th ed. Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Halpern, D. (1999). Teaching for critical thinking: Helping college students develop the skills and dispositions of a critical thinker. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 1999(80), 69-74. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.8005>
- Jaaskelainen, R. (1999). *Tapping the Process: An Explorative Study of Cognitive and Affective Factors Involved in Translating*. University of Joensuu Publications in Humanities.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2001). *Mindfulness Meditation for Everyday Life*. Piatkus Books.
- Karasar, N. (2005). *Bilimsel Araştırma Yöntemi* [Scientific Research Method]. 15th ed. Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.
- Kashirina, N. (2015). Psychology of translation: Critical and creative thinking. In Cui, Y. & Zhao, W. (Eds.). *Handbook of Research on Teaching Methods in Language Translation and Interpretation*. IGI Global (274-296). <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-6615-3.ch015>
- Lipman, M. (1987). Critical thinking: What can it be?. *Analytic Teaching*, 8(1), 5-12.
- Melville, C. (Ed.). (2012). *Persian Historiography: A History of Persian Literature*. I&B Tauris. <https://doi.org/10.5040/9780755610426>
- Minson, J., Chen, F. & Tinsley, C. (2020). Why won't you listen to me? Measuring receptiveness to opposing views. *Management Science* 66(7), 3069-3094. <https://doi.org/10.1287/mnsc.2019.3362>
- Moghaddas, M. & Khoshsaligheh, M. (2019). Implementing project-based learning in a Persian translation class: a mixed-methods study. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 13(2), 190-209. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2018.1564542>
- Mohseni, A. & Satariyan, A. (2011). The Relation between Critical Thinking and Translation Quality. *Journal of Language and Translation*, 2(2), 23-32.

- Özdemir, S. M. (2005). Üniversite öğrencilerinin eleştirel düşünme becerilerinin çeşitli değişkenler açısından değerlendirilmesi. [Evaluation of university students' critical thinking skills based on various variables] *Türk Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi* 3(3), 297-316.
- Öztürk Kasar, S. & Tuna, D. (2017). Shakespeare in three languages: Reading and analyzing sonnet 130 and its translations in light of semiotics. *IJLET International Journal of Languages' Education and Teaching*, 5(1), 170-181. <https://doi.org/10.18298/ijlet.1723>
- Öztürk Kasar, S. & Tuna, D. (2018). Üç dilde Shakespeare: Göstergebilimin ışığında 130. sone ile çevirilerini okumak ve çözümlemek [Shakespeare in three languages: Reading and analyzing sonnet 130 and its translations in light of semiotics]. *International Journal of Languages' Education and Teaching*, 6(1). 514-539. <https://doi.org/10.18298/ijlet.2708>
- Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2012). *The Thinker's Guide to Fallacies*. Thinker's Guide Library.
- Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2020). *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts and Tools*. 8th ed. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pirozzi, R. (2003). *Critical Reading, Critical Thinking. A Contemporary Issues Approach*. 2nd ed. Longman.
- Ricœur, P. (2016). *On Translation*. Routledge
- Saud, W. I. (2020). The Relationship between Critical Thinking and Translation Ability of EFL Undergraduate Students. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies* 7(3), 19-28. <https://doi.org/10.23918/ijsses.v7i3p19>
- Scriven, M. & Paul, R. (1987). Defining critical thinking. Paper Presented at The Foundation for Critical Thinking 8th Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking and Education Reform, Summer. Retrieved from: <https://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/defining-critical-thinking/766>
- Shapiro, S. & Carlson, L. (2009). *The Art and Science of Mindfulness: Integrating Mindfulness into Psychology and The Helping Professions*. Washington: American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/11885-000>
- Shapiro, S. (2009). The integration of mindfulness and psychology. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 65(6), 555-560. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.20602>
- Shihab, I. A. (2011). Reading as critical thinking. *Asian Social Science*, 7(8), 209-218. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v7n8p209>
- Sriwantaneeyakul, S. (2018). Critical reading skills and translation ability of Thai EFL students: Pragmatic, syntactic, and semantic aspects. *English Language Teaching*, 11(4), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v11n4p1>

- Tabachnick, B. & Fidell, L. (2013). *Using Multivariate Statistics*. 5th ed. Pearson Education.
- Thistlethwaite, L. (1990). Critical reading for at-risk students. *Journal of Reading*, 33(8), 586-593.
- Tuna, D. & Avaz, M. G. (2019). Analyzing, transmitting, and editing an Anatolian tale: A literary translation project as process. *RumeliDE Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, (S6), 533-554. <https://doi.org/10.29000/rumelide.649353>
- Tuna, D. (2017). Revealing to translate: The intertextuality and strategic nature of voices, presuppositions and metadiscourse in a non-literary text. *IJLET International Journal of Languages' Education and Teaching*, 5(3), 133-144. <https://doi.org/10.18298/ijlet.2064>
- Whimbey, A., Lochhead, J. & Narode, R. (2013). *Problem Solving & Comprehension*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203130810>
- Will, F. (1983). Translating the Conceptual. *Babel* 29(4), 214-221. <https://doi.org/10.1075/babel.29.4.06wil>

Reviewers:

1. Anonymous:
2. Anonymous

Handling Editor:

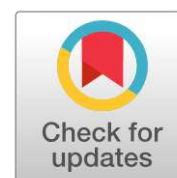
Boris Naimushin, PhD,
New Bulgarian University

INVADERS, ATTACKERS AND DESTROYERS: TRESPASSING-RELATED TERMS AND REPRESENTATIONS IN NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

Ebuka Elias Igwebuike

Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel, Germany

Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Nigeria



Abstract

Discourses on herding have focussed on the “exact” representations of the social actions of itinerant herders who clash with farmers while grazing on supposed cattle routes. Media coverage on the herdsman-farmers conflict has deployed ideologically laden terms to represent herding as trespassing on farmlands and herders as foreigners and trespassers. Using van Leeuwen’s Representation of Social Actions and Actors model and Martin and White’s Appraisal Framework, this paper examines how different trespassing-related terms (i.e. invade, attack and destroy) were deployed in the Nigerian newspaper headlines to represent herders and their activities with a view to discussing the kinds of representations that were constructed of the nomads through the texts. Findings revealed that using transactive role allocations, nominalization, descriptivation, identification, aggregation and attitudinal lexicalization, these social actors were evaluated negatively as intruders, raiders, and destroyers. The negative othering underscores the general perception and suspicious treatment of nomads in their host farming communities.

Keywords: media representation, trespassing, evaluation, newspaper headlines, Fulani herdsman, farming-herding conflict, social actors and actions analysis, Nigeria

Article history:

Received: 11 January 2022

Reviewed: 10 February 2022

Accepted: 15 March 2022

Published: 30 June 2022

Copyright © 2022 Ebuka Elias Igwebuike



This open access article is published and distributed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at igwebuike@ips.uni-kiel.de. If you want to use the work commercially, you must first get the authors’ permission.

Citation: Igwebuike, E. E. (2022). Invaders, Attackers and Destroyers: Trespassing-related Terms and Representations in Nigerian Newspaper Headlines. *English Studies at NBU*, 8(1), 117-140.
<https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.22.1.7>

Dr. Ebuka Elias Igwebuike is a postdoctoral research fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in the International Political Sociology, the Christian-Albrecht University of Kiel, Germany. He is also a 2014 AHP postdoctoral fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies. His research interests include: (critical) discourse analysis and social media studies and socio-political violence in the media.

E-mail: igwebuike@ips.uni-kiel.de

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3764-1333>

Background and Problem

In recent time, research on discursive representation of actors of violence has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention in (critical) discourse analysis. The studies, aimed at examining language use especially by the media focused on terrorists (Ahmad, 2016; Sanz Sabido, 2013), militants (Chiluwa, 2010), revolutionists and rebels (Al-Gamde and Tenbrink, 2020), and protesters and demonstrators (Trew, 1979, Sadeghi, Hassani and Jalali, (2014) and on the issues of religion (Ghauri and Umber, 2019; Poole, 2016; Powell, 2011), ethnicity and racism (Webster, 2018, Nyamnjoh, 2010). Focusing on discursive strategies such as labelling, polarization, argumentation, agency suppression and backgrounding, etc. the research has shown that the media dominantly portray these minority social actors as violent and a threat to the society. In addition, the research has examined (de)legitimation strategies used in the representations and evaluations of the supposed perpetrators of violent actions, and submits that media bias are central in construction of their identities and reproduction of dominant ideologies. Despite this ample research, there is a paucity of critical discourse studies in the African context, even though discourses on especially conflict are predominant in the media given the violence-prone nature of the Africa continent (Aremu, 2010). Scholars such as Chiluwa and Chiluwa (2020) and Nartey and Ladegaard (2021) have examined media reports on herders-farmers conflict in Nigeria and Ghana, respectively, but do not focus on representations bordering on ownership of and trespassing on grazing and farming area.

Clashes between herdsman and farmers have recently escalated into widespread violence, attracting the attention of the media, which report on the day-to-day incidents of the resource-based conflict. The media are filled with many reports on the ownership dispute and clashes between herdsman and farmers to the extent that there is “not a single day without a negative reportage on the farmer-pastoralist conflicts” (Agyemang, 2017, p. 23). Trespassing has become the dominant reportage frames used in representing the crisis as contest for and invasion of grazing and farming space. Before now, herders are presented as living in a harmonious, peaceful, symbiotic relationship with the farmers (International Crisis Group Report, 2017). According to Igwebuike (2020), they have co-existed and interacted with the southern farmers and landowners who view them as mere harmless nomads and pastoralists. The mutual symbiotic relation is such

that “while grazing their herds in the south, pastoralists were providing farmers with manure, milk and other animals products. In return, they received grains and vegetables and took the farmers’ animals into their custody” (Leonhardt, 2017, p. 4). Recent emerging media representations, in particular, portray cattle grazing as an invasion and destruction of farms (Ele, 2020, Idowu and Okunola, 2017). Since the media is a powerful institution involved in the business of representation, the particular angle media stories are framed becomes the dominant perspective on how people view events and people as well as shaping audience’s opinion (Mccombs, 2011). Thus, the media play a significant role of not only informing people but also act as a key filter through which people learn about the activities of the “other” and form their opinions (Ross, 2019).

Media representations tend to exhibit prejudice against the nomads (Nartey & Ladegaard, 2021). According to Nartey and Ladegaard (2021), media selective reporting of violent incidents through sensational headlines, alarmist news contents and bias quotations projects the Fulani herdsman group as the “undesirables” in Ghana. In the same vein, Chilwa and Chilwa (2020) submit that the conscious language choices of the Nigerian media, such as “attack” instead of “clash” in representing violent actions of the conflict portray the violence as one-sided as well as constructing the herders as a violent group. These representations influence public understanding of herding-farming issues as well as shaping media consumers’ perception and categorizations of the herders’ group. More importantly, since the conflict is primarily resource-based and a struggle over access of a contested space (Onah, Asadu, & Aduma, 2019), the use of trespassing-related vocabulary to describe social actors and actions has implications on the understanding of issues relating to ownership and non-ownership of the area. This study, therefore, explores the linguistic and ideological representation of Fulani herdsman with a view to pointing out how the Nigerian media employ violence- and trespassing-related vocabulary to report their activities. Specifically, it examines how the media reports on Fulani herders’ activities construct the identity of the herders as violent trespassers and non-owners of the supposed grazing fields. This becomes necessary as “different ways of representing social action encode different interpretations of, and different attitudes to, the social actions represented” (van Leeuwen, 1995, p. 81).

Nomadic Herding, Ownership of and Trespassing on Farmland

Nomadic herding through seasonal and occasional mass movement of herds from the arid north to the humid south is shrouded in conflict between the herdsmen and the farmers over access and ownership of grazing routes and farms. Impacts of climate change such as drastic reduction in rainfall, increase in the rate of dryness and heat, etc. in the north have intensified the southward movements and herders' interactions with farming communities along the migration and grazing routes, leading to frequent clashes and violence (Obioha, 2008). Such movements by transhumant herders are accommodated in the ECOWAS Protocol on Transhumance Treaty (1998) which stipulates free movement of persons, services and goods in and across borders of ECOWAS member States. However, in some African countries such as Nigeria where there are no longer marked transhumance corridors and grazing areas, pastoralists are occasionally "vulnerable to allegations of trespassing" (Leonhardt 2017, p. 59).

Trespassing by grazing on farms is one of the undisputed causes of farmer-herder conflict (Adomako, 2019, p. 1). Due to the expansion of farmland through commercial agriculture as well as industrialization, previously created cattle routes in the 1960s have collapsed and there is always controversies determining legitimate rights of access and control of contested grazing areas (Odoemene, 2017; Ele, 2020). According to Leonhardt (2017, p. 27), "In the 1970s, the system of stock routes began to collapse, as farmers increasingly claimed ownership of the land crossed by the stock routes and began to cultivate the well-manured plots. Cattle following the stock routes so inevitably wandered into newly created farms, leading to conflict and violence". Consequently, there is increased competition for land leading to ownership and non-ownership issues as well as accusations of trespassing. While the herdsmen claim to have been using the routes since colonial day, the farmers argue that the land in their family inheritance, thereby considering the herders as invaders. According to Idowu (2017, p. 188), "The Fulani herders claim there is freedom of movement-of man and cattle, interaction and association in the country while the farmers see the farmland invasion as not acceptable and infringement on their personal and communal properties".

Issues bordering on rights of ownership to grazing routes and farms as well as trespassing have triggered national policies. In Ghana, for instance, the policy of expulsion was promulgated which authorized evacuation of herders from Ghana as well as classifying herdsmen as *persona non grata* and foreigners, thereby denying them access

to herding in the country (Olaniyan, Francis, & Okeke-Uzodike, 2015). Also, there was the deployment of a joint military-police taskforce code-named “Operation Cow Leg” targeted as driving out Fulani herdsmen (Adomako, 2019). On its own part, the Nigerian government passed the Grazing Reserve law that allows it to legally acquire a minimum 10 per cent of the country’s land area and constitute it into grazing reserves for lease allocation to pastoralists (Leonhardt, 2017). While the Federal Government’s attempt to establish grazing reserves (cattle colonies) was targeted at curtailing indiscriminate grazing and trespassing on farms, the Rural Grazing Area (RUGA) bill was politicized and viewed as a land-grabbing strategy in favor of the northern Fulani. According to Onah, Asadu and Aduma (2019), leaders from the southern Christian-dominated farming areas opposed the ideas and argued that provision of cattle colony to the Fulani herdsmen is a subtle agenda to “Islamize” and “Fulanize” the country. Consequently, such unsuccessful implementations of the grazing policies to guarantee rightful access to land use have continued to escalate communal tensions between farmers and herders (Ele, 2020). Herders-farmers violence is also mainly played out in the media, which present it in different fronts including representations on right to access and ownership of land as well as trespassing on private farmland. In particular, selective word choices such as “nomads vs. natives” and “indigenes vs settlers” (Okoli & Atelhe, 2014) contribute to influencing media consumers’ perceptions of the ownership and non-ownership status of the conflicting parties.

Media Representations of Herders-Farmers Violence

The media are in the business of representing people and actions and their representations play a vital role in shaping and forming our perceptions of others and events. Media representations are often based on socio-cultural stereotypes and ideologies, which tend to portray the out-group negatively (Ross, 2019). In the herders-farmers violence, the herdsmen are systematically portrayed negatively in media representations (Chiluwa & Chiluwa, 2020; Igwebuike, 2020; Nartey & Ladegaard, 2021). For instance, the herdsmen are linked to criminality and are identified with negative stereotypes such as rapists and armed robbers (Adomako 2019; Bukari & Schareika 2015). Media prejudiced portrayals of the nomads contribute to an exclusionist and a discriminatory discourse that puts the nomads at the margins of Ghanaian society (Nartey & Ladegaard, 2021). Despite the fact that herders-farmers violence is two-sided, “Media reports are

often rife with violent acts committed by herders contributing to an erroneous perception that Fulani herdsmen are not law abiding” (Adomako, 2019: 2). In the Nigerian press, there is a negative stance of the herders group as they are identified as killers. According to Chilwa & Chilwa (2020, p. 16) “the Nigerian press succeeds in creating the killer-herdsmen “script” with which the herders and their activities are frequently evaluated, and this forms the general perception of the herders, including those (herdsmen) that may have been victimized”. Furthermore, metaphorical constructions serve to justify the demonization of the herdsmen (Anonymous, 2020). According to Anonymous (2020), the Nigerian press use metaphors of dangerous water, hunting and cleaning agents to construct herdsmen negatively as disasters trying to eliminate farmers. Also, Alfred and Oyebola (2019, p. 3) have shown how the Nigerian editorials syntactically positioned the cattle herders as “Agents of destruction and death and syntactically portrayed Nigerians and farmers as the victims/affected of these security issues”.

One of the prominent media frames is “aggressor versus victim” representation by which the herdsmen are presented as an armed group attacking the farmers with dangerous weapons (Higazi, 2016). Before the escalation of the violent identities, herdsmen are known to move about with traditional sticks, arrows and machetes to help them navigate the bushes and separate fighting cows on their way down to the South (Abdulai & Yakubu 2014). However, by identifying the group with such labels as “cutlass-wielding herdsmen” or “well-armed herdsmen” presents them as an armed violent group (Ajibefun, 2018; Ciboh 2017). In the same vein, a significant pattern of media representation is invasions of farms and subtle land grabbing tactics under the guise of cattle grazing (Bamidele 2018). Media reports tend to suggest that the main triggers of the increased clashes between farmers and nomads include trespassing on farmland. In this regards, violence- and trespassing-related vocabulary is employed to present the continued violence as invasions, attacks and dispossession of farmland. For instance, the media’s metaphorical use of “descended on” constructs the herders as invaders who launched surprise ambush on host communities (Alfred & Oyebola, 2019, p. 9) while the use of metaphors of dangerous water such as “stormed”, “poured” and “flooded” construct massive invasion and takeover of a place (Anonymous, 2020). Such media representations of the “other” have become influential in constructing, reproducing and reinforcing shared and dominant ideologies in the society (van Dijk 2000). These collectively shared ideologies or representations are “usually tied to particular discourses, which

work to shape the meanings and identities attached to ‘other’ people” (Torkington and Ribeiro, 2019, p. 24). According to Ross (2019), representations of the “other” are largely negative with hegemonic and discriminatory stereotypes suggesting criminality (Ross, 2019).

Representing and Evaluating Social Actors and Actions

Social actors and actions are constantly being represented in the media from different ideological angles. Van Leeuwen (2008) proposed a comprehensive theoretical approach “Representing Social Actions and Actors in Discourse” to explain the different ways through which social actions and actors are represented defined in discourses. Some of the categories of his theory include transactive and non-transactive role allocations, nominalization, descriptivation, identification and aggregation.

According van Leeuwen (2008), social actors are allocated with active (activation) role or passive (deactivation) role. Social actors are represented as active forces whose actions have effects on other participants while other actors can be passivated and represented as recipients or goals experiencing the actions of the agents. In the same vein, social actions are often presented as transactive and nontransactive actions. According to Leeuwen (2008), transactive material processes involve an actor and a goal (or Patient) while non-transactive processes have only one participant, the Actor. While the actions is transactive processes have effects on people or things, they do affect other people or things in the nontransactive processes. Actors can also be represented generically (genericization) or specifically (specification), as well as referring to them personally or impersonally (van Leeuwen (2008). They can also be presented as individuals or as belonging to a group. Using plurality or mass nouns, actors are represented collectively and denoted as a group of people (collectivization) while a group of actors can be treated as statistics using definite and indefinite quantifiers (aggregation). Identification as a discourse strategy of representing actors is when social actors are defined in terms of what they are (such as their ethnicity, religion, etc.). A part of identification is descriptivation, which is when social actors are assigned certain qualities using adjectives. It is important to know that by using any of the discourse strategies in representing actors and actions, the media are projecting particular points of view, ideologies, as well as influencing readers’ opinions towards the represented.

In media representations, social actors and actions are also evaluated. Martin and White (2005) provide the appraisal framework for the analysis of writer's stance and evaluations of actors and actions. According to Martin and White (2005), the three concepts of attitude, engagement and graduation are key in determining how writers express their approval or disapproval of people and actions. In particular, the system of attitude encompasses how "feelings, including emotional reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluation of things" are expressed in texts (Martin & White, 2005, p. 35). While graduation is concerned with how feelings are amplified or lowered, engagement deals with linguistic resources by which the writer's voice is positioned intersubjectively (White, 2001). In the analysis, Martin and White's (2005) appraisal resources will be used to examine evaluative aspects of language use.

The Corpus and Methodology

The data are online news reports on herders-farmers conflict collected from the websites of four Nigerian national newspapers, namely, The Punch, The Guardian, Leadership, and Daily Trust. The printed and electronic format of the four newspapers are among the most widely read and leading Nigerian dailies. The newspapers were selected because of their national coverage, perceived popularity and accessibility. They cut across both the northern and southern parts of Nigeria. The first two are located in the southern part while the last two are located in the Northern and the capital city of Nigeria. In terms of political orientation, The Punch and The Guardian are among the few overtly non-political newspapers, noting their balanced coverage of events without explicit display of allegiance to any political, ethnic or religious group (Adesoji & Hahn, 2011; Ademilokun & Taiwo 2014). Leadership is generally considered pro-government and has the backing of its strong politician owner, Samuel Ndanusa Isaiah while Daily Trust is moderately apolitical but displays strong bias towards pursuing northern Nigerian agenda (Daramola, 2013). The study covered the period (2017 – 2019) when the conflict was at its highest peak.

The search words used to collect data were "herdsmen", "herdsmen invasion" and "herdsmen attack". These returned large number of news reports. Hence, there was the decision to limit the corpus to news headlines containing at least one of the search words. Headlines are key to news reports as they attract the attention of readers as well as persuading them to read the whole news story (Bell 1991). They constitute a discourse site

for ideological manipulations and evaluations of situations using eye-catching phrases, emotive vocabulary and rhetorical and graphological devices (Taiwo, 2007). In the same vein, headlines also play a prominent role in orienting the interpretation of news by readers (Develotte & Rechniewski, 2001). More importantly, due to their short and catchy nature, newspaper headlines contain carefully selected words used to evaluate people and events. A total number of 160 news headlines comprising 40 each from the four newspapers were purposively sampled and used in the analysis. Table 1 below presents the frequency count of the use of trespassing-related terms in the selected newspapers.

Table 1: Sources and Frequencies of the Use of Trespassing Terms in the Data (2017 – 2019)

Newspapers	Invasion	Destruction	Attack	Total
Northern				
Daily Trust	05	02	16	23
Leadership	04	04	26	34
Sub-Total	09	06	42	57
Southern				
The Punch	21	15	20	56
The Guardian	04	01	33	38
Sub-Total	25	16	53	94
Grand Total	34	22	95	151

Table 1 presents the number of times that words related to trespassing occur in the newspapers. “Attack” has the highest number, occurring 95 times. It implies that, more than all the other forms, trespassing is mainly constructed as an attack on the farmers and farmland. The next is “invasion” with 34 occurrences. Though invasion is closely related to attack, it differs as invasion entails entering and occupation of a space by force while attack involves some degrees of physical assault. “Destruction” has the least number of occurrences with just 22, most of which comes from the southern-based newspapers. This could be related to the fact that most of the farms destroyed are located in the southern part of Nigeria. In addition, the southern newspaper deployed more of the trespassing-related vocabulary at 94 times than their northern counterparts at 57 times. The implication of this is that the southern newspapers seem to be altruistic towards the southern farmers who are reported as the victims of the violence and

trespassing. In the next section, instances of the use of the trespassing vocabulary are identified and analyzed using van Leeuwen's (2008) and Martin and White's (2005) theoretical approaches.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Invasion, Attack and Destruction as Social Actions

"Invade", "attack" and "destroy" are trespassing-related words deployed to represent social actions of the herders as trespassing. Through these, the herdsmen are portrayed as violent trespassers. In the corpus, "attack" has the highest number of frequency at 95, followed by "invade" at 34 and lastly, "destroy" at 22. Such trespassing terms are reflected in the following headlines:

- (1) Herdsmen **invade** Imo community, **destroy** multi-million naira crops (*The Punch*, August 17, 2017)
- (2) Again, Troops Nab 7 Herdsmen **Destroying** Farmlands in Benue (*Leadership*, March 01, 2018)
- (3) Herdsmen **destroying** our crops-Anambra farmers (*Daily Trust*, April 19, 2019)
- (4) Herdsmen **attack** Delta community, kills police officer (*The Guardian*, February 01, 2019)
- (5) Herdsmen **Destroy** Farm, **Poison** Dam In UNILORIN (*Leadership*, February 12, 2018)
- (6) Residents flee home as herdsmen **invade** Cross River community (*The Punch*, December 6, 2017)
- (7) Tension in Delta communities over **fresh attack** by herdsmen (*The Guardian*, May 23, 2017)
- (8) 8 persons feared dead as suspected herdsmen **attack** 2 Benue villages (*Daily Trust*, May 09, 2017)

"Invade", "attack" and "destroy" are used in the headlines to evaluate herdsmen's actions as trespassing. They constitute negative judgement of the situation and by using them, the media present the herdsmen as violent actors engaging in trespassing acts. In particular, while "destroy" portrays violent acts of damaging sources of livelihood and investments in Examples 1, 2, 3 and 5, it depicts murderous acts of contaminating water. On its own part, "invade" explicitly depict intrusion and occupation of a space. Using the term to describe the actions of herders in Examples 1 and 6, the herders are depicted as trespassers who have illegally taken over some communities in the southern states of Imo and Cross River. In the same vein, "attack" carries the notion of violent force geared

towards causing injury or harm. The resultant effects of such violent effects include the death of a police officer in Example 4 and the killing of eight persons in Example 8. Using the *affect* resource “flee” in Example 6 and “tension” in Example 7, the newspapers evaluate insecurity caused by herdsmen’s invasion and attack, respectively. Inclusion of southern communities (Imo, Delta and Cross River), village (Benue) as well as other spatial locators (e.g. Anambra) as the areas invaded, attacked and destroyed by the herdsmen construct the nomads as the dangerous “outsiders”. This is because up to about 90% of herdsmen are of the Northern Fulani ethnic group (International Crisis Group Report, 2017) and the communities reported to be attacked in the headlines are in the southern regions. Thus, a recurring pattern of using “invade”, “attack” and “destroy” farms and communities in close connection with herdsmen paints the picture that the nomads are trespassing on the farming communities in the southern parts. Lexical items such as “again” and “fresh” reinforce the view of frequent disturbances of the herdsmen in the region.

Role Allocation of Social Actors

Herdsmen are allocated the roles of agents and patients. As agents, they play an active part in the represented violent activities while as patients; they are at the receiving end of a supposed counterattack.

Herdsmen as agents

Herdsmen are generally represented as having aggressive, destructive role. In the headlines, they are assigned more with transactive roles whereby their violent actions have adverse effects on the farmers and security officers than with non-transactive roles. Since “the ability ‘to transact’ requires a certain amount of power” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 60), herdsmen are elevated from having lower status in the society to having powerful roles by carrying out violent transactive material actions.

Transactive Actions

Some examples where herdsmen are allocated transactive roles are presented below:

(9) Again, herdsmen invade Falae’s farm, attack policemen (*The Punch*, June 20, 2017)

(10) Suspected herdsmen attack villages, kill 2 farmers in Benue (*Daily Trust*, April

- 3, 2017)
- (11) Suspected herdsmen attack farmer in Edo (*The Guardian*, August 02, 2018)
 - (12) Herdsmen destroy farms in Osun villages (*The Punch*, January 29, 2018)
 - (13) Suspected herdsmen sack 2 communities, raze 27 houses in Nasarawa (*Daily Trust*, March 27, 2019)
 - (14) Herdsmen attack Benue community, kill five farmers (*The Punch*, January 05, 2017)
 - (15) Herdsmen Attack Workers, Sack Local Govt Secretariat in Ondo (*Leadership*, February 13, 2018)

The headlines above present different transactive actions of herdsmen. Syntactically, the herdsmen are placed at the subject position of the material processes (invade, attack, destroy, etc.), thereby making them responsible for the varying trespassing acts. The implication of this direct and explicit representation is that the herders are constructed as the aggressors in the herders-farmers conflict. For instance, trespassing is explicit in Example 9 in which herdsmen are represented as invading Falae's farm once again and attacking policemen. "Again" in the headline presupposes the former Nigerian Minister of Finance's farm has had previous invasion(s). Their invasion and attack sometimes lead to killing of farmers as stated in Examples 10 and 14. "Destroy" as trespassing extends to pulling down of farm crops (Example 12) and burning of houses (Example 13). Significantly, "sack" is a *judgement* resource used to evaluate herders' activities as trespassing. From the metaphor of job and employment, "sack" entails dispossession of a space. By its use in Example 15, it presents the view that herders have extended their violent acts from the farmers and security forces to other members of the communities, including the local government workers.

Nontransactive Actions

In the data, nontransactive actions involving a single actor participant are realized through nominalizations. Nominalizations objectify a given action as a phenomenon rather than as an active process. According to Mayr and Machin (2011), in nominalizations, verb processes are converted into noun constructions and the degrees of impacts of social actors' actions are minimized. While nominalizations obscure agency or make invisible an actor of a given action, nominalizations in the corpus foreground the

agency of actors and only background already known patients. Instances of nontransactive actions are:

- (16) IMO youths raise alarm over herdsmen invasion (*The Punch*, May 03, 2017)
- (17) Bishop raises concern over Herdsmen attacks (*The Guardian*, March 25, 2018)
- (18) Herdsmen attacks: 2,000 children out of school in Nasarawa (*The Punch*, June 15, 2019)
- (19) Death toll risen to 78 in Nasarawa Herdsmen attacks (*Daily Trust*, April 18, 2018)
- (20) At least 30 killed in herdsmen clash (*The Guardian*, November 22, 2017)
- (21) Magboro community raises the alarm over herdsmen invasion (*The Punch*, February 01, 2018)
- (22) Palpable Fear in Edo Community over Herdsmen Attack (*Leadership*, January 28, 2018)

Nominalizations are realized in “attacks”, “invasion” and “clash”. These nominal have reduced and minimized the effects of their verbal processes as well as constructing the actions as objects. Unlike in the transactive actions (Examples 9 – 15), actions here have been converted into abstract nouns. However, the use of nominalizations is strategic as they personalize the violent actions. that is, the nominal nouns are qualified with the adjective “Herdsmen” as in “herdsmen attacks”, “herdsmen invasion” and “herdsmen clash”. Through this, the herders are identified as the violent actors. In particular, the nominal phrase “herdsmen clash” specifically identified only herders in a violent act that entails more than one conflicting parties. A “clash” involves two warring participants. By writing the headline as “At least 30 killed in herdsmen clash” (Example 20) instead of “At least 30 killed in herdsmen-farmers clash” shows that the headline is bias against the herdsmen. That is, by qualifying “clash” with only “herdsmen”, the newspaper has taken a stand that it was the herdsmen who clashed with the unspecified participant; in this case, the farmers. The bias in the headline is obvious in the body of the news report, as the clash is an attack on the herdsmen by the farmers in Adamawa State, northeast Nigeria. In the same vein, pluralising “attack” as “attacks” in Examples 17 - 19 portrays the violence as constant and frequent. *Judgment* resources “raise alarm” (Examples 16 and 21) and “raise concern” (Example 17) evaluate the reactions of the southern farming

communities (Imo, Magboro, etc.) as warning against impending dangers of herders trespassing. Also, the *affect* resources “palpable fear” (Example 22) evaluates the emotions of the people as panic and insecure. In all, despite the fact that nominalizations are used, the two participants (actors and goals) are easily discernible in the headlines.

Herdsmen as Patients

Apart from representing herdsmen as agents of trespassing acts, they are also assigned the role of patients. As patients, herders are represented as suspects and victims of a crime. That is, during police interventions and control of crimes, the herdsmen are “arrested” and, subsequently “killed”. The underlying representation is that herdsmen are apprehended for engaging in criminal offences or captured for illegal possession of arms. This portrayal maintains the positive presentation of the police as proactive in maintaining law and order, including curtailing disturbances and trespassing. For instance:

(23) Troops Nab 7 Herdsmen Who Destroy Farmlands (*Leadership*, March 02, 2018)

(24) Troops arrest Fulani herdsmen planning attack on Benue community (*The Punch*, February 08, 2018)

(25) 4 Herdsmen Arrested For Attacking Ogun Communities (*Leadership*, May 09, 2019)

(26) Seven herdsmen arrested in Benue while destroying farms (*The Punch*, March 02, 2018)

(27) Troops kill 36 armed herdsmen in Benue (*Daily Trust*, May 21, 2018)

(28) Military parades captured armed herdsmen (*The Punch*, April 28, 2018)

(29) Herdsmen raze Adamawa village, army kills 10 fleeing attackers (*The Punch*, February 28, 2018)

The headlines in Example 23 – 29 present herdsmen as patients of the material processes of arrest, captured, nabbed, killed, etc. These material processes, especially arrest, captured and nabbed, entail that the herders were caught in violent acts. Identification of herdsmen with the negative tags such as “armed herdsmen” (Example 28) and “fleeing attackers” (Example 29) in the headlines reinforces the view that herdsmen are violent and constitute a threat to the peaceful life of the farming

communities. Hence, they are represented as “deserving” victims of policing. “Fleeing attackers”, removes negativity in the police killing by subscribing to the view that the herdsmen were killed while “evading” from the army after attacking a village (Example 29). The underlying representation is that the herdsmen are arrested and killed while trespassing through destroying farms (Examples 23, 26 and 29) and attacking farming communities (Examples 24 and 25). This representation supports the killing of herdsmen who are by the labels considered threats to the supposedly peaceful communities.

Other Agents: Police and Farmers

Apart from the herdsmen, the police and farmers are two other agents represented in the headlines. As already seen in Texts 23 – 29 above, the police are represented as having an active, preventive role – arresting and killing herdsmen who trespassed on the farming communities. In addition to this, the police also perform the role of curtailing trespassing activities through interception of arms (Example 30) and prosecution of violent herdsmen (Examples 31 and 33):

(30) Police intercept herdsmen with firearms, army uniforms in Ebonyi (*Daily Trust*, April 21, 2018)

(31) Benue police prosecute 188 herdsmen over anti-grazing law (*The Punch*, June 05, 2018)

(32) Police recover three corpses as Fulani herdsmen attack Plateau commuters (*The Punch*, February 14, 2018)

(33) Police to prosecute herdsmen for destroying farmlands in Edo (*The Punch*, January 21, 2018)

(34) Police confirm 4 dead as herdsmen attack Ebonyi community (*Daily Trust*, March 13, 2018)

Examples 30 – 34 are headlines that positively evaluate police and negatively portray herdsmen. As agents, the police are positioned as subjects of the security activities. Conversely, the herdsmen are portrayed as the perpetrators of the violent activities which the police are controlling.

As agents, the farmers and the farming communities are presented as passive victims (patients) of the herdsmen attacks. As vulnerable people, they mainly “protest” (Examples 35 and 36), “lament” (Examples 37, 39 and 40) and “accuse” (Example 38)

herdsmen of their plights. For instance:

(35) Abia women protest farm invasion, sexual harassment by herdsmen (*Daily Trust*, January 04, 2018)

(36) Indigenes protest against killings by herdsmen, ransack forest in Edo (*The Guardian*, 26 June 2019)

(37) Edo farmers lament herdsmen attacks (*The Punch*, June 19, 2017)

(38) Kaduna indigenes accuse herdsmen of harvesting crops (*The Guardian*, April 06, 2017)

(39) Herdsmen destroying our farms, Ekiti residents cry out (*The Punch*, March 05, 2017)

(40) Women farmers lament activities of herdsmen in Enugu (*The Guardian*, March 26, 2017)

The representation is that this class of people is vulnerable and defenseless to the violent trespassers. The image created is that of a generalized collectivity of powerless victims whose farms have been trespassed on. The newspapers use *affect* resources “cry out”, “lament”, “accuse” and “protest” to evaluate the feelings of the group as fear and pain. In particular, the use of the tags “indigenes” (Example 36) and “residents” (Example 39) depicts legal ownership and occupiers of the trespassed area. According to Anonymous (2016), “indigene” entails aboriginal inhabitants of a place and confers a kind of ownership while “resident” depicts legal occupier of a space. In the same vein, explicit tags such as “Abia women” (Example 35) and “Edo farmers” (Example 37) also add to the designation of the actual occupiers and owners of the farmers that were destroyed and attacked. Abia and Edo are states in the southern part of Nigeria.

Genericization and specification

Social actors are referred to generally or specifically in the news headlines. Genericization is when social actors are represented as general classes of groups or individuals while specification occurs when social actors are identified as specific individuals (van Leeuwen 2008). In the data, herdsmen are identified generally through collectivization, and specifically through identification. *Collectivization* is realized using plurality or mass nouns to denote a group of people. In this case, trespassers or actors of violence are identified collectively with the plural common noun “herdsmen”. The

newspapers avoid identifying them as specific individuals but rather genericize them as herdsmen. Despite the absence of qualifying definite or indefinite article attached to the term, “herdsmen” in the Nigerian context is generic and denotes a group of northern cattle breeders. Frequent use of this plural form has created a mental schema that conscripts all cattle breeders as the “violent herdsmen”. On the other hand, herdsmen are equally identified as specific identifiable individuals through *identification*. They are defined in terms of their ethnicity. In Examples 41 – 46, ethnic identifying classifiers such as “Fulani” and “Hausa” are used to describe herdsmen as belonging to the Fulani and Hausa ethnic groups. The classifiers particularize their identities as well as making it explicit that the “violent” herdsmen are of the northern tribes:

(41) **Fulani** herdsmen invade Ondo varsity’s farm, destroy crops (*The Punch*, September 12, 2017)

(42) 1 Killed As Suspected **Fulani** Herdsmen Invade Community in Ondo (*Leadership*, January 04, 2018)

(43) Tension in Makurdi over planned attack by suspected **Hausa/Fulani** herdsmen (*The Punch*, April 28, 2018)

(44) **Fulani** herdsmen kill 32 in Kogi State attack (*The Guardian*, March 16, 2018)

(45) 54 Berom Communities Sacked By **Fulani** Herdsmen (*Leadership*, February 2, 2018)

(46) **Fulani** herdsmen set Falae’s five-hectare oil palm plantation ablaze (*The Punch*, January 21, 2018)

In Nigeria, almost all cattle breeders are designated as Fulani herdsmen despite the fact that some other tribes still have people who own cattle herds. The media have also contributed to disseminating and influencing such perceptions. In addition, this view is not unconnected to the fact that about 90% of the Fulani herd cattle (International Crisis Group Report, 2017). Thus, by specifically identifying the herdsmen who trespass on the farming communities in the southern Nigeria as “Fulani” and “Hausa”, the newspapers have specifically portrayed that the Fulani are involved in the trespassing. Odoemene (2017) describes this use of ethnic identifiers in conflict reporting by the media as “ethnification”. According to Odoemene (2017), ethnification constructs the conflict as ethnic struggles between Fulani herdsmen and indigenous farmers and this has contributed to the intractability of the conflict as well as the volatile identity politics

in Nigeria. In Example 43 in particular, the media have not only made explicit the agency of the trespassers as Hausa-Fulani but has also passed a judgement on their ethnicity. Shrouding the agency with the adjective “suspected” has not limited or minimized the agency, as readers would still be influenced to see the violent actors as the Fulani herdsmen. Masking the agency would have been done by using the phrases “suspected attackers” or “suspected invaders” instead of “suspected Fulani herdsmen”

Descriptivation

Descriptivation involves assigning different qualities and features to social actors. Pre-modifying adjectives such as rampaging, invading, armed, and killer and militia are deployed to evaluate herdsmen as aggressive trespassers in Examples 47 – 51:

(47) **Invading** herdsmen kill woman on own farm, destroy crops (*Daily Trust*, Jan 04, 2018)

(48) 2 LG Staff Hacked, As **Rampaging** Herdsmen Sack LG Secretariat In Ondo (*Leadership*, February 14, 2018)

(49) **Armed** herdsmen allegedly destroyed 750 hectares of rice farm in Taraba (*The Punch*, October 31, 2018)

(50) **Killer** herdsmen: Obaseki imposes 90-day ban on grazing in Edo communities (*The Punch*, April 16, 2018)

(51) Army kills four **militia** herdsmen in Benue (*Daily Trust*, April 17, 2018)

The descriptive adjectives are *judgement* resources used to evaluate the herders their actions as violent. The underlying representation is that herdsmen are dangerous group who engage in violent trespasses. Specifically, while the descriptions “rampaging” (Example 48) and “invading” (Example 47) designate herdsmen as a violent group, “killer” (Example 50), “armed” (Example 49) and “militia” (Example 51) extend their designation to include illegality and unlawful possession of arms and weapons. These negative descriptive labels are substantiated in the headlines with the various violent acts (killing, hacking and destruction of farms) attributed to them. The descriptive labels also discredit the already-known identities of the group’s as peaceful cattle breeding as well as normalising their violence. The designations of being armed and killer are contrarily to the identity of traditional and regular cattle breeders who herd with sticks and machetes for clearing the bush path and for protection against wild animals (Abdulai &

Yakubu, 2014). In the same vein, imposition of grazing ban (Example 50) that triggered mixed reactions seems to be in order as it was decreed to curb the trespassing activities of “killer” herdsmen. Likewise, killing of herdsmen (Example 51) seems to be justified in the headline as the army is reported to have eliminated “militia” herdsmen and not ordinary cattle breeders.

Aggregation

Social actors are aggregated, quantified and treated statistically through definite and indefinite quantifiers. According to Leeuwen (2008), aggregation works to manufacture consensus opinion, even though it presents itself as merely recording facts. In the corpus, victims of herdsmen’s attacks, invasions and destructions are aggregated through definite and indefinite quantifiers. While definite quantifiers tend to present news items as factual and authentic, indefinite quantifiers foreground the massive effects of the affected. For instance:

(52) Herdsmen displaced **680,000**, destroyed N400bn property - Ortom (*The Punch*, May 08, 2019)

(53) Herdsmen attack leaves **10** dead, **3,500** homeless in Cross River (*The Guardian*, 02 April 2017)

(54) Herdsmen attacks: **500** still missing in Benue Group (*The Punch*, November 25, 2017)

(55) **Dozens** of women taken captive as herdsmen raid villages in Numan (*Daily Trust*, Sep 14, 2018)

(56) **Many** feared dead as Fulani herdsmen attack villages (*Daily Trust*, Dec 4, 2017)

(57) Herdsmen Kill **Over 20**, Injure **Over 30** In Benue - Gov. Ortom (*Leadership*, January 2, 2018)

(58) **Four** killed, **scores** injured as herdsmen attack farmers in Taraba (*The Punch*, June 4, 2018)

Using indefinite quantifiers such as many (Example 56), dozens (Example 55), scores (Example 58) and over (Example 57), victims of herdsmen’s attacks and invasions are measured and quantified. Specifically, aside from providing the numbers of the people affected by the violent trespassing actions, the indefinite quantifiers magnify the

effects of the attacks. They are intensification strategy to foreground large numbers of people affected in the herdsmen's attacks. On the other hand, definite quantifiers present the actual number of displaced and homeless people as 680,000 (Example 52) and 3,500 (Example 53), respectively. The quantifiers also depict the number of missing person as 500 (Example 54) and amount of money lost to the destructions at N400bn (Example 52). These big numbers help to create a picture of massive casualties in the violent incidents. In particular, Example 52 evaluates both the human and material losses incurred because of herdsmen's attack and invasion.

Conclusion

This study has analyzed how the Nigerian news headlines have shaped social representation of the Fulani herdsmen as trespassers. The findings show that through transactive role allocations, nominalization, descriptivation, identification and aggregation, the herdsmen are represented as aggressive trespassers on the farming communities. Such representations trigger the ownership and non-ownership of the contested grazing and farming areas. Specifically, the use of certain spatial identifiers from the southern farming communities project the view that the communities are under siege by the trespassers. In addition, the ownership and possession tags such as indigenes and residents to designate the farming communities bequeath some legal rights of ownership and occupation to the area. Conversely, descriptive labels as "invading herdsmen" and "rampaging herdsmen" construct the herders as the intruders. In the same vein, syntactic positioning of the herdsmen as the subject of "attack", "invade" and "destroy" support their description as violent trespassers while representing the farmers with words of anguish such as "lament" and "cry out" portray them as the patients and victims of the violent acts. In sum, representations in the headlines support the obvious "othering" in which the herders are constructed as the violent "other". The study has shown that headlines used in reporting conflict situations need to carefully written as the words in them have some implications in readers' understanding and interpretations of the conflict actors and actions. In the case of the herders-farmers conflict, the negative othering contributes to the confrontation in the relationship between the herders and farmers as well as reflecting how the nomads are treated with suspicion by their host farming communities.

References

- Abdulai, A. & Yakubu, F. (2014). Pastoralism and Violence in Northern Ghana: Socialization and Professional Requirement. *International Journal of Research in Social Science*, 4(5), 102-111.
- Ademilokun, M. & Taiwo R. (2014). Discursive Strategies in Newspaper Campaign Advertisements for Nigeria's 2011 Elections. *Discourse & Communication*, 7(4), 435-455. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481313494501>
- Adesoji, A. & Hahn H. (2011). When (Not) to be a proprietor: Nigerian newspaper ownership in a changing polity. *African Study Monographs*, 32(4), 177-203.
- Adomako, M. (2019). Addressing the Causes and Consequences of the Farmer-Herder Conflict in Ghana. Policy Brief 6. KAIPTC.
- Agyemang, K. (2017). Transhumance Pastoralism in Africa: Sustainable Pastoralism and Rangelands in Africa. *Nature & Faune*, 31(2), 2-8.
- Ahmad, J. (2016). A Shifting Enemy: Analysing the BBC's Representations of "al-Qaeda" in the Aftermath of the September 11th 2001 Attacks. *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, 9(3), 433 - 454. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17539153.2016.1213049>
- Ajibefun, M. (2018). Social and Economic Effects of the Menace of Fulani herdsmen Crises in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 8(2), 133-139. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jesr-2018-0024>
- Alfred, B. & Oyebola, F. (2019). Media Perspectives on Boko Haram Insurgency and Herdsmen-Farmers' Crises in Nigeria: An Analysis of Transitivity in Newspaper Editorials. *Linguistik Online*, 95(2), 3-16. <https://doi.org/10.13092/lo.95.5513>
- Al-Gamde, A. & Tenbrink, T. (2020). Media Bias: A Corpus-based Linguistic Analysis of Online Iranian Coverage of the Syrian Revolution. *Open Linguistics*, 6(1), 584-600. <https://doi.org/10.1515/opli-2020-0028>
- Aremu, J. (2010). Conflicts in Africa: Meaning, Causes, Impact and Solution. *African Research Review: An International Multi-Disciplinary Journal*, 4(4), 549-560. <https://doi.org/10.4314/afrrrev.v4i4.69251>
- Bamidele, S. (2018). "Land Bandits" or "Land Grabbers": Fulani Herdsmen and Local Farmers Incessant Bloody Clashes in Nigeria. *Brazilian Journal of African Studies* 3(6), 163-181. <https://doi.org/10.22456/2448-3923.81671>
- Bell, A. (1991). *The Language of News Media*. Blackwell.
- Chiluwa, I. & Chiluwa, I. (2020). 'Deadlier than Boko Haram': Representations of the Nigerian Herder-Farmer Conflict in the Local and Foreign Press. *Media, War and Conflict*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750635220902490>

- Chiluwa, I. (2010). The Media and the Militants: Constructing the Niger Delta crisis. *RASK: International Journal of Language and Communication*, 32, 41–78.
- Ciboh, R. (2017). Framing the Herdsmen-Farmers' Conflicts and Peace Building in Nigeria. *Mkar Journal of Media and Culture* 2(2), 1–16.
- Daramola, I. (2013). *History and Development of Mass Media in Nigeria*, 2nd ed. Rothan Press.
- Develotte, C & Rechniewski, E. (2001). Discourse Analysis of Newspaper Headlines: A Methodological Framework for Research into National Representations. *The Web Journal of French Media Studies*, 4(1), 1–12.
- Ele, M. (2020). Transhumance, Climate Change and Conflicts: Reflections on the Legal Implications of Grazing Reserves and Ruga settlements in Nigeria. *Journal of African Law*, 64(2), 199–213. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021855320000066>
- Ghauri, M. & Umber, S. (2019). Exploring the Nature of Representation of Islam and Muslims in the Australian Press. *Sage Open*, 9(4), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019893696>
- Higazi, A. (2016). Farmer-Pastoralist Conflicts on the Jos Plateau, Central Nigeria: Security Responses of Local Vigilantes and the Nigerian State. *Conflict, Security and Development*, 16(4), 365–385. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14678802.2016.1200314>
- Idowu, A. & Okunola, B. (2017). Pastoralism as a New Phase of Terrorism in Nigeria. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science*, 17(4), 51–54.
- Idowu, A. O. (2017). Urban Violence Dimension in Nigeria: Farmers and Herders Onslaught. *Agathos: An International Review of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 8(1), 187-206.
- Igwebuike, E. (2016). Owners vs. Non-owners? A Critical Discourse Analysis of Print Media Representations of Territorial Ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula Border. *Journal of Language Aggression and Conflict*, 4(2), 255–273. <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlac.4.2.05igw>
- Igwebuike, E. (2020). Metaphorical Constructions of Herding in News Reports on Fulani Herdsmen. *Continuum - Journal of Media and Cultural Studies*, 35(1), 85–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10304312.2020.1852531>
- International Crisis Group. (19 September 2017). Herders against Farmers: Nigeria's Expanding Deadly Conflict. Africa Report N252. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/west-africa/nigeria/252-herders-against-farmers-nigerias-expanding-deadly-conflict>
- Leonhardt, M. (2017). *Regional Policies and Response to Manage Pastoral Movements within the ECOWAS Region*. International Organization for Migration.

- Martin, J. & White, P. (2005). *Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230511910>
- Mccombs, Maxwell. (2011). *The Agenda-Setting Role of the Mass Media in the Shaping of Public Opinion*.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237394610_The_Agenda-Setting_Role_of_the_Mass_Media_in_the_Shaping_of_Public_Opinion
- Nartey, M. & Ladegaard H. (2021). Constructing Undesirables: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Othering of Fulani Nomads in the Ghanaian News Media. *Discourse and Communication*, 15(2), 184–199.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481320982095>
- Nyamnjoh, F. (2010). Racism, Ethnicity and the Media in Africa: Reflections Inspired by Studies of Xenophobia in Cameroon and South Africa. *Africa Spectrum*, 45(1), 57–93. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000203971004500103>
- Obioha. E. (2008). Climate Change, Population Drift and Violent Conflict over Land Resources in Northeastern Nigeria. *Journal of Human Ecology*, 23(4), 311–324.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/09709274.2008.11906084>
- Odoemene, A. (2017). Whither Peacebuilding Initiatives? The Escalation of Herder-Farmer Conflicts in Nigeria. <https://kujenga-mani.ssrc.org/2017/04/07/whither-peacebuilding-initiatives-the-escalation-of-herder-farmer-conflicts-in-nigeria/>
- Okoli, C. & Atelhe G. (2014). Nomads against Natives: A Political Ecology of Herder/Farmer Conflicts in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 4(2), 76–88.
- Olaniyan, A., Francis M. & Okeke-Uzodike U. (2015). The Cattle are “Ghanaians” but the Herders are Strangers: Farmer-Herder Conflicts, Expulsion Policy, and Pastoralist Question in Agogo, Ghana. *African Studies Quarterly*, 15(2), 39–51.
- Onah, C., Asadu I. & Aduma A. (2019). Crop Farmers-Herdsmen Conflict in Nigeria: Exploring the Socio-Economic Implication on National Development. *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research*, 3(8), 12–21.
<https://doi.org/10.12816/0055365>
- Poole, E. (2016). The United Kingdom’s Reporting of Islam and Muslims; Reviewing the Field. In Mertens, S., de Smaele, H. (Eds.), *Representations of Islam in the News: A cross-cultural analysis* (pp. 21–36). Lexington Books.
- Powell, K. (2011). Framing Islam: An Analysis of U.S. Media Coverage of Terrorism since 9/11, *Communication Studies*, 62(1), 90–112.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10510974.2011.533599>

- Ross, T. (2019). Media and Stereotypes. In Ratuva S. (Ed.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Ethnicity* (pp. 1-17). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0242-8_26-1
- Rowland, Y. (2014). *Movable Thresholds: On Victorian Poetry and Beyond in Nineteen Glimpses*. Plovdiv University Press.
- Sadeghi, B., Hassani, M. & Jalali, V. (2014). Towards (De-) legitimization Discursive Strategies in News Coverage of Egyptian Protest: VOA & Fars News in Focus. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 98, 1580-1589. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.03.581>
- Sanz Sabido, R. (2013). Representations of Terrorism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Postcolonial Critical Discourse Analysis of the British Press (1948-2009). [Unpublished doctoral dissertation], De Montfort University.
- Taiwo, R. (2007). Language, Ideology and Power Relations in Nigerian Newspaper Headlines. *Nebula* 4(1), 218-245.
- Torkington, K. & Ribeiro, F. (2019). 'What are these People: Migrants, Immigrants, Refugees?': Migration-related Terminology and Representations in Portuguese Digital Press Headlines. *Discourse, Context & Media*, 27, 22-31. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dcm.2018.03.002>
- Trew, T. (1979). Theory and Ideology at Work. In Fowler, R., Hodge, B., Kress, G. & Trew, T. (Eds.), *Language and Control* (pp. 94-116). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429436215-6>
- van Dijk, T. (2000). *Ethnic Minorities and the Media, News Racism: A Discourse Analytical Approach*. Open University Press
- van Leeuwen, T. (1995). Representing Social Action. *Discourse & Society* 6(1), 81-106. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0957926595006001005>
- van Leeuwen, T. (2008). *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Discourse Analysis*. Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195323306.001.0001>
- Webster, C. (2018). Turning the Tables? Media Constructions of British Asians from Victims to Criminals, 1962-2011. In Bhatia, M., Poynting, S., & Tufail, W. (Eds.), *Media, Crime and Racism* (pp. 11-32). Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0306396819853206>
- White, P.R. (2001). An Introductory Tour through Appraisal Theory. *Grammatics*. <https://www.grammatics.com/appraisal/appraisaloutline/framed/appraisaloutline.htm>

Reviewers:

1. Anonymous:
2. Anonymous

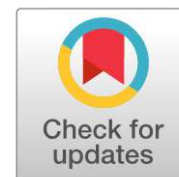
Handling Editor:

Boris Naimushin, PhD,
New Bulgarian University

POETICS OF MIGRATION TRAUMA IN MOHSIN HAMID'S *EXIT WEST*

Qurratulaen Liaqat

Forman Christian College (A Chartered University),
Lahore, Pakistan



Abstract

Migration has emerged as one of the most pertinent issues in the contemporary milieu. Currently, more than ever, people from many countries are being forced to migrate because of religious, social, cultural, national, racial and economic issues. This increasing trend of shifting from one place to another is causing an epistemological shift in the current milieu of human history. *Exit West* (2017) by Hamid is one of those novels that develops a discursive discourse of the ongoing migrant crisis, and highlights the ugly realities related to the phenomenon of relocation. It chronicles the story of two lovers, Nadia and Saeed, who migrate from their conflict-ridden country to save their lives. This paper configures the poetics of migration trauma in the contemporary literature by analyzing the symbols, metaphors and narrative technique used in Hamid's text with the aim of tracing a discursive aesthetic trajectory of the migration trauma discourse.

Key words: Trauma, Migration, Door, Poetics, Drone

Article history:

Received: 22 February 2022

Reviewed: 01 March 2022

Accepted: 11 March 2022

Published: 30 June 2022

Copyright © 2022 Qurratulaen Liaqat



This open access article is published and distributed under a [CC BY-NC 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at qurratulaen@fccollege.edu.pk. If you want to use the work commercially, you must first get the authors' permission.

Citation: Liaqat, Q. (2022). Poetics of Migration Trauma in Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*. *English Studies at NBU*, 8(1), 141-158. <https://doi.org/10.33919/esnbu.22.1.8>

Qurratulaen Liaqat has degrees in English Language and Literature. She is Assistant Professor at the Department of English, Forman Christian College, Pakistan. Her research interest are Pakistani Anglophone Fiction, American Drama, Postcolonial Literature, Post 9/11 Literature, and Posthuman Literature.

E-mail: qurratulaen@fccollege.edu.pk



<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6356-8814>

Human civilization has been through multiple personal and public traumas since the beginning of times. These traumas related to wars, plagues, massacres, genocides, natural calamities, terrorist attacks and personal individual tragedies affected both physical and psychological makeup of the human race. So, trauma, in both public and personal lives has been a constant in human history. The field of trauma studies evolved over time and had been through various phases. This field studies multi-dimensional traumas under the aegis of Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities. Migration is one of the issues that are being discussed under the praxis of trauma. More and more people are migrating from one place to another in multitudes on the pretexts of regional, national, religious, ethnic and political issues. Therefore, it is incumbent to study this phenomenon for a better comprehension and resolution of this issue. This research paper is a semiotic analysis of migration trauma in one of the most prolific fictional responses to the growing refugee crisis, *Exit West* (2017), penned down by Mohsin Hamid. By conducting a hermeneutics analysis of the symbols, metaphors, allusions and linguistic dimensions, this paper will analyze physical, emotional and technological kinds of traumas which migrants have to go through during their relocation.

Literature Review

Before delving into an in-depth analysis of the text, it is imperative to highlight the contours of studies already conducted in the field of migration trauma. In addition to this, it is also important to highlight the evolving meaning of the concept 'trauma', an all-time increase in refugee population all around the world, poetics of relationship between trauma and literature, trauma and migration and migration literature. Furthermore, it is necessary to observe the research contribution that has already been made by the interconnections between trauma, literature, and migration while anticipating the potential of more research that lies inherent in this interdisciplinary field. Therefore, this paper will first of all enumerate the pertinent issues and previous researches related to the interconnections between trauma, literature, and migration.

Most often, the problem of migration trauma has been studied from social sciences perspective, where migration is considered as a "security threat", "governance problem" (Munck, 2008, p. 1227), and a "key aspect of social change" (Castles, 2012, p. 155). Migrants are also considered a challenge for development (Munck, 2008, p. 1244; Hass,

2010, p. 258) which might have repercussions for the economy of the host country (Taylor et al., 1996, p. 397). However, the ongoing contours of migration and its features are “multifaceted and complex” (Jayet & Rapoport, 2010, p. 5; Taylor & al., 1996, p. 410) and there are not many comprehensive and integrated theoretical frameworks to study migration (Arango, 2000; Mangalam & Schwarzweller 3-18). Hence, in order to capture complex realities related to migration, a “semi-scientific manner of research” is required (Munck, 2008, p. 1230). Therefore, in the area of migration studies, it is imperative to collaborate for cross-disciplinary studies which might prove to be “a fertile way of extending the methodological range of research, of highlighting previously neglected aspects, and of identifying new questions for consideration” (Munck, 2008, p. 1230). This collaborative research will also extend the methods of analysis and enhance the understanding of the phenomena of migration (King, Connell & White, 1995). Hence, this paper is an attempt to study migration from a semi-scientific perspective provided usually by the field of humanities.

To begin with, trauma studies have zoomed into a sharper focus in contemporary era after the terrible instance of 9/11. The meaning of this term has evolved over time as it meant a physical injury before 18th century and now entails hybrid meanings and connotations. In dictionary terms, ‘trauma’ means “a deeply distressing or disturbing experience” (*ODE*, 2005, p. 1877) and an “emotional shock following a stressful event or physical injury, which may lead to long-term neurosis” (*ODE*, 2005, p. 1877). This word has been derived from the Greek word ‘wound’ (*ODE*, 2005, p. 1877). In these terms, trauma can be both physical and mental which can have ramifications for an individual’s subjectivity formation. Recently, trauma has become subject of ontological and epistemological inquiries which lead to innovative studies related to both praxis and poetics of trauma studies (Broderick and Traverso, 2011; Casper and Wertheimer, 2016).

This rise in the studies in trauma has also led to interdisciplinary studies of the impact of trauma in literature, film, media, sociology, psychology and politics (Tageldin, 2003; Buelens, Durrant, & Eaglestone, 2014; Nadal & Calvo, 2014; Broderick & Traverso, 2010; Heidarizadeh, 2014; Alexander, 2012). A few notable literary studies related to the praxis of trauma have been conducted by Caruth Cathy (1995), Ann Kaplan (2005), Kali Tal (2006), Michelle Balaev (2014), and Roger Kurtz (2018), Tom Toremans (2018) and Madeline Hron (2018) which highlight the multiple dimensions of trauma theories that

can be applied to literature from different eras. These literary endeavours either analyse literary works according to a psychoanalytic perspective or conduct a semiotic analysis of the text under consideration. This paper, in adherence to the semiotic analytical studies of trauma, will highlight the linguistic and literary element of the texts.

In addition to many other contemporary issues, migration is also one of the emerging field of study that is being studied under the praxis of trauma (Broderick & Traverso, 2010; Mazetti, 2008; Hron, 2018). Recently, there has been a dramatic rise in the number of migrants in the 21st century (Castles, 2012, p. 155). There is an all-time increased desire to migrate from down-trodden, war-ridden, extremist and plagued countries to developed and prosperous countries (Hass, 2010, p. 286; Gálvez, 2014, p. 169) because of globalization and advanced means of transportation available in contemporary times (Munck, 2008, p. 1229; Held & al., 2000, p. 2; Naerssen, Spaan, & Zoomers, 2008, p. 1; Paik, 2009, p. 1; Frank, 2008, p. 1). Resultantly, mass migration at this crucial juncture in the history of humanity inspired global intelligentsia to produce visual, pictorial and written accounts of migrations happening all around the globe (Frank, 2008). Mohsin Hamid has also written a detailed account of the contemporary migration crisis in his latest novel, *Exit West* (2017). The novel was an immediate success because it was so timely and pertinent.

The theme of dislocation is not only prevalent in Hamid's novels, but it is also the focus of many other authors. In fact, contemporary world is haunted by the "specter of migration" (Hardt and Negri, 2000, p. 133-134) and this "Age of Migration" (Castles & Miller, 2012, p. 1) has given rise to the creative productions on migration (Frank, 2008, p. 2; Fraser, 2018, p. 8; Koser 9; Naeressan et al., 2008, p. 1). Consequently, migration literature has emerged as a genre which deals with discursive stylistics, discourses, languages, enunciations, cultural hybridity and themes (Frank, 2008, p. 1-30; Fraser, 2008, p. 1-18; Moslund, 2010, p. 1-28; White, 1995, p. 1-19). The main features of these novels might be "linguistic deviance, impoverished vocabulary, and improper use of grammar" with "an unadorned minimalistic style which turns into a sign machine... that avoids closure that keeps pushing language to its limits, breaking down significance and multiplying meaning potentials" (Moslund, 2010, p. 7-8). Thus, migration literature is an established literary genre with its own specifications and stylistic devices.

Similarly, the studies conducted on the relationship between trauma and literature develop unique aesthetic trajectory for literary analysis. Stringer (2010, p. 7) explains how “repetition in tropes, narrative, sounds, even typography” is can be analyzed in order to evaluate trauma in a literary work. He further argues that “...contemporary trauma theory identifies what cannot be fully remembered, the illegible, the unspeakable, with a something repeated, be it an image, a phrase, a metaphor, even a syllable or sound” (Stringer, 2010, p. 5). An amalgamation of aesthetics of migration literature and trauma analysis in literature lend a chance to a very unique kind of literary analysis that can yield valuable information for the field of literary studies in trauma of migration by evaluating the literary linguistic devices employed in the text.

Methodology

This paper is an attempt to analyze the poetics of migration trauma in the text *Exit West*. ‘Poetics’ refer to “the principles and nature of any art” (Smith, 2004, p. 974). It is also the “study of the formal construction of literary works” of any genre (Buchanan, 2010, p. 369) that analyzes “poetic (literary) use of language” (Buchanan, 2010, p. 369). This study intends to analyze the use of poetic language in the text especially metaphors, symbols, similes, connotative and denotative meanings of the words. In short, it is a deconstructive study and a semiotic analysis of the poetic language used by Hamid in order to inscribe the trauma of migration in contemporary times.

Discussion

Hamid belongs to the successful younger generation of Pakistani Anglophone novelists writing in contemporary times. All his novels narrate the harsh realities of not only contemporary Pakistani society but also international burning issues. Migration has also been the harshest reality faced by Pakistanis at the time of partition. Another aspect of migration is the religious discourse of migration for Pakistani – the Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) migration to Medina. Therefore, migration is one of the prevailing discourses in Pakistani literature and is an established historical reality of Pakistani psyche, philosophy, religion and literature. Migration is a constant theme in all the novels written by Hamid. In *Moth Smoke* (2000), Ozi migrates from Pakistan to America and then back to Pakistan. Similarly, Changez, the central character of *The Reluctant*

Fundamentalist (2009), also goes to America and then comes back to Pakistan. Likewise, the protagonist of *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) migrates from rural to urban area. However, in his latest novel, *Exit West* (2017), Hamid transcends the boundaries of nationality, religion and geography by narrating multiple strands of national, religious, historical and contemporary realities related to migration.

The plot of *Exit West* is a clear indication of the universal approach of this text because the main characters of the novel, Saeed and Nadia, live in an unnamed city which can be any city of the conflict ridden locality ranging from Karachi, Mosul, Basra, Aleppo, Cairo and Lahore (El Akkad, 2017; Gilbert, 2017; El Rashidi, 2017). They migrate from that unnamed city to well-known places like Greek Island of Mykonos, London, or Marin in California, USA. Their ongoing journey is a quest for peace which is the most prevalent archetypal human journey narrated in almost all the literatures form all eras, localities and generations. Moreover, multiple brief narrative stories, form alternate migrant situations, have been integrated into the main story of Saeed and Nadia to enrich migrant discourse in the narrative. Furthermore, along with spatial migration, temporal nature of migration has also been mentioned, “everyone migrates even if we stay in the same houses our whole lives, because we can’t help it. We are all “migrants through time” (Hamid, 2017, p. 209). Thus, the novel sounds like an allegorical epic tale for all ages, eras and generations because Saeed and Nadia’s journey depict the voyage of humanity- from innocence to knowledge. Migration has been used both as a contemporary reality as well as a metaphor for human evolution.

Migration trauma can be discussed in many different aspects related to emotional and physical security. Nadia and Saeed are always under a constant threat of physical assault. Similarly, the minor characters in the novel are also under physical threats. Secondly, the characters are changing emotionally. Their emotions, feelings and dispositions are changing after the trauma of migration. Furthermore, migrants are under constant surveillance of technology that makes them feel insecure and exposed. All these dimensions of migration trauma will be discussed later in the paper one by one.

Metaphor of ‘Door’ and its Association with Trauma

To begin with, the presence of mysterious doors in the narrative of the text is the first significant key to the narrative of trauma migration in this novel. Perhaps, the most interesting aspect of this novel is that every migrant travels by mysterious magical doors. These magical doors further confirm the universal vision of this narrative. Hence, the presence of surreal doors (Goldsworthy, 2017; Kapoor, 2017; Sandhu, 2017) provides a magical quality to this text and it transcends from being the narrative of an ordinary couple's migration to an allegorical representation of contemporary migrant condition. In the narrative, it has been mentioned that migrants are migrating with the help of mysterious doors and a normal door can turn into a "special door" (Hamid, 2017, p. 70). There is acknowledgement of these mysterious doors on the global level as the text narrates, "the most reputable international broadcasters had acknowledged the door existed, and indeed were being discussed by world leaders as a major global crisis" (Hamid, 2017, p. 83). These doors are being considered as a major crisis by world leaders. A crisis is something which needs to be prevented. The mysterious doors, perceived as crisis, imply that migrants are considered as a crisis and they are not given a welcoming gesture. This is the first hint towards the various causes of the traumas that migrants face during and after their migration. The migrants are not welcome anywhere – they are a crisis which needs to be rectified. This perception of migrants being a crisis leads to the victimization of the migrants.

The same doors, which are considered as a crisis by world leaders, are something dark, mysterious and scary for the migrants. The text concludes that "when we migrate, we murder from our lives those we leave behind" (Hamid, 2017, p. 94). There are recurrent references to doors as dark and mysterious places. For instance, a door has been described as "dark, darker than night, a rectangle of complete darkness – the heart of darkness" (Hamid, 2017, p. 6). Similarly, Nadia's feeling while crossing through that special door while migrating is another hint towards the symbolic significance of the doors as she is "struck by its darkness, its opacity, the way it did not reveal what was on the other side" (p. 98). This repetition of the word 'dark' provides a very significant key to analyze the traumatic experience of migration. According to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (OALD)* 'dark' is something that is "with little light" (Hamid, 2017, p. 376) and this word also connote the elements of mystery, evil and hopelessness (Hamid, 2017, p. 376). Therefore, the discourse of migration in this novel evolves as something which

might initiate people into facing the mysterious evil and hopelessness. The allusion to *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad further the feeling of impending doom related to the journey of a migrant. The third significant word is 'opaque' that signify something "not clear enough to see through or let the light pass through" and "difficult to understand" (OALD, 1045). Both words 'dark' and 'opaque' hint at the journey and the experience of migration as something difficult to understand and evil and mysterious, thus, reconfirming Stringer's vision of the expression of trauma as something which is difficult to express, understand and narrate.

Along with the discourse of doors as something dark and dangerous, there is an underlying discourse of being born again, as migrants are described emerging out of those doors "pulling himself up against gravity, or a rush of monstrous tide" (Hamid, 2017, pp. 6-7) "like a newborn foal" (Hamid, 2017, p. 7) and the entry into these doors "equally felt like a beginning and an end" (Hamid, 2017, p. 98). The discourse of dying and being born again has been extended further, "it was said in those days that the passage was both like dying and being born, and indeed Nadia experienced a kind of extinguishing as she entered the blackness and a gasping struggle as she fought to exit it" (Hamid, 2017, p. 98). All these references assert that migration is a trauma because while migrating you have to murder yourself from one life and get uprooted and get born again into a new system.

Physical Trauma

In addition to the use of symbol of door in order to convey the danger and sadness associated with the trauma of migration, there are many poignant descriptive details that not only highlight the lack of basic necessities which refugees face but also the physical violence which they have to face. This lack of basic human rights and exposure to physical harm make migrants more vulnerable to long-term emotional traumas. The text quotes many examples of the underprivileged and unfortunate condition of migrants.

For example, the migrants are shown from the very beginning of the novel in both physical and emotional turmoil because of their migration. In the very first few pages the narrative depicts deplorable physical and emotional situation of the refugees as follows:

Refugees had occupied many of the open places in the city, itching tents in the green belts between roads, erecting lean-tos next to the boundary walls of houses, sleeping rough on pavements and in the margins of streets. Some seemed to be trying to recreate the rhythm of a normal life, as though it was completely normal to be residing, a family of four under a sheet of plastic propped up with branches and a few chipped bricks. Others stared out at the city with what looked like anger, or surprise, or supplication or envy. Others didn't move at all: stunned, maybe, or resting. Possibly dying. (Hamid, 2017, p. 23)

The excerpt above provides a very pitiable picture of the living conditions migrants have been forced to live in. Refugees are living in "itching tents", "lean-tos", and "under a plastic sheet propped up with branches and a few chipped bricks" placed either in the "green belts between roads" or "boundary walls of houses". They are "sleeping rough on pavements and margins of the roads" (Hamid, 2017, p. 23). In short, they are living in a very painful and traumatic condition and some people are trying to cope up with this trauma by pretending that this kind of living is perfectly "normal" but others are staring out at the city in "anger, or surprise, or supplication or envy". There is another set of migrants that does not "move at all: stunned, maybe, or resting. Possibly dying". The emotions of anger, envy, or being stunned are various responses to the traumatic condition which migrants face during and after their migration. The migrants depicted here are in pain because of their pitiable living conditions and the trauma of leaving their homes behind.

Another instance which gives a very significant insight into the trauma of being a migrant is the moment when Nadia and Saeed reach in an abandoned hotel in London city (which is now a safe haven for migrants like Nadia and Saeed) where after a long while they can have some privacy and a room to themselves. For Nadia and Saeed, to "have a room to themselves" with "four walls, a window, a door with a lock-seemed incredible good fortune" that most of the people take for granted. Nadia wants to unpack in that room and feel more at home but could not because they might be in need to leave soon. Saeed tries to make the room look more like home by placing a photo of his parents, which he brought with himself, on a bookshelf and transforms that hotel room "at least partially, temporarily into home". Nadia and Saeed are deprived of basic human facilities of cleanliness and taking bath. Nadia wants to "to take shower more than anything, more

even than she wanted food". Bathroom becomes "a kind of heaven". When she observes her body that has grown "leaner" and is "streaked with grime" and with hair, she thinks that her body looks like "body of an animal a savage". Migrants are forced to live in such barbarous and unhygienic conditions where they are deprived of very basic human necessities. For Nadia, taking bath is "not about frivolity", but it is about being "essential, about being human, living as a human being, reminding oneself of what one was, and so it mattered" (Hamid, 2017, pp. 120-122). The basic necessities of life like bathing, house, food and privacy have become inaccessible for migrants.

Adding insult to injury, migrants, who are already deprived of basic human necessities, are also facing the violence all over the globe. For instance, this text displays that migrants are always under the fear of some physical attack. Moreover, human body is so fragile that it can be eliminated by any wrong "blow", "gunshot", "flick of a blade", "turn of a car", or by "presence of a microorganism in a handshake, a cough" (Hamid, 2017, p. 7). Here, the writer enlists the kinds of physical security threats a migrant is exposed to. It is a gist of all kinds of physical assaults which are faced by migrants all around the world and that lurk in the unconscious mind of every migrant while he is migrating and becoming part of a new community. The word 'fragile' connotes something that can be "easily broken or damaged" (*OALD* 603). Therefore, Hamid is implying that human bodies and psyches are so vulnerable to the dangers present around them but in case of migration they become more susceptible to such hazards.

Repeatedly, the examples of physical traumas which migrants face have been mentioned (Hamid, 2017, pp. 25-28). For instance, in the "Tokyo district of Shinjuku", there is a man with "violence potential" who plans to physically harm two Filipina girls because they are migrants in his country and he does not like Filipinos. He believed that they "had their place, but they had to know their place. There had been a half Filipino in his junior high school class whom he had beaten often, once so badly that he would have been expelled, had someone been willing to say who had done it". Furthermore, this instance hints at the kind of mistreatment, migrants can be exposed to on the bases of their race, colour, gender, and ethnicity. He has all plans to harm these two Filipino girls as he followed them while "fingering the metal in his pocket". This is just one example of migrants being physically harmed at the hands of racists, supremacists, and nationalists.

Another nativist mob, in London city where Nadia and Saeed take refuge for a while (Hamid, 2017, p. 131-132), acts “like a strange and violent tribe”, “some armed with iron bars or knives” intent on the destruction of migrants. The text implies that these native mobs are no less than ancient groups of people who could come with unusual power and wish to cause physical harm to another tribe. This is a frightening version of the uncivilized aspects of civilized nations. This also elaborates upon the kind of brutality migrants have to face at the hands of native people. Because of this physical assault by the mob Nadia’s eye gets “bruised and would soon swell shut” while Saeed’s lip gets “split” and keeps on “bleeding down his chin and on his jacket”. This is one of the clearest and the most brutal example of physical assaults on migrants rampant in contemporary world.

In addition to these two individual examples there are multiple citations of violation of migrants’ human rights (Hamid, 2017, pp. 104, 134, 159-161). For example, the text narrates that in Vienna militants are shooting unarmed people in the hope “to provoke a reaction against the migrants” and succeed in that. Moreover, there is a “nativist mob” that intends “to attack migrants”. There is also a mentioning of ‘nativist backlash’ happening “... in other desirable cities in other desirable countries”. Furthermore, the text cites an “operation to kill migrant ghetto”, rumours about the incineration of over two hundred migrants, and a “bloodbath in Hyde Park”. The acts of incineration and bloodbath imply the atrocious acts of Holocaust because these words are usually associated with the mass murders that happened in Germany at the hands of Hitler. In the contemporary times, migrants are being killed and incinerated and they are the new sect of victimized people who are being harmed by the extreme nativists. All these incidents assert a discourse of violence, bloodshed and violation of basic human rights at the hands of nativists.

Psychological Trauma

Saeed’s character in the novel can lend to a full-length psychoanalytic study of the impacts of migration trauma but this paper will only be conducting semiotic analysis of the words and metaphors used for Saeed’s transformation from an optimistic to a pessimistic character (Hamid, 2017, pp. 102-103, 122, 128-129, 140, 185, 187). Nadia starts noticing a strange bitterness in Saeed and she thinks that she has “never seen

bitterness in him before". Nadia believes that "a bitter Saeed would not be Saeed at all". The word 'bitter' is associated with a human feeling of anger and unhappiness because one feels that one has been "treated unfairly". The unfair treatment that migrants face makes them unhappy, sad and angry that is true in Saeed's case as well. The Saeed before migration and after migration are two different persons. He always keeps on trying to connect with his country fellows "via chat applications and social media". He becomes unresponsive to Nadia's romantic gestures, "She smiled and moved to kiss him, and while her lips did touch his, his did not much respond". They are "wandering far and wide but not together, even though they appeared to be together". Saeed is a kind of person who feels happy, comfortable and secure with his native people, and does not like the feeling of "complete strangers living in close proximity". For Saeed, the house where a multitude of people is living is "jarring" that implies an "unpleasant or annoying effect" (OALD, 814). He finds it "stressful to be packed in so tightly with people who spoke in tongues he did not understand...". There is an overall discourse of decay and destruction of Saeed's subjectivity and his emotional make up. He feels something "rancid in himself, like he was rotting from within." The words 'rancid' and 'rot' both imply a significant sense of deterioration as 'rancid' stands for something "unpleasant" (ODE, 2005, p. 1456) and "stinking" (ODE, 2005, p. 1456) while the word 'rot' imply "decay" (ODE, 2005, p. 1533) and "deterioration" (ODE, 2005, p. 1533). Therefore, the text draws a discursive trajectory of human emotional, physical and psychological decay while going through the experience of migration. The multiple words, metaphors and analogies used for Saeed's transformation after migration hint at both mental and physical deterioration of Saeed's overall subjectivity.

Technological Trauma

In addition to human assaults, migrants are also haunted by technological gadgets. These machines include surveillance cameras, drones, helicopters and other military technology. The text narrates about a migrant family caught on a security camera while migrating into Jumeirah beach. There are "three exterior surveillance feed" in addition to "drone surveillance (Hamid, 2017, pp. 86-87). There are four layers of surveillance on the migrant's entry narrated here. The word 'surveillance', interestingly means "the act of carefully watching a person suspected of a crime or a place where crime may be committed" (OALD, 1525). The entry points of migrants are under strict surveillance

because migration is termed on legal terms that might imply a crime. Migrants are perceived as criminals who might be detained or captured anywhere. The feelings of these refugees under the cameras give an added insight into what kind of mental trauma they go through while being under the scrutiny of cameras. They seem “bewildered” and “overawed”. The word ‘bewilder’ connote something which evokes the feelings of confusion (ODE, 2005, p. 159) and word ‘overawed’ implies the emotion of being overwhelmed to the point of silence and inhibition (ODE, 2005, p. 1253). These technological surveillance devices are causing mental traumas of confusion, silencing and inhibition among the refugees represented in the book.

Moreover, Around Nadia and Saeed, there are “soldiers and armoured vehicles”, and above them there are “drones and helicopters” mentioned again “drones and helicopters and surveillance balloons prowled intermittently overhead” (Hamid, 2017, 135, 142, 150). This implies that migrants are being frightened with the help of ground vehicles as well as air surveillance. In short, they are being traumatized from both air and ground with the help of the technological superiority of their host countries. There is a constant presence of technology for the purpose of surveillance and victimization of the migrants in the narrative of the novel. Hamid writes, “Every day a flight of fighter aircraft would streak through the sky, screaming a reminder to the people of dark London of the technological superiority of their opponents”. The word ‘scream’ here requires special attention because it implies “a long, loud, piercing cry” (ODE, 2005, p. 1586) that also connotes a “frenzied” noise (ODE, 2005, p. 1586). This constant noise is creating and auditory trauma for the migrants with which they have to deal throughout their stays in the foreign countries.

Drones terrify the migrants more than any other technological gadget. Drones are described as more “frightening” than anything else because of their “unstoppable efficiency” and “inhuman power” (Hamid, 2017, p.151). ‘Drone’ is “an aircraft without a pilot, controlled from the ground” (OALD, 459) that is being frequently used for both military and civilian purposes. Drones are reported to have a traumatic impression on the minds of the people who are exposed to this kind of unmanned aircraft (Cavallaro & al., 2012). This text constructs the image of a drone as something dreadful that cannot be escaped from. The word ‘inhuman’ further highlights the frightening element related to drones because it signifies something that lacks “human qualities of compassion and

mercy" (ODE, 2005, p. 891) that is "cruel and barbaric" (ODE, 2005, p. 891). Moreover, the text narrates that drones evoke a "kind of dread that a small mammal feels before a predator of an altogether different order, like a rodent before a snake" (Hamid, 2017, p. 151). The use of word 'predator' for drone implies another dimension of drone use against migrants. The word 'predator' means "an animal that naturally preys on others" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2005, p. 1386) or a person who ruthlessly exploits others" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2005, p. 1386). Therefore, a drone emerges as a technological device that naturally victimizes people and exploit them especially underprivileged people like migrants. Drones emerge as lacking any positive feelings and standing as the cruelest technological device that give rise to the traumatic feelings of fear, dread, anxiety and insecurity among the migrants.

Conclusion

In conclusion, a semiotic analysis of the metaphors, symbols, analogies, allusions and denotative and connotative meanings of the language used in this novel constructs a discursive discourse of persecution, victimization and ostracizing of migrants in contemporary era. The text incorporates the discourses of injustice and inhumane treatment of migrants at the hands of developed world. The metaphor of dark and mysterious doors successfully conveys the feeling of pain, suffering and misery associated with a migrant's dislocation. Moreover, the recurrent references to multiple physical traumas, ranging from the deprivation of basic necessities of life to the physical harm inflicted on migrants in various part of the world at the hands of government and nativist mobs imply a physically insecure milieu for migrants. Additionally, bearing all these traumas does not only affect migrants physically but this suffering also leaves permanent marks on the psyche of migrants which cause unintelligible emotional traumas. Perhaps the latest kind of distress which migrants are exposed to is the deployment of military and paramilitary technology to frighten them. Surveillance drone cameras, helicopters, armoured tanks and robots are intensifying the traumas related to migration. They are being treated as criminals who need to be persecuted at all times. In short, a deconstructive study of *Exit West* delineates a bleak poetics of the dilemma of migration that needs legal humanitarian intervention on international level for the protection and provision of basic human rights to the global migrant community.

References

- Alexander, J. C. (2012). *Trauma: A Social Theory*. Polity Press.
- Arango, J. (2000). Explaining Migration: A Critical View. *International Social Science Journal*, 52(165), 283-296. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2451.00259>
- Balaev, M. (2014). Literary Trauma Theory Reconsidered. In M. Balaev (Ed.), *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory* (pp. 1-14). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137365941_1
- Broderick, M., & Traverso, A. (Eds.). (2010). *Trauma, Media, Art: New Perspectives*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Buchanan, I. (2010). *Oxford Dictionary of Critical Theory*. OUP.
- Buelens, G., Durrant, S., & Eaglestone, R. (Eds.). (2014). *The Future of Trauma Theory: Contemporary Literary and Cultural Criticism*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203493106>
- Caruth, C. (2010). *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*. JHU Press.
- Casper, M., & Wertheimer, E. (Eds.). (2016). *Critical Trauma Studies: Understanding Violence, Conflict and Memory*. NYU Press.
- Castles, S. (2012). 7. Migration and Social Transformation. In M. Martiniello & J. Rath (Eds.), *An Introduction to International Migration Studies: European Perspectives*, (pp. 155-178). Amsterdam University Press, <https://doi.org/10.1515/9789048517350-007>
- Cavallaro, J., Sonnenberg, S., & Knuckey, S. (2012). *Living Under Drones: Death, Injury and Trauma to Civilians from US Drone Practices in Pakistan*, Stanford: International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic, Stanford Law School; New York: NYU School of Law, Global Justice Clinic.
- Conrad, J. (1990). *Heart of Darkness*. Dover Publications, Inc.
- El Akkad, O. (2017, March 17). Mohsin Hamid's *Exit West*, reviewed: A masterpiece of humility and restraint. *The Globe and Mail*. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/books-and-media/book-reviews/mohsin-hamids-exit-west-reviewed-a-masterpiece-of-humility-and-restraint/article34335946/>
- El Rashidi, Y. (2017, April 20). Caught Between Worlds. *The New York Review of Books*. <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/04/20/mohsin-hamid-caught-between-worlds/>.

- Frank, S. (2008). *Migration and Literature: Günter Grass, Milan Kundera, Salman Rushdie, and Jan Kjærstad*. Palgrave Macmillan.
https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230615472_5
- Fraser, R. (2018). *Literature, Music and Cosmopolitanism. Culture as Migration*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-68480-2>
- Gálvez, A. (2014). Migration. In B. Burgett and G. Hendler. (Eds.), *Keywords for American Cultural Studies* (pp. 168-171). New York: NYU Press.
- Gilbert, S. (2017, March 8). Exit West and the Edge of Dystopia. *The Atlantic*.
<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2017/03/exit-west/518802/>
- Goldsworthy, K. (2017, May 26). Exit West review: Mohsin Hamid's brilliant novel of the plight of refugees. *The Sydney Morning Herald*.
<https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/books/exit-west-review-mohsin-hamids-brilliant-novel-of-the-plight-of-refugees-20170526-gwdwsl.html>.
- Guillem, S. M. (2015). Migration Discourse. In K. Tracy, C. Ilie, & T. Sandel (Eds.), *The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction* (pp. 1-10). John Wiley & Sons, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118611463>
- Hamid, M. (2000) *Moth Smoke*. Granta.
- Hamid, M. (2009) *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*. OUP.
- Hamid, M. (2013). *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia*. Riverhead Books.
- Hamid, M. (2017). *Exit West*. Penguin Random House.
- Hardt, M., & Negri, A. (2000). *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674038325>
- Hass, Hein de. (2010). Migration and Development: A Theoretical Perspective. *The International Migration Review*, 44(1), 227-264. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2009.00804.x>
- Heidarizadeh, N. (2015). The Significant Role of Trauma in Literature and Psychoanalysis. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 192, 788-795.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.06.093>
- Held, D., McGrew, A., Goldblatt, D., & Perraton, J. (1999). *Global transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture*. Polity Press. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780333981689_2
- Hron, M. (2018). The Trauma of Displacement. In R. Kurtz (Ed.), *Trauma and Literature* (pp. 284-298). Cambridge University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316817155.021>

- Jayet, H., & Rapoport, H. (2010). Migration and Development: New Insights. *Annals of Economics and Statistics*, 97/98, 5–12. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41219107>
- Kurtz, R. (Ed.). (2018). *Trauma and Literature*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316817155>
- Marco M. & Jan R. (Eds.) *An Introduction to International Migration Studies: European Perspectives*. Amsterdam University Press.
- Mazzetti, M. (2008). Trauma and migration: A transactional analytic approach toward refugees and torture victims. *Transactional Analysis Journal*, 38(4), 285-302. <https://doi.org/10.1177/036215370803800404>
- Moslund, S. (2010). *Migration Literature and Hybridity: The Different Speeds of Transcultural Change*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230282711>
- Munck, R. (2008). Globalization, Governance and Migration: An Introduction. *Third World Quarterly*, 29(7), 1227-1246. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436590802386252>
- Nadal, M., & Calvo, M. (Eds.). (2014) *Trauma in Contemporary Literature: Narrative and Representation*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315880501>
- Naerssen Van, T., Ernst, S., & Zoomers, A. (2008). *Global Migration and Development*. Routledge.
- Nandi, S. (2016). Trauma and its Traces in the Poetry of Paul Celan. *Spring Magazine on English Literature*, 2(1), 50-57.
- Paik, P. Y. (2009). Introduction. In M. Bullock & P. Y. Paik (Eds.), *Aftermaths: Exile, Migration, and Diaspora Reconsidered* (pp. 1-12). Rutgers University Press. <https://doi.org/10.36019/9780813545981-002>
- Sandhu, S. (2017, March 12). "Exit West by Mohsin Hamid – magical vision of the refugee crisis." *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/mar/12/exit-west-mohsin-hamid-review-refugee-crisis>.
- Schouler-Ocak, M. (Ed.). (2015). *Trauma and migration: Cultural factors in the diagnosis and treatment of traumatised immigrants*. Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-17335-1_7
- Smith, S.S. (Ed.). (2004). *The New International Webster's Comprehensive Dictionary of the English Language. Encyclopaedic Edition*. Trident Press International, New Delhi.
- Soanes, C., & Stevenson, A. (Eds.). (2005). *Oxford Dictionary of English* (2nd ed.). OUP Oxford.

- Stringer, D. (2010). *Faulkner, Larsen, and Van Vechten*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Tal, K. (1996). *Worlds of Hurt: Reading the literatures of Trauma*. Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor J. E, Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Massey, D. S., & Pellegrino, A. (1996). International Migration and Community Development. *Population Index*, 62(3), 397-418. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3645924>
- Toremans, T. (2018). Deconstruction: Trauma Inscribed in Language. In J. R. Kurtz (Ed.), *Trauma and Literature* (pp. 51–65). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316817155.005>
- White, P. (1995). Introduction. In J. Connell, R. King, & P. White (Eds.), *Writing Across Worlds: Literature and Migration* (pp. 1-30). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203426128_chapter_1

Reviewers:

1. Anonymous:
2. Anonymous

Handling Editor:

Boris Naimushin, PhD,
New Bulgarian University

Translation revising, which was seen as “function of professional translators in which they find features of the draft translation that fall short of what is acceptable, as determined by some concept of quality, and make any needed corrections and improvements” (Mossop, 2020, p. 115), plays an important role to ensure the translation quality. Another concept similar to revising is post-editing. According to ISO 17100, post-editing is “editing and correcting machine-translation output” (term 2.2.4). With the improvement of machine-translation (MT) technology and the surge of translation demand in the era of globalization, post-editing has become an important production process in translation. Post-editors check and correct MT output to improve the translation quality and applicability. It’s not difficult to find that revision and post-editing are intuitively comparable: the former is the process of checking human translation, whereas the latter is that of checking a machine-translated text. Even though many studies on revision and post-editing have been carried out, ranging from studies of the process, studies of the product to studies in different environments or contexts, seldom do they investigate these two types of translation checking work together. This volume, edited by Maarit Koponen, Brian Mossop, Isabelle S. Robert and Giovanna Scoccherro, explores the interrelation and boundaries between the two as well as some other interesting topics.

Structurally, the book is divided into three parts, including twelve incisive chapters contributed by leading scholars in the fields of translation revision and post-editing. An adequate introduction precedes the first chapter, which thoroughly introduces the state-of-the-art research into revision and post-editing from the aspects of theoretical publications and empirical studies.

The first part, covering from chapter 1 to chapter 3, confirms the over-editing behavior, or we can say preferential changes, in revision and post-editing tasks (chapter 1), and discusses the conceptual boundaries among editing, post-editing and revision as well as details the role of editing in the study of post-editing (chapter 2), and examines the differences between post-editing and revision concerning efficiency and quality by letting translators revise and post-edit translations without knowing the real provenance of the text, that is, whether they are human translations or machine outputs (chapter 3).

Part 2 (chapter 4 and 5) concentrates on revision and post-editing activities carried out by non-professionals. Chapter 4 presents the non-professional revision of translations within a government department in Canada. It finds that the translations provided by the Translation Bureau, regardless of being deemed to be of good quality, were not always suitable for the intended readers. Therefore, civil servants in the government department, the ones who ordering the translations, usually make stylistic and lexical editing to the end users. Chapter 5 analyzes the quality of the post-editing carried out by some Spanish-speaking physicians. The result suggests that although non-professionals were able to identify some syntactic and terminological errors of MT outputs, their post-edited texts were not good enough as was demonstrated by the proof-reader's large number of stylistic and syntactic edits.

The third part (chapter 6 to 9) explores the professional revision practice in different contexts: translation agencies in chapter 6, 7 and literary publishing sector in chapter 9. Relations between translators and revisers are investigated in chapter 8.

Chapter 6 reveals the reception and application of two translation quality standards — EN 15038 and ISO 17100 by Austrian translation service providers. In chapter 7, after investigating the revision process of some Finnish language service providers, the author introduces the concept of “revision continuum”, which ranges from “simple linguistic review” to “creative stylistic editing”, to show the flexibility and complexity of the revision task (p. 133). Chapter 8 investigates the expectations and attitudes of translators and revisers towards each other and the power struggle between the two in the working practice. In chapter 9, the authors, using as examples the whole revision stages that three literary translation manuscripts went through before publication, argue that the revision process is “a complex loop” (p. 180) in which translators, revisers as well as authors, editors and proofreaders are all involved.

The revision and post-editing teaching as well as the acquisition of skills and competences are always among hot topics in the field (O'Brien, 2002, Robert et al., 2017, 2018, Scocchera, 2019, Nitzke et al., 2019). The last part, chapters 10 to 12, focuses on revision and post-editing training.

Chapter 10 explores a holistic and integrative model for teaching revision and post-editing in the translator training curriculum based on commonalities and

differences in revision and post-editing competences. Chapter 11 observes the revision training from a technological perspective. The functionalities of the tool, translationQ (TELEVIC/KU Leuven), was examined to see if it can help improve the quality of trainer-to-trainee revision. The study reveals that with error memory and extensive feedback, translationQ can reduce the repetitiveness of revision practice and enhance feedback consistency across assignments. The closing chapter presents a detailed description of the MT post-editing training in Europe, based on data collected from questionnaires, analysis of syllabi and interviews with educators in European Master's in Translation (EMT).

This volume presents the latest research on translation revision and post-editing in various contexts, including government department, translation agencies, literary publishing sector, volunteer sector, etc. There are also a few books that focus on translation checking work. Nevertheless, this book distinguishes itself from other books in several ways.

First and foremost, this book looks at revision and post-editing together, exploring the similarities and differences between the two, such as the over-editing behavior in both practices (chapter 1), their conceptual boundaries (chapter 2), characteristic features regarding quality and efficiency (chapter 3) and the common as well as specific competences involved in each checking task (chapter 10), which has rarely been done in previous publications.

Secondly, the research methods are diverse and complementary. This volume includes both empirical studies based on observations or experiments like questionnaires, eye-tracking, interviews and keystroke logging, and theoretical reflections about specific aspects of translation, editing, revision, and post-editing.

Last but not least, what highlights this collection is the wide variety of topics it covers, which range from translation revision process (chapters 4, 7, 9), quality of the revision and post-editing products (chapters 5, 6), translator and reviser relations (chapter 8), to the training in revision and post-editing (chapters 10, 11, 12). Therefore, this book will undoubtedly be useful to its intended readership, including researchers, teachers, undergraduates along with MA and PhD in related fields as well as translation practitioners with interest in the checking work.

Despite the above-mentioned merits, this volume still leaves some space for improvement. For example, there is an imbalance between the empirical studies and theoretical research in the organization of the book, with ten chapters focusing on testing hypotheses related to revision and post-editing based on quantitative or qualitative data while only two chapters (chapters 2, 10) explore theoretical characteristics of checking translation. In addition, due to a small number of participants in the research, the conclusions of some contributions should be taken with caution, for example only five participants in the experiment in chapter 5, and only 4 translation agencies investigated in chapter 4. What's more, since most contributions in the book discuss revision and post-editing involving English and other European languages, experiments on larger scales and richer language pairs would have gained a wider appreciation.

Overall, this is an insightful and enlightening volume that presents both recent empirical and theoretical studies on revision and post-editing. The book will be of great help for scholars and students in the fields of translation studies as well as for professional translators.

References

- Koponen, M. et al (2020). *Translation Revision and Post-editing: Industry Practice and Cognitive Processes*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003096962>
- Mossop, B. (2020). *Revising and Editing for Translators (4th edition)*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315158990>
- Nitzke, J., Hansen-Schirra, S, & Canfora, C. (2019). Risk management and post-editing competence. *Journal of Specialized Translation*, 31, 239–59.
- O'Brien, S. (2002). Teaching post-editing: a proposal for course content. In *Proceedings of the 6th EAMT Workshop Teaching Machine Translation*, 99-106.
- Robert, I. S. et al. (2017). Towards a model of translation revision competence. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 11(1), 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2016.1198183>
- Robert, I. S., Remael, A., & Ureel, J. J. J. (2018). Conceptualizing translation revision competence: a pilot study on the 'fairness and tolerance' attitudinal component. *Perspective: Studies in Translatology*, 26(1), 2-23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2017.1330894>
- Scocchera, G. (2019). The competence reviser: a short-term empirical study on revision teaching and revision competence acquisition. *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, 14(1), 19-37. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1750399X.2019.1639245>

ISSUE METRICS

ESNBU Volume 8, Issue 1, 2022

Submitted: 31 articles

Rejected: 22 articles

Withdrawn: 0 article

Published: 9 articles

Acceptance rate: 29%