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A Note from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear beloved TESOLers & Educators,

I am pleased to announce the publication of Volume 4, Issue 3, 2024 of the International Journal of TESOL & Education. This edition represents another significant step forward in our ongoing mission to advance research and practice in TESOL and Education. The papers in this issue demonstrate the range and depth of study that our magazine seeks to nurture.

In this issue, Quach Thi To Nu and Nguyen Loc investigated the use of accrediting standards in Vietnam's tertiary general English programs. Their analysis concluded that present quality assurance systems are usually effective, but that there is room for improvement, particularly in terms of aligning these approaches with learners' needs and curriculum effectiveness. The findings highlight accreditation's potential for uniformity and continual development across institutions.

Ly Nguyen Minh Chau, Chu Tien Dat, Tran Thi Hue An, and Pham Que Anh investigated how YouTube affects English learning among students at Van Lang University. Their research discovered that YouTube efficiently boosts students' motivation and autonomy, particularly in terms of increasing listening and speaking abilities, making it a viable teaching tool.

Nguyen Luu Diep Anh's research focuses on the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA AS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English online newspapers. By evaluating 200 metaphorical terms, the study uncovers both universal parallels and cultural variances in how media is viewed in these two languages, emphasizing the metaphor's importance in molding public perception and communication across linguistic boundaries.

Dinh Anh Duc and Pham Nguyen Minh Chau investigated how non-English major students respond emotionally to teacher-written comments. The study discovered that tailored feedback had a substantial influence on students' motivation, self-perception, and engagement. Positive feelings such as appreciation and thankfulness were frequently elicited, highlighting the value of empathy and clarity in feedback delivery.

Laelah Al Mubarakah investigated the professional identities of Indonesian English instructors via the lens of Global Englishes (GEs). The study discovered that, while GEs provide potential for cultural awareness and innovative education, obstacles such as native-speaker bias and insufficient resources impede their adoption. Teachers work through these issues to develop their identities as genuine English educators.

Tran Thi Mai studied the role of pop culture in teaching semantics to English students at Van Lang University. The study discovered that incorporating pop culture items improves students' knowledge of semantic ideas and boosts engagement. Challenges include the necessity for instructors to keep up with swiftly changing pop culture trends.

Duong Thi Thu Huyen, Nguyen Thi To Hoa, and Hoang Tuyet Minh studied instructors' attitudes toward adaptive learning at Vietnam National University in Hanoi. The study found various levels of comfort and familiarity with adaptive learning, emphasizing its potential advantages. However, it also underlined the importance of improved institutional support, resources, and focused professional development to ensure that adaptive learning practices are implemented effectively and have the most impact possible.

Tran The Phi and Nguyen Hoang Gia Khanh evaluated EFL learners' reactions to conversational films at a language facility in Can Tho City. The study discovered that conversational films improve classroom engagement by increasing behavioral, emotional, and cognitive participation. The findings emphasize the potential for video resources to improve language learning experiences and student motivation.

A Note from the Editor-in-Chief

Tran Thi Tuyet Tram and Vuong Tuyet Kha performed research at Van Lang University on the effect of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) on learner autonomy among English majors. Over the course of ten weeks, they discovered that students made substantial use of mobile devices for autonomous learning, communication, and access to educational materials. The study emphasizes the need of incorporating MALL into EFL teaching to improve student autonomy and adapt to technology advances in language acquisition.

This achievement would not have been achieved without the great assistance of various essential players. First and foremost, I'd want to express my heartfelt appreciation to the writers who trusted us with their work. Their research, ideas, and innovations are the foundation of our publication, and their commitment to the field fuels our continuing success.

I'd also want to recognize our Editorial Board's constant support. Their knowledge and assistance have helped shape the course of this publication, ensuring that we retain the highest levels of academic rigor and relevance.

Furthermore, I am very thankful to our Peer Reviewers, whose thorough and attentive reviews confirmed the quality and integrity of the articles published in this issue. Their dedication to a thorough and constructive review process is critical to our journal's reputation for quality.

As we mark the publication of this book, I encourage all of our readers to engage thoroughly with the research presented and to continue contributing to the vibrant conversation that keeps our field so active and influential.

Thank you for your continuous support; we expect more innovative research in future issues.

Thanks be to God for everything!

Warm regards,



Associate Professor Dr. ~~Pham Vu Phi Ho~~
Editor-in-chief
International Journal of TESOL & Education

Using Accreditation Standards for Internal Quality Assurance for Tertiary General English Program in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

accreditation, quality assurance approach, General English training, higher education institutions

The mixed-method study used a quantitative questionnaire to collect feedback from teachers and program directors regarding the current practices of quality assurance approaches in General English (GE) training programs at their higher education institutions (HEIs). Additionally, the study sought their evaluation of applying accreditation schemes to ensure the quality of GE training programs using a semi-structured interview. The results indicated that the quality assurance measures implemented in the GE training program were generally perceived as effective and aligned with industry standards and best practices. However, there needs to be a comprehensive QA approach that covers areas of improvement related to the learners' needs and expectations and the implementation of QA approaches for curriculum effectiveness. Informants were found to have positive evaluations of the application of the existing accreditation schemes for GE training programs at HEIs in Vietnam. Research on the effectiveness of a specific accreditation scheme implemented at particular HEIs in Vietnam will be conducted in the future.

Introduction

In the landscape of English Language Teaching, General English (GE) training at higher education institutions (HEIs) holds significant importance in Vietnam, as it is a fundamental prerequisite for students to engage in international exchanges and thrive in the global job market. However, concerns have been raised regarding the quality of GE training provided by higher education institutions (HEIs) in Vietnam. Despite efforts made by the Vietnamese government to enhance education quality, there remains a lack of standardization and accountability in assessing GE programs (Hoang, 2018; Nguyen T.T., 2017). This deficiency in

quality assurance has resulted in inconsistent outcomes in terms of student performance and employability (Katsomitros, 2015; Nguyen T.H., 2017). Tran (2019) highlights that while GE training is a mandatory component of many higher education programs in Vietnam, its quality and effectiveness can vary significantly. Many institutions still rely on traditional teaching methods that prioritize grammar and vocabulary over communicative competence and real-world language use, leading to students with theoretical knowledge but poor practical skills. A mismatch between learning outcomes and assessment can be another cause for undesired training quality. For instance, Dang and Pham (2024) explored the alignment of student learning outcomes with assessment methods in higher education. Their study found that ambiguous verb usage in learning outcomes could lead to misunderstandings, affecting both teaching and assessment quality. They highlighted the importance of using precise verbs and maintaining balanced requirements in learning outcomes to improve the coherence and effectiveness of the curriculum in linguistic programs. Teachers' competence in assessment also plays a vital role in the quality of English training programs. As part of enhancing English training quality, Dao (2021) recommends incorporating self-reflection tools, like the Tree of Life, into teacher education. This approach aims to help educators better understand and develop their assessment identity, addressing the shortcomings of traditional teacher education programs in fostering teacher identity.

A primary challenge facing GE training in Vietnam is the shortage of qualified and experienced lecturers. Many institutions depend on part-time or inexperienced lecturers who may lack the necessary skills or training to teach English (Nguyen, T.T., 2017) effectively. Additionally, there needs to be more resources, including textbooks, teaching materials, and language labs, poses another obstacle (Tran, 2018; Tran, 2019; Tran, 2020).

To address these challenges, some institutions have begun adopting more contemporary teaching methods, such as task- and project-based learning. Others have invested in teacher training programs and resources to improve the quality of instruction. There is also a growing trend towards international partnerships and collaborations to bring in foreign lecturers and resources (Nguyen, 2017; Nguyen, 2021). Some institutions are even seeking accreditation as a quality assurance (QA) approach for GE training at their higher educational institutions (NEAS, 2022).

Educational institutions have emphasized quality assurance issues in all contexts. Accreditation is a widely recognized QA approach employed by HEIs worldwide. It involves external evaluations of educational institutions or programs against established standards, ensuring that the quality of education meets minimum requirements (Deem & Lucas, 2008). Accreditation is extensively utilized in various countries, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia, and it has proven to be an effective approach to ensuring quality education (Staub, 2019).

However, the reality showed that the QA for GE training is a novice to the Vietnamese context, resulting in the need for research on the effectiveness of accreditation as a QA approach in GE training at HEIs in Vietnam. This study aims to fulfill this urgent need by investigating the current practices of accreditation in GE training at HEIs in Vietnam and evaluating its effectiveness in assuring the quality of GE training.

Literature review

Overview of quality assurance in education

Quality Assurance in education encompasses a range of processes and practices designed to ensure that education and training programs meet established standards and expectations. Its ultimate aim is to provide students with a high-quality education that equips them for their future careers and enables them to achieve their personal goals. QA can take various forms, such as accreditation, certification, licensing, and regulation (Warren, 1993; SEAMEO, 2003; INQAAHE, 2015).

Accreditation stands out as one of the most widely adopted QA approaches in HEIs worldwide. It involves an external evaluation of an educational institution or program against predefined standards, serving to ensure that the quality of education meets minimum requirements. Accreditation entails a rigorous process that incorporates self-assessment, peer review, and external evaluation to foster continuous improvement in educational quality (Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2022; U.S. Department of Education, 2022).

Regarding quality assurance in language education, both government and academia have raised their concerns and solutions via their research and projects. Heyworth (2013) investigated into the application of quality management (QM) in language education. He outlined key aspects of QM, such as defining its purpose, describing principles and practices, presenting various descriptive frameworks, and discussing the roles of reflective practice and action research. He summarized quality descriptions for different areas of language teaching, including examinations and assessment, education for migrants and young learners, and mainstream education. Additionally, Heyworth provided an account of the accreditation and recognition of language teaching institutions and critically reviewed some contradictions and conflicts within the QM approach, such as the tensions between accountability and trust and between creativity and standardization. He also examined the strengths and weaknesses of auditing and quality inspection methods. In Vietnam, the government had an action plan for language education. In particular, the Vietnamese Prime Minister issued Decision No 1400/QD-TTg to enhance English education in Vietnam, aligning it with global trends. The 10-year National Plan (2008-2020) aims to improve English teaching and learning in the national educational system. The Plan adopts the Common European Framework of Reference for Language's 6-level testing system to assess English proficiency and encourages the development of bilingual programs in Vietnamese educational institutions. Hoang (2008) investigated the poor quality of English education at VNU, Hanoi, addressing whether the quality is indeed poor and identifying the causes. The research presented findings from the 2006-2007 Pivotal Project Team and conducted a detailed analysis of the current state of English education, highlighting contributing factors to its poor quality, namely lack of systematic learning goals, non-systematic course books, big class size, inappropriate equipment, lack of English practice environment, incompetent teachers. The paper concluded with corresponding recommendations for improvement to meet regional and global educational needs. Ranson (2005) raised the ESL students' perceptions and expectations in terms of their needs and support. The paper presents preliminary findings from a survey of international ESL students at the University of Melbourne. It explores their perceptions and expectations regarding English language learning

needs and support. The study highlights a significant gap between these students' expectations and the current university support services despite well-documented cultural, social, and academic challenges faced by international ESL students in Australia. Issues in this research are called student support in the literature of recent quality assurance. Stroupe (2013) had a more systematic approach to administering an English program.

In Vietnam, QA in education has been a focal point of recent educational reforms. The Vietnamese government has implemented various policies and programs to enhance the quality of education, including the establishment of a national accreditation system (Vo & Phan, 2019; Dinh & Bui, 2020). Nonetheless, significant challenges remain in ensuring education quality in Vietnam, particularly concerning the assessment of GE training programs.

Types of accreditations and their impacts

Accreditation is a process of QA that involves evaluating an educational institution or program against established standards. There are different types of accreditations, and each has a specific purpose. Institutional accreditation evaluates the institution as a whole, while specialized accreditation evaluates specific programs within the institution (Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs, 2021). National accreditation is recognized by the government of the country in which the institution is located, while regional accreditation is recognized by a specific region within a country.

The overarching goal of accreditation is to ensure that educational institutions and programs uphold rigorous standards of quality, thereby furnishing students with an exemplary educational experience primed for their future careers. Accreditation also facilitates employers in gauging the caliber of job applicants and is frequently a prerequisite for graduates seeking entry into certain professions or pursuing professional licensure (Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2022).

Research delving into the impact of accreditation on educational training programs abounds. Several studies have scrutinized the influence of program accreditation across various educational dimensions. Darolia and Koedel (2018) conducted a study in Missouri, uncovering that program accreditation positively correlates with graduates' employment prospects and earnings. Morrison and Schneider (2019) concentrated on undergraduate business programs and discerned that accreditation positively impacts student learning outcomes. Hill and Bartholomew (2019) explored the effect of accreditation on nursing program quality, utilizing data from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, concluding that accreditation effectively enhances nursing program quality. Renn and Reason (2019) delved into the impact of accreditation on program quality in higher education, revealing an overall beneficial influence, albeit with variations contingent on the program and accrediting agency. In the realm of online master's degree programs, O'Connor and Lau (2020) found that program accreditation correlates with increased enrollment and improved student outcomes.

Accreditation in higher education institutions in Vietnam

In Vietnam, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) undergo accreditation conducted by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET, 2022; Ta *et al.*, 2019) or other authorized agencies. While accreditation remains voluntary, its significance is progressively rising for institutions

aiming to attract students, secure funding, and sustain or enhance the quality of their programs. Two primary types of accreditation prevail in Vietnam: institutional accreditation and program accreditation. Institutional accreditation appraises the overall quality of an institution, encompassing governance, management, facilities, and resources, while program accreditation scrutinizes specific programs within an institution, such as those in business, engineering, or education (Do *et al.*, 2020).

Accreditation in Vietnam is a relatively nascent concept, continuously evolving. While the MOET has established accreditation standards, a pressing need exists for enhanced transparency and consistency in the accreditation procedure (Vietnam Briefing, 2020; Asia-Pacific Quality Network, 2019).

Vietnamese Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) offer English language education in two main forms (Hoang, 2010). At the tertiary level, English is introduced nationally both as a discipline and as a subject. In the first category, students study English to earn a BA, MA, or doctoral degree in English. Trained in this category, they can become teachers, translators, interpreters, or researchers in either English linguistics or English language teaching methodology. This kind of program undergoes program accreditation following standards set by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). Additionally, some programs may seek accreditation from international bodies like FIBAA and AUN-QA Assessment. In the second category, English is a compulsory subject applied across the whole higher educational system in Vietnam for students enrolled in disciplines other than English Language. In this category, students study about 10% of the total credit hours of an undergraduate program, 12% of the total credit hours of a graduate program, and three self-studied credit hours at a doctoral program. While not part of a full degree program, this subject can be endorsed by the NEAS scheme.

Accreditation of English Language Education

The pursuit of higher education quality has spurred an escalating demand for accreditation bodies, particularly specialized ones, originating from Western contexts (Eaton, 2015; Knight, 2015; Morse, 2015). Nations prioritizing the internationalization and globalization of education have begun recognizing the imperative of evaluating the quality of foreign language teaching programs.

To attract international students, universities in the United States and Europe are intensifying their focus on quality assurance. English has evolved into a mandatory subject for foreign students, facilitating their engagement in lectures and interactions. External quality evaluation processes are being instituted to ensure this standard. In the United States, legislation enacted in 2010 mandates that all Intensive English Programs (IEPs) obtain accreditation from a recognized agency. Accredited IEPs exclusively issue documents for international students applying for an F-1 visa. Leading accrediting bodies for IEP programs include the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) and the Accrediting Council for Continuing Education and Training (ACCET) (Ludska, 2019).

In Turkey, the collaboration between the British Council and the Turkish Council on Higher Education has birthed an external accreditation program geared toward enhancing the quality of English language teaching in university-level Intensive English Programs (IEPs).

Consequently, an external accreditation process has been formulated and implemented (Donald, 2019). Presently, numerous student preparation programs have undergone quality assessment through external/international accreditation via organizations like the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA), EAQUALS, and Pearson-Edexcel.

In Middle Eastern nations, where English language proficiency is imperative due to the prominence of oil extraction, the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) has been conducting accreditation evaluations since 2004, primarily in the Middle East. Reeves (2019) characterizes CEA as a specialized accreditation entity adept at meeting the burgeoning demand for assessing foreign language teaching.

Crandall and Chisholm (2004) proved the importance of accreditation in maintaining quality in ELT programs, providing insights into the challenges, benefits, and the necessity of collaborative stakeholder engagement in developing effective accreditation frameworks.

The briefing of accreditation schemes in English Language Teaching

This section summarizes five reputable accreditation schemes: NEAS in Australia, Accreditation UK in the UK, CEA in the US, Languages Canada, and Eequals. These schemes have been chosen for their recognized reputation and successful implementation on both national and international levels. They have been carefully designed to accommodate a wide range of educational organizations, including public and private institutions, autonomous language centers and schools, global chains of centers, contractual arrangements with colleges and universities, and university-affiliated programs.

NEAS Accreditation Scheme

The NEAS (National ELT Accreditation Scheme) is a rigorous accreditation scheme specific to English language teaching institutions in Australia. Established in 1990, NEAS accreditation ensures that institutions meet or exceed the NEAS standards in areas such as curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment, student support, and management and administration. This accreditation scheme is internationally recognized as a benchmark for quality assurance in English language education, enhancing the reputation of NEAS-accredited institutions among students and industry stakeholders (Crichton & Craven, 2016). Some HEIs located in Vietnam, such as RMIT, and Hoa Sen University, have their GE training programs accredited by NEAS.

The Accreditation UK

Accreditation UK, a collaboration between the British Council and English UK, accredits English language services in the UK. Established in 1996, it covers various providers such as language schools, home tuition providers, and further and higher education institutions (Accreditation UK Handbook). The scheme ensures quality standards for English language education offered to international students. Accreditation is granted to organizations meeting these standards, allowing them to enroll students on short-term student visas. The scheme is based on four main standards: Management, Resources and Environment, Teaching and Learning, and Welfare and Student Services.

CEA

The Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) is a specialized accrediting agency in charge of evaluating intensive English language programs and institutions operating at the post-secondary level. CEA conducts accreditation assessments within the United States as well as globally. The CEA Scheme encompasses 44 distinct standards grouped into 11 areas (CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions, 2017). These standards align with the requirements outlined by the US Department of Education regulations for recognized accrediting agencies. The 11 areas encompass a wide range of criteria, including Mission, Curriculum, Faculty, Facilities, Administrative and Fiscal Capacity, Student Services, Recruiting, Length and Structure of Program Study, Student Achievement, Student Complaints, and Program Development, Planning, and Review.

Languages Canada

Languages Canada is the primary language organization in Canada, representing English and French. It has been recognized by the Canadian government and the international community. The main goal of Languages Canada is to ensure the well-being of students studying or planning to study English and/or French in Canada (Languages Canada Quality Assurance Scheme Accreditation Handbook, Orion Assessment Services, 2017). Membership in Languages Canada requires adherence to the Standards and Quality Assurance Scheme. This scheme includes an evaluation of six key areas: Student Admissions, Student Services, Teaching Staff, Curriculum, Marketing and Recruiting, and Administration. Each area consists of primary standards and supplementary specifications.

EAQUALS

Eaquals is an international organization committed to promoting high standards in language teaching and learning worldwide. It focuses on quality language instruction across languages, countries, and education sectors. EAQUALS embodies its core values, including plurilingualism, intercultural understanding, international cooperation, and lifelong learning, through various charters: the General Charter, the Charter for Course Participants, the Staff Charter, and the Information Charter. These charters form the basis of the Eaquals Accreditation Scheme, with the Quality Standards derived from them representing their practical implementation. The Standards are structured into twelve categories that encompass different aspects of a Language Education Centre's activities. Each category includes specific standards and compliance indicators to ensure adherence to quality guidelines. The twelve categories outlined in The Eaquals Inspection Scheme Manual Version 7.1 (2016) are Management and Administration, Teaching and Learning, Course Design and Supporting Systems, Assessment and Certification, Academic Resources, Learning Environment, Client Services, Quality Assurance, Staff Profile and Development, Staff Employment Terms, Internal Communications, and External Communications.

Evaluation of these schemes

Kotarska (2019) pointed out core standards in quality assurance of language education after comparing these accreditation schemes, namely (1) the UK-based schemes" Accreditation UK, BAC/IELP and BALEAP; (2) the US-based scheme: CEA; (3) languages Canada; (4) the

Australian scheme: NEAS; (5) An international scheme: Eaquals. He concluded that although the main standards or assessment areas range from five to twelve, all the schemes cover five generic standards, namely Management, Administration, Governance and Staff; Programme Design and Delivery; Assessment and Certification; Resources and Learning Environment; Student Welfare and Services.

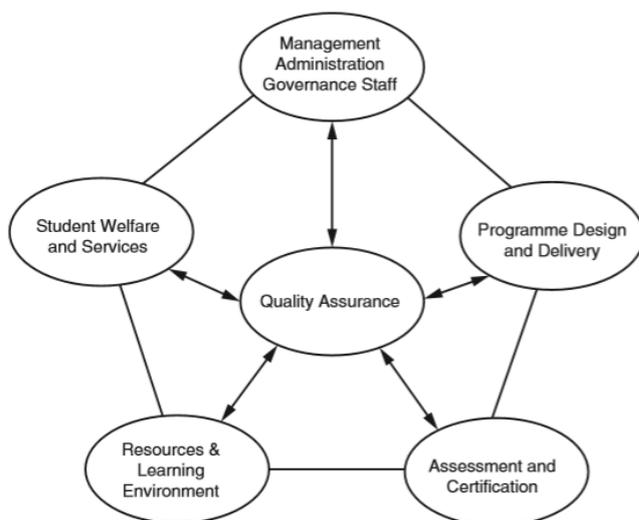


Figure 1. Generic quality standard by Kotarska (2019)

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the teachers’ and program managers’ experiences and feedback on QA approaches in GE training at HEIs in Vietnam?
2. What is the program managers’ evaluation of the application feasibility of accreditation schemes in QA in General English training at HEIs in Vietnam?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The sample for this study consisted of all GE lecturers and 3 program directors at 3 HEIs (one public sector and two private sectors) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. They were selected on the basis of convenience sampling due to the approach's feasibility. The program manager at HEI 1, coded as PD1, is a male, born in 1989, with 2-year experience in this position, having experience with AUN and FIBAA accreditation as AUN and FIBAA accredited their English Language Program. The program manager at HEI 2, coded as PD2, is a male, born in 1986, with five years of experience in this position, having accreditation knowledge as MOET accredited their ELP. The program manager at HEI 3, coded as PD3, is a female, born in 1976, with three years of experience in this position, having experience of AUN accreditation as AUN accredited their English Language Program. These HEIs have their own department/division of

General English, which belongs to the faculty of foreign languages, where students accumulate credits to advance to the English level. The department/division of General English provides General English courses to their students. The sample size was quite small, from 3 HEIs, which was determined based on participants' availability and willingness to participate in the study.

Table 1.

Description of HEIs and its General English courses

HEI Type	Code	Program	Number of periods	Number of levels	Credit	Number of students	Number of teachers
1. Private sector	HEI 1	English for International Communication	630 periods	6	20	12.139	30
2. Private sector	HEI 2	General English Program	480 periods	8	32	5.000	25
3. Public sector	HEI 3	English	90 periods	2	6	36.000	45

Design of the Study

This mixed-method study explores the feasibility of using an accreditation scheme as a QA approach in GE training at HEIs in Vietnam. The quantitative approach was used first to collect teachers' and program managers' experiences and feedback on QA approaches used in GE training as well as their evaluation of the application feasibility of accreditation schemes in QA in GE training. A qualitative approach was used to explore the program managers' evaluation of the application feasibility of accreditation schemes in QA in GE training more deeply. This study adhered to ethical principles and guidelines for research involving human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and their privacy and confidentiality would be protected.

Data collection & analysis

Data was collected through surveys and interviews with GE lecturers and program administrators at HEIs in Vietnam. The surveys were administered in a hybrid manner to collect data on the experiences and feedback of participants regarding the use of accreditation as a QA approach in GE training. The survey is a 5-point Likert questionnaire that consists of two parts, namely (1) the experiences and feedback on QA approaches in GE training and (2) the evaluation of the feasibility of the accreditation scheme as QA approach in GE training. The statements in the questionnaire in part 1 and part 2 were written based on the literature on internal quality assurance components, features, and purposes by Martin (2018) and suggestions on the feasibility of using standards for program administration by Stroupe (2013), respectively. The value of each level was calculated as follows: $(\text{highest point} - \text{lowest point}) / \text{number of points} = (5-1) / 5 = 0.8$. The significance of each point is divided as follows (Likert, 1932):

- From 1.00 to 1.80: Totally disagree / Never / Completely not influential.
- From 1.81 to 2.60: Disagree / Infrequent / Normal
- From 2.61 to 3.40: Normal

- From 3.41 to 4.20: Agree / Frequent / Influential
- From 4.21 to 5.00: Totally agree / Very often / Very influential

The interview questions were created following the study aims and the interpretation of the survey results, which allowed for a more in-depth exploration of participants' views and experiences regarding the feasibility of applying for accreditation in GE training. Informants were interviewed, either in person or virtually via Zoom, at their convenience. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis, focusing on how informants evaluated the feasibility of the proposed standards.

Findings

The experiences and feedback on QA approaches in GE training at HEIs in Vietnam

Table 2.

Experience in QA approaches in GE training

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
1. Quality assurance approaches (course report, bench marking, teacher training, and student feedback) are integrated into my GE training program.	3.29	0.64	3
2. The GE training program implements quality assurance approaches to ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum	3.19	0.74	5
3. The GE training program continuously improves its instructional materials and teaching methodologies.	3.45	0.67	1
4. I am satisfied with the level of monitoring and evaluation conducted by the GE training program to ensure the quality of teaching and learning outcomes	3.25	0.72	4
5. The overall effectiveness of the quality assurance approaches implemented in the GE training program	3.30	0.52	2

The data provided in Table 2 focuses on various factors related to QA approaches in a GE training program. Each factor is described in terms of its mean score, standard deviation, and ranking. "The GE training program continuously improves its instructional materials and teaching methodologies" received the highest mean score of 3.45 and was ranked first. This suggests that participants recognized the program's efforts to continuously improve its instructional materials and teaching methodologies continuously, indicating an acceptable commitment to enhancing the quality of education. "The overall effectiveness of the QA approaches implemented in the GE training program" received a mean score of 3.30 and was ranked second. This indicates that participants generally believed that the QA approaches implemented in the program have an overall positive impact on its effectiveness. "QA approaches (course report, benchmarking, teacher training, students' feedback) are integrated into my GE training program" received a mean score of 3.29 and was ranked third. It can be inferred that participants generally perceived the integration of QA approaches into the program, indicating a systematic approach to ensure quality. "I am satisfied with the level of monitoring and evaluation conducted by the GE training program to ensure the quality of teaching and learning outcomes" received a mean score of 3.25 (a moderate level of

satisfaction) and was ranked fourth. "*The GE training program implements QA approaches to ensure the effectiveness of the curriculum*" received a mean score of 3.19 (a relatively lower level of confidence) and was ranked fifth.

Overall, the data suggests that participants positively perceived the program's integration of QA approaches and continuous improvement efforts. However, there is a relatively lower level of confidence in the program's implementation of QA approaches for curriculum effectiveness. The program's monitoring and evaluation efforts were moderately satisfactory, and the overall effectiveness of QA approaches was perceived positively.

The findings can be used to affirm the literature that there is a lack of consistent and effective procedures for QA in GE training program.

Table 3.

Feedback on QA approaches in GE training

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
1. The quality assurance measures implemented in my GE training program effectively ensure the delivery of high-quality instruction.	3.22	0.85	2
2. The quality assurance procedures are in place within my GE training program.	3.09	1.07	3
3. The quality assurance procedures in your GE training program adequately address the needs and expectations of the learners.	3.00	0.85	4
4. I am confident in the effectiveness of the quality assurance measures in improving the overall quality of GE training.	3.09	0.83	3
5. The quality assurance approaches in my GE training program align with current industry standards and best practices.	3.41	0.67	1

The data in Table 3 represents the ratings and rankings of various factors related to QA measures in GE training programs. The mean scores and standard deviations provide insights into these measures' perceived effectiveness and alignment. "The QA approaches in my GE training program align with current industry standards and best practices" received the highest mean score (3.41) and was ranked first. This indicates that participants generally believed that the program's QA approaches align with industry standards and best practices. "The QA measures implemented in my GE training program effectively ensure the delivery of high-quality instruction" got a mean score of 3.22 and was ranked second. This suggests that participants generally felt that the implemented measures were effective in ensuring the delivery of high-quality instruction. "The QA procedures are in place within my GE training program" and "I am confident in the effectiveness of the QA measures in improving the overall quality of GE training" both carried mean scores of 3.09. Although their mean scores were the same, they were ranked differently due to their standard deviations. These factors were ranked third, indicating that participants were confident in the presence and effectiveness of QA procedures in improving overall training quality. "The QA procedures in your GE training program adequately address the needs and expectations of the learners" received a mean score of 3.00 and was ranked fourth. This suggests that participants perceived the program's QA procedures

to address the needs and expectations of the learners only adequately, indicating room for improvement.

Generally, the data, from the viewpoint of the surveyed lecturers and program directors, suggests that the GE training program's QA measures were generally perceived as effective and aligned with industry standards and best practices. However, there is room for further improvement in addressing the learners' needs and expectations.

Evaluation of the application feasibility of accreditation schemes in QA in General English training

Table 4.

The application feasibility of accreditation schemes in QA in General English training

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation	Ranking
1. Accreditation schemes serve as a QA mechanism for General English training programs at Vietnamese higher educational institutions	3.41	0.56	5
2. Accreditation schemes cover various aspects of a program including curriculum, teaching methodologies, resources, and faculty qualifications of Vietnamese higher educational institutions	2.87	0.67	7
3. Accreditation schemes promote consistency and continuous improvement for General English training programs.	2.90	0.74	6
4. Accreditation schemes enhance program visibility for General English training programs.	3.41	0.56	5
5. Accreditation schemes facilitate student mobility.	3.87	0.56	3
6. Applying accreditation schemes could promote professional development for teachers at your HEIs.	4.25	0.63	1
7. The accreditation scheme could help standardize the quality of general English training programs at Vietnamese higher educational institutions.	3.41	0.56	5
8. Applying for accreditation would involve a significant administrative burden for Vietnamese higher educational institutions.	4.16	0.52	2
9. Applying accreditation schemes would be perceived positively by stakeholders in the Vietnamese higher educational sector (e.g., students, employers, government agencies).	4.25	0.72	1
10. Applying accreditation could support meaningful innovation to General English training programs at Vietnamese higher educational institutions.	3.48	0.85	4

The data represents the mean, standard deviation, and ranking for different factors related to accreditation schemes in the context of General English training programs at Vietnamese higher educational institutions.

The results show that informants highly believe that applying accreditation schemes could promote professional development for teachers and be perceived positively by stakeholders.

However, they also believe that applying for accreditation would involve a significant administrative burden (4.16). Ranked as the third most important factor, accreditation schemes

are believed to facilitate student mobility (3.87). The following are supporting meaningful innovation, serving as QA mechanism, enhancing program visibility, standardizing the quality of programs, promoting consistency and continuous improvement, and covering various aspects of a program.

In summary, the data suggests that stakeholders perceive applying accreditation schemes positively and could promote teacher professional development. However, it also indicates that there may be concerns about the administrative burden involved. The factors related to program visibility, consistency, and standardization are also considered important. Facilitating student mobility and supporting meaningful innovation are also moderately important factors in the context of General English training programs at Vietnamese higher educational institutions.

Interview results

Interviews with three program directors (coded as PD1, PD2, and PD3) were categorized into four themes. Accordingly, program directors highly evaluated accreditation schemes specific to English language teaching institutions in America, Canada, Europe, and some Middle Eastern countries. They believed that those schemes could serve as valuable references for assuring the quality of GE training at HEIs in Vietnam. From their viewpoints, these schemes offer potential approaches that can be adapted to the Vietnamese context.

First, Vietnamese authorities can compile assessment standards for GE training programs at their institution, taking inspiration from the principles and criteria used by these accreditation schemes. PD1 stated that

“the Vietnamese authorities can develop their own set of assessment standards for GE training programs by referencing the principles and criteria of the existing accreditation schemes.”

PD3 added that stakeholders such as educators, students, employers, and industry experts must be consulted when developing assessment standards for GE training programs.

Second, it is implicated that program administrators in Vietnam can assess GE training programs using criteria similar to those employed by Accreditation UK, CEA, Languages Canada, NEAS, and EAQUALS. It is up to the institution's real context to pick relevant assessment criteria. PD2 clarified that program administrators in Vietnam have the option to evaluate GE training programs by employing criteria that are similar to those used by Accreditation UK, CEA, Languages Canada, NEAS, and EAQUALS during program evaluations. In addition, PD3 believed that evaluations should cover program content, teaching staff, resources, and management systems.

Third, as accreditation schemes aim to foster continuous improvement in English language teaching institutions, HEIs can adopt similar principles in GE training programs to identify areas for improvement, search for resources to facilitate necessary changes for the sake of internal QA. PD 1 emphasized that promotion of ongoing improvement is a built-in aspect of those mentioned accreditation schemes. This feature can be adopted by HEIs in Vietnam.

Fourth, accreditation UK, CEA, Languages Canada, NEAS, and EAQUALS have established benchmarks for quality in English language education. HEIs in Vietnam can likewise establish

quality benchmarks for GE training programs, ensuring that all programs meet high standards. PD3 summarized that accreditation bodies such as Accreditation UK, CEA, Languages Canada, NEAS, and EAQUALS have set standards that serve as benchmarks for quality in English language education. Similarly, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Vietnam can establish their own quality benchmarks for GE training programs, ensuring that all programs meet rigorous standards.

Discussion

The quantitative data shed light on the current context of QA in GE training programs. The findings indicated that overall, the QA measures implemented in the GE training programs at the studied HEIs were considered effective and satisfied industry standards and best practices. This suggests that the program successfully maintained a certain level of quality and ensured that learners were equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills required by the industry. By adhering to these standards, the GE training programs likely prepared learners to meet the demands of the job market and perform effectively in their roles.

To recap, while the QA measures in the GE training program were generally perceived as effective and aligned with industry standards, the findings of the current suggest the need for further improvement to address the specific needs and expectations of learners. These results are aligned with those found by Ranson *et al.* (2005), exploring the gap between ESL learners' expectations and what they were supported. The paper examining their views and expectations about English language learning needs and support reveals a notable discrepancy between these students' expectations and the existing university support services, even though the cultural, social, and academic challenges international ESL students face in Australia are well-known. By actively seeking feedback, customizing the learning experience, and continuously evaluating the program, GE can ensure that its training program remains relevant, engaging, and valuable to the learners it serves.

The qualitative data revealed the informants' evaluation of the feasibility of applying existing accreditation schemes in English Language Teaching into Vietnamese HEIs' GE programs. Accordingly, stakeholders view accreditation schemes positively due to their perceived ability to enhance teacher professional development and improve education quality. However, concerns exist regarding the administrative burden associated with accreditation. Despite that undeniable hindrance, the idea in this current study of using an existing accreditation scheme as a framework for internal assurance of a language teaching program is in line with Stroupe (2013) stating that making use of national and international standards is an opportunity for institutions to bring objectivity to the self-evaluation process. It also plays a vital role in standardizing program quality and promoting consistency across institutions. Additionally, accreditation encourages continuous improvement and covers various aspects of a program. Importantly, the implications of accreditation should be considered within the context of specific programs and institutions.

Conclusion

In summary, the study confirms the positive hypotheses that applying accreditation schemes is a viable QA approach for assuring the quality of GE training at HEIs in Vietnam. The findings of this study provided valuable insights into the potential utilization of current accreditation schemes in GE training at HEIs in Vietnam. It arouses a chance for HEIs in Vietnam to benchmark to enhance their own training quality.

One limitation of this study is the small sample as it is time-consuming for experts to read through accreditation schemes that are quite unpopular. Additionally, the study only focused on GE training at some HEIs in Vietnam, so the findings may not be generalizable to other contexts or language programs.

This study serves as a preliminary examination of the QA aspect of an English language teaching program. In the future, the author's research will investigate the influence of a specific scheme – NEAS on the efficacy of General English instruction within two educational institutions in Vietnam, namely RMIT and Hoa Sen University.

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Biodata

As an experienced lecturer at the Industrial University of Ho Chi Minh City, with 19 years of teaching experience, Quach Thi To Nu is currently a PhD student at Hochiminh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities - Vietnam National University, Vietnam. My research interests lie in enhancing English teaching skills and ensuring quality assurance in education for future generations.

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Students' Perception of Using YouTube to Learn English: A Case Study at Van Lang University

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: YouTube, video-based learning, autonomy, motivation, students' perception

The research is set to examine students' perspectives on using YouTube for English language learning and its impact on their motivation and autonomy in education. A mixed-methods approach was employed, which surveyed 333 English-major students at Van Lang University using a 24-item multiple-choice questionnaire based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The questionnaire was based on the TAM model, which includes three factors: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and Intention of Use. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten students to delve deeper into their individual experiences and perspectives, focusing on the themes of skill development, motivation, and autonomy. Data revealed that students generally find YouTube an effective tool to motivate them to learn English and give them control over their learning. Also, apart from listening, students are found to have their speaking skills enhanced to some extent. This research recommends that English teachers adapt and adjust the use of YouTube for both in-class assignments and homework. Therefore, teachers may encourage their students' motivation and autonomy, eventually resulting in more effective and enjoyable language learning.

Introduction

Today's digital era has revolutionized education in many areas, with new platforms and technologies available to support learning. One of the most effective methods applied today is learning English through social networks. According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), social media consists of web-based platforms grounded in the principles of Web 2.0, enabling users to produce and share their own content. In the era of technological advancement, social media is gradually becoming an indispensable part of English learning, as it helps students to be provided with knowledge more conveniently and easily (Prayudha, J., 2022). Among those social media platforms, YouTube is seen as an English learning tool that supports students in learning English independently (Dabamona & Yunus, 2022). Furthermore, because of its

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audiovisual format, it provides a dynamic and interesting learning environment that may improve students' motivation and understanding. According to Sakkir et al. (2020), it is being used more and more in both classroom and self-study settings as an additional learning tool, which is now known to be an essential tool for various colleges and universities worldwide. Therefore, researchers and educators are especially interested in the use of YouTube in language acquisition.

This study aims to investigate how students feel about utilizing YouTube as a language-learning resource for English. The study specifically focused on students at Van Lang University, a prestigious university in Vietnam. Van Lang University was selected due to its high enrollment in language courses, widespread use of digital platforms among students, and the institution's openness to innovative teaching methodologies. At this university, many teachers have combined watching YouTube videos into English lessons in class and have the task of watching video lectures on YouTube for self-study sessions. These factors make it an ideal setting for examining the educational impacts of YouTube. Many previous studies also investigated awareness and attitudes towards using YouTube as an English learning platform but focused little on motivation and autonomy, especially in a tertiary education context. Therefore, this research aims to offer insights into how students evaluate the usefulness of YouTube in improving their English language proficiency and how it affects their motivation and autonomy in learning English.

Regarding the significance of the study, it is important to understand how students see YouTube since this affects their motivation, engagement, and, ultimately, the effectiveness of using YouTube in language learning programs. Learners benefit from watching educational videos on YouTube, and using YouTube has many positive effects on EFL learners' English proficiency (Tahmina, T. 2023). In particular, YouTube plays a crucial role in explaining and examining lessons and assignments, allowing for time efficiency and enhancing the enjoyment of studying (Alhrahsheh, R., 2024). This research focused on students' motivation and autonomy because learners with greater autonomy are more likely to exhibit higher levels of intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This intrinsic motivation is crucial as it fuels learners' persistence and effort in language learning tasks (Noels et al., 2001). Additionally, studies have shown that autonomous learners are better at self-regulation and goal-setting, which further enhances their language proficiency (Benson, 2011). The ability to make choices about their learning process empowers students, making them more engaged and invested in their studies. Furthermore, motivation and autonomy in learning are always related to each other because autonomy has an interwoven relationship with motivation and success in language learning (Spratt et al., 2002). Therefore, fostering learner autonomy boosts motivation and leads to more effective and successful language acquisition. Therefore, the investigation in this matter may help educators and curriculum designers decide how to integrate video-based learning into teaching methods to boost the efficiency of students' English learning.

Literature Review

Perception

Perception is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as "a belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem." In the context of student learning, students' perception refers to the way in which students interpret and make sense of their educational experiences, including their understanding, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings towards various aspects of their learning environment, curriculum, teaching methods, and institutional support. (Weimer, 2013).

It encompasses how students perceive the quality, relevance, fairness, and effectiveness of their educational experiences based on their personal perspectives and individual contexts. Marsden et al. (2017) provided a summary of this concept as the way that students perceive their learning experience through several factors, such as their learning styles, the amount of knowledge they acquired, and the factors they consider relevant or important as to cultivate learning success (Huy et al., 2021). To measure students' perceptions, Afifah and Yunus's (2020) study used quantitative and qualitative research methods, namely closed-ended and open-ended questions, to investigate students' views on the benefits of using social media to learn English. Similarly, a recent study by Rahmawati et al. (2024) also used a closed-ended questionnaire based on previous research by Afifah and Yunus (2020) and Nuarta (2020) and interviews to measure students' perceptions about how social media can help to improve writing skills. Although there are other methods that can be used to investigate students' perceptions, like observations, diaries or journals, or ethnography, surveys, and interviews are popular methods for measuring student perceptions because they offer complementary strengths: surveys provide breadth and quantifiability, while interviews offer depth and qualitative insights. Surveys often help to effectively collect standardized, quantitative data from a large population, which is essential for the descriptive quantitative nature of this study. Researchers often choose between these methods based on their research objectives, the complexity of the research questions, and practical considerations such as resources and participant accessibility.

Technical acceptance model (TAM)

The technical acceptance model (TAM) was developed by Davis (1989), consisting of two main factors that influence users' intention to use a new technology: (1) perception of usefulness (PU) and (2) perception of ease of use (PEU). These three elements are simple to comprehend and strongly correlate with the ultimate outcome, which is users' perception of a particular technology. TAM has been extensively validated and applied across various contexts and technologies, including educational settings. Many researchers have also conducted research to reinforce the principles laid out in TAM. For instance, King & He (2006) conducted a meta-analysis by investigating 88 studies that have used the TAM model. The study has demonstrated this model's applicability and validity in various contexts, reaffirming TAM's efficacy in anticipating and elucidating users' adoption of technology by combining results from multiple studies. This study also adds to our understanding of how perceptions affect technology adoption. Additionally, Lee (2009) pointed out that TAM's attractiveness lies in its detail and efficiency, and it can accurately predict how people will use technology. In education-related fields, TAM is the most popular model for estimating the adoption intentions for the application of technology to support learning performance (Liao et al., 2022). This is because TAM provides a straightforward model with key constructs—perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU)—that are easy to operationalize and measure through surveys or interviews. This simplicity makes it accessible and practical for researchers to apply in studying students' perceptions of technology for learning English.

YouTube as a video-based learning platform

YouTube, a social media platform used to share videos, was registered on February 14, 2005, by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley, and Jawed Karim. The company is based in San Bruno, California (Hosch et al., 2024). Sakkir et al. (2020) state that YouTube is now an essential tool for colleges and universities worldwide. Snelson, C. (2011) found that YouTube offers internet access to an incredible quantity of free public videos covering a wide range of subjects, which is certainly one of the advantages of online learning. Teachers can help students connect to the "real-life" aspect of YouTube videos by providing context for these short videos that allow students to

explore an expanded variety of online English learning opportunities. Moreover, YouTube videos can be utilized in an ELT classroom to teach a variety of subjects, including voice modulation, accents, pronunciations, and vocabulary (Ghasemi et al., 2011). This platform can also be utilized as a teaching tool to provide students with unlimited resources for their English language studies. Additionally, it provides students with a wider range of opportunities to enhance their skills and aspects of English language learning, including speaking, listening, grammar, vocabulary, and cultural content. (Dabamona & Yunus, 2022) There has been some consensus among researchers about the usefulness of YouTube in ELT.

Perceptions of students on using YouTube to learn English

There is a high volume of empirical research investigating students' perceptions about using YouTube to learn English. Sakkir et al. (2020) examined the students' perceptions of using YouTube in learning English at the English Education Department, Universitas Negeri Makassar Indonesia. The participants were 76 first-semester undergraduate students at that department's Faculty of Language and Literature. The questionnaire featured a five-point Likert Scale to examine their feelings, opinions, and thoughts about using the media. Findings from this research pointed out that using YouTube as visual media applies to teaching English, and the students had positive perceptions of using YouTube for learning English. Gracella, J., and Nur, D. R. (2020) conducted a qualitative study to determine students' perspectives regarding the usefulness and assistance of YouTube in the English language learning process to examine a deeper insight. Five students from SMK Negeri 17 who utilize YouTube as a platform for English language instruction participated in this study. Data were gathered through open-ended interview questions based on a case study approach. The study's findings show that all students greatly benefited from using YouTube to improve their English language proficiency. These benefits are also readily available on nearly all student gadgets, providing support and motivation for learning English in a variety of environments. Most students also gave positive feedback regarding using the YouTube application for English language study.

Other researchers are interested in how and why students can use YouTube to learn English effectively. One of those was Dabamona, M., & Yunus, A. (2022), who assessed how students use YouTube and explored a technology-based approach to learning English. This study involved six participants in the English Education Program at Sorong National Islamic Academy who were actively engaged in learning using YouTube. The author employs the descriptive qualitative method to gather information and data. Observation, interviews, and note-taking instruments were employed in a triangulation strategy to validate the data collected. The findings demonstrated that students can utilize YouTube as a tool to help them study and improve their English on their own. Additionally, the study showed how YouTube may be used as instructional technology to encourage students' technology-based learning strategies by promoting autonomous, enjoyable, and productive learning.

Some studies wanted to examine the specific skills that YouTube can assist students in learning. Rusgandi (2021) carried out a study to investigate how students felt about using YouTube to practice speaking English. The qualitative method was employed in this study, along with a descriptive design by the researcher. 30 English students in the second semester of the UNISMA English Education Department participated in this study. As the representative of 30 respondents, only 10 students were available for interviews. Semi-structured interviews and a questionnaire with a Likert scale were the study's instruments. The results indicated that every student believed YouTube was a major factor in helping them become more comfortable public speakers. The students reported that using YouTube had improved their fluency and pronunciation. Furthermore, their vocabulary was expanded. Additionally, every student

mentioned how versatile YouTube was, allowing them to utilize it anytime and anywhere they wanted to practice speaking. In general, the students stated that using YouTube to improve their speaking ability was positive.

Student autonomy

A variety of theoretical frameworks has shaped the concept of student autonomy. John Dewey's 1916 book *Democracy and Education* laid the groundwork for the growth of learner autonomy (Dewey, 1916), a period marked by rapid social and industrial changes in the United States, and his work was part of a larger movement in progressive education that stressed the need for education to prepare people to take part in democracy. The idea of autonomy has been greatly affected by Dewey's ideas about learning through experience, how important it is for the learner to be actively involved in the learning process, and how education should promote democratic values. His focus on how people interact with society laid the philosophical groundwork for the growth of learner autonomy.

Since then, this concept has been defined by various researchers; Holec (1979), whose project was created in the context of adult language education in Europe and shaped by the Council of Europe's efforts to promote lifelong learning and the need for students to learn how to manage their own time, first defined student autonomy as the ability to regulate one's own learning. He set the stage for future research and practice on learner autonomy by saying that autonomy means being able to take charge of one's own learning. This was different from the usual teacher-centered approaches because it stressed the importance of learner responsibility and the role of learners in their own learning.

Later on, David Little's book, published in 1991, resulted from his concentration on language education and participation with the European Centre for Modern Languages, which was a period when the evolution of communicative language teaching strategies and self-directed learning attracted increasing interest. Little (1991, p. 4, as cited in Hafner & Miller, 2011) named it the "capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision-making, and independent action.". Little helped us learn more about the problems and issues that come up in real life when we try to give learners more freedom. He looked into what this meant for how lessons are planned, what teachers do, and how tests are given. His work helped to put the idea of autonomy in language learning into practice and looked at how to make autonomous learning environments work in real life.

Benson's (2013) work reflects a more global and contemporary context, incorporating insights from various educational settings and advancements in technology, and throughout his book, he expanded the understanding of autonomy by incorporating psychological, sociocultural, and political dimensions. His practical strategies for fostering autonomy and linking theory with empirical research make the concept more accessible and actionable for educators. While Benson (2013) has the same definition as Holec (1979), he further stated that autonomy is recognized as a multidimensional capacity that everyone possesses in varying degrees and that this capacity varies within the same human at different times and in different settings. As Holec laid the groundwork by defining learner autonomy and emphasizing the learner's responsibility, Benson's work expands this definition by incorporating psychological, sociocultural, and political perspectives, offering practical strategies for implementation, and grounding his discussion in extensive research. Benson's more holistic and detailed approach provides a richer and more actionable understanding of learner autonomy.

Holec (1979) first outlined five areas where autonomy is involved: (1) *what to do*, (2) *what is included in that task*, (3) *how it can be done*, (4) *what has worked and what has not*, and (5)

how it proceeds. In line with this, one and a half decades later, Dickinson (1993, pp. 330–331), had the same categorization. Later, Benson's (2013) definition of student autonomy includes psychological (learners' beliefs, motivations, attitudes toward learning, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and learner identity), sociocultural (social interactions, cultural contexts, and institutional settings) and political (power dynamics within educational institutions and broader societal structures) aspects, along with practical strategies (teaching strategies, curriculum design, and the use of technology).

In a more recent study, Cheon & Reeve (2015) defined student autonomy as the extent to which students perceive themselves as having choices, control, and responsibility over their learning processes within the classroom context, and it includes students' ability to make decisions about their learning goals, methods, and evaluation criteria, as well as their sense of ownership and self-regulation in learning activities in their study to help teachers increase students' motivation.

For a comprehensive and modern definition of student autonomy, we adopt the ideas of Holec (1979), Benson (2013), and Cheon & Reeve (2015). Student autonomy is defined as the capacity of learners to take charge of their own learning, including the ability to set goals, track progress, and select learning strategies.

Student motivation

Motivation, by definition of Oxford Learner's Dictionary, is the feeling of wanting to do something, especially something that involves hard work and effort. Learning motivation is the promotion, guidance, and maintenance of learning activities carried out via an internal strength or process (Fernanda et al., 2024). For a well-rounded definition of student motivation, we use concepts from Brophy (1998) and Pintrich and Schunk (1996), which include intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence students' engagement, effort, and persistence in learning activities. Furthermore, to use an up-to-date definition of motivation, we define intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, according to Shaikholeslami and Khayyer (2006), as the drive stemming from internal rewards such as personal interest or enjoyment in the task itself, and external rewards or pressures, such as grades or approval from others.

Motivation is one of the most important elements influencing students' English learning success, and foreign language teachers and scholars have long been worried about it (Lai, 2011, as cited in Fernanda et al., 2024). In general education, student motivation is a critical factor in language learning, as it directly influences learners' engagement, persistence, and overall success. Most scholars agree that motivation is one of the most important variables influencing the rate and success of second/foreign language learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dörnyei, 2001; Noels et al., 2001; Anjomshoa & Sadighi, 2015). Once learning motivation is established, the student will adopt an active learning attitude, demonstrate a strong interest in learning, and focus attention in class to master knowledge. It can affect their use of learning strategies, communication readiness, and overall success in picking up a second language. Studies by Noels, Clément, and Pelletier (2001) revealed that better language learning results are linked to extrinsic motivations, and getting students excited about learning a language is very important for getting good results. Additionally, Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015) highlighted that motivated language learners are more likely to use good learning strategies and communicate, leading to better language skills.

Using technology in language learning has been widely recognized for its positive impact on motivation among learners. Research by Kukulska-Hulme and Shield (2008) underscores how technological tools provide learners with access to diverse resources such as interactive apps, online courses, and multimedia platforms like YouTube, catering to various learning styles and

interests. These resources offer interactive and engaging content, facilitate immediate feedback, and foster opportunities for social interaction and collaboration, thereby significantly enhancing learner motivation. Additionally, studies by Godwin-Jones (2014) emphasize that technological advancements enable adaptive learning experiences that customize content and activities to individual learners' needs, preferences, and proficiency levels, promoting autonomy and control over the learning process, which further boosts motivation. By harnessing these technological benefits, educators can effectively motivate English learners by making learning more flexible, accessible, and aligned with their diverse interests and learning goals.

The impact of YouTube on students' autonomy and motivation

Regarding how YouTube affects students' autonomy and motivation, research consistently demonstrates the importance of motivation in language learning and highlights various methodologies and findings related to using digital tools like YouTube to enhance learner autonomy. Nguyen, M. T. (2022) used a qualitative research design to show that due to students prioritizing their selections when watching movies, they can dig deeper on their own and, therefore, automatically spend more time emerging themselves in English content. Sakkir et al. (2020) conducted a survey and found that overall, students view YouTube as having a positive impact on learning English, finding it engaging and helpful. Kelsen (2009) surveyed 69 college EFL students, adding that students are motivated to study languages thanks to YouTube's 'authenticity'. YouTube videos, i.e., authentic language input, are capable of helping students learn a lot of new vocabulary, topics, and grammatical awareness, all of which significantly impact the growth of their second language. Budianto (2014) employed a case study approach to reveal that ICT-based learning promotes autonomous learning among students also agreed that YouTube, being an authentic English source, enables learners to interconnect, interexchange, and, most importantly, learn autonomously. Specifically, Chen (2013) used a mixed-methods approach with 140 university students found the YouTube-based learning method is primarily referred to as experiential learning, where learners use their own power of observation and interpersonal skills so as to achieve learning outcomes through useful and meaningful learning, regarding YouTube as language learning evoking self-autonomy and self-control.

Even though there have been some studies on YouTube usage for teaching and learning EFL, only some have investigated undergraduate students' perceptions of the impacts of YouTube on their motivation and autonomy in language learning, and little research has adapted the TAM model for its questionnaires. For instance, Puspitasari's undergraduate thesis (2019) examines student autonomy via YouTube. Still, the participants are junior high school students, and the research by Nguyen, M. T. (2022) investigated university students. Still, in his quantitative data collection, the questionnaires designed are based on something other than any frameworks. Furthermore, in the setting of Van Lang University, there was already a paper investigating the students' perceptions of social media in EFL learning in general (Pham et al. et al., 2023), and scholars have pointed out that YouTube comes in the first position of student choice for English vocabulary learning. Therefore, the current study can be considered a step further as it examines students' perceptions of YouTube's impact on English learning in the same setting. The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What are the perceptions of students about using YouTube for language learning?
2. How does YouTube influence students' autonomy and motivation in English learning according to their perception?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The study was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2023 - 2024 at Van Lang University. The students participating in the research were asked to fill out questionnaires via Google Forms. After collecting survey responses, the researchers invited 10 volunteers from the group of participants to answer interview questions. When conducting surveys and interviews, we asked permission from the subjects who were given survey forms as well as those who were interviewed. We clearly explained to participants how their data would be used, stored, and protected, and in the questionnaire, we also inserted informed consent to ensure they understood the confidentiality measures in place. We also removed any identifying information from the data. This can include names, addresses, and any other personal details that could potentially identify participants, when analyzing the interview transcript, we used pseudonyms to ensure participants' confidentiality.

Design of the Study

To conduct this study, we employed a mixed-method approach. Mixed methods research capitalizes on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research while improving their weaknesses to provide an integrated and comprehensive understanding of the topic being studied (Scammon et al., 2013; Wisdom et al., 2012). Regarding the process of collecting data, students in classes majoring in English Language at Van Lang University were sent the questionnaire form to fill out, and then ten of them were picked up for an individual interview. The survey consisted of 26 questions with a five-point Likert scale from "totally disagree" to "totally agree" (1 = totally disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = totally agree). The questionnaire was based on the TAM model, which includes three factors: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and Intention of Use. Items in the questionnaire were adapted from various research (Rafique et al., 2018; Hong et al., 2011; Davis, 1989; Chintalapati & Daruri, 2017; Venkatesh et al., 2002; Lee et al., 2011) and adapted to suit the topic of this study. The interview is semi-structured. One of its primary benefits is that the semi-structured interview method has been shown to be effective in promoting reciprocity between the interviewer and the participant (Galletta, 2012) and allowing the interviewer to improvise additional queries based on the responses of the participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2011; Polit & Beck, 2010). The questionnaire contains 20 items, which are divided into three categories according to TAM: (1) *Perceived Usefulness* (13 items), (2) *Perceived Ease of Use* (4 items), and (3) *Intention of Use* (3 items).

Data collection & analysis

The quantitative data were collected within three weeks, and the qualitative data were collected within two weeks. The current total number of English-majored students at Van Lang University is 2463 students. To determine the minimum sample size required for the survey, a formula that takes into account the total population size, the desired confidence level, and the margin of error was used. This formula is attributed to Cochran (1977) and is widely used in research to determine sample size in surveys and other studies. It combines elements of probability theory and statistical inference to provide an estimate of the required sample size based on desired confidence levels and margins of error.

Common confidence levels are 90%, 95%, and 99%. A 95% confidence level is most commonly used, so this figure was chosen for the research. The margin of error is the range within which

the true population parameter is expected to fall. Common margins of error are 5% or 3%, so 5% was chosen for this research.

$$n = \frac{N \cdot Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}{E^2 \cdot (N - 1) + Z^2 \cdot p \cdot (1 - p)}$$

Where:

- n = required sample size
- N = population size (2463 in our case)
- Z = Z-value (the number of standard deviations from the mean; for a 95% confidence level, it's 1.96)
- p = estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population (use 0.5 if unknown, as it gives the maximum sample size)
- E = margin of error (0.05 for 5%)

$$n = \frac{2463 \cdot (1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5)}{(0.05)^2 \cdot (2463 - 1) + (1.96)^2 \cdot 0.5 \cdot (1 - 0.5)}$$

$$n \approx 332.47$$

Therefore, the authors would need to survey at least 332 students to have a representative sample with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. Due to the time constraint, convenience sampling was used. This is a non-probability sampling method where researchers select participants based on their accessibility and proximity to the researcher. Among the 411 students who were sent the survey, 333 filled out the form. In order to come up with a final result to answer the research questions, this research utilizes a table with detailed data along with extracts from the semi-structured interviews. After that, we compare our findings with those of previous studies to consolidate the answers.

Results/Findings

Item numbers and interview questions are included in the appendices of this paper. To answer both research questions, questionnaires, and interviews were utilized to investigate the insights of students' perception of YouTube in general and the perceived impacts of this platform on their motivation and autonomy.

Research question 1: What are students' perceptions about using YouTube for language learning?

Table 1*Students' Perceived Usefulness of YouTube in Learning English*

No.	Statement	Probability					Mean	SD
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
1	YouTube can improve my academic performance	3,59%	1,20%	26,95%	45,51%	21,56%	3,81	0,91
2	YouTube increases my understanding of English	2,69%	0,60%	10,48%	53,89%	31,14%	4,12	0,82
3	I can watch videos on a subject that I missed or did not understand at school	2,40%	2,69%	11,68%	52,99%	29,04%	4,05	0,86
4	I can listen to the same lesson from different teachers on YouTube	3,89%	5,09%	20,96%	40,12%	28,74%	3,86	1,02
5	YouTube gives me more control over my learning	3,29%	3,29%	18,26%	46,11%	27,84%	3,94	0,95
6	YouTube helps me learn new ideas	4,19%	0,90%	11,38%	48,80%	33,53%	4,08	0,93
7	I can find answers to my questions on YouTube	2,40%	4,19%	24,25%	46,71%	21,86%	3,82	0,91
8	I have a lot of fun watching YouTube videos for educational purposes	3,89%	2,69%	20,36%	49,10%	22,75%	3,84	0,94
9	The variety of content on YouTube covers all topics of interest to me	2,40%	1,80%	14,97%	45,81%	33,83%	4,08	0,89
10	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my writing skills	3,89%	6,59%	33,53%	35,63%	18,86%	3,60	1,00
11	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my speaking skills	3,29%	1,80%	15,87%	46,71%	31,74%	4,03	0,92
12	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my reading skills	3,59%	3,59%	20,96%	44,01%	26,35%	3,88	0,97
13	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my listening skills	3,29%	0,60%	10,78%	42,22%	41,62%	4,20	0,90

Generally, most students agree that using YouTube helps them improve their English skills. In particular, approximately 85% out of 333 students agree and strongly agree that YouTube helps them increase their understanding of English. 70% of the participants find the content on YouTube interesting.

Almost all participants said that using YouTube helps them learn languages effectively. The interviewees said that through YouTube, they can explore and learn the knowledge they lack, such as grammar, vocabulary, or other skills. Watching many videos on YouTube helps learners become more confident in communicating in English.

Before using YouTube videos to learn English my English was much worse. I knew a lot of grammar and vocabulary. But I couldn't use them in you know incentives when I speak but after watching a lot of YouTube videos now I can speak with more confidence. I believe that it really improves my English overall. (P1)

Two participants mentioned how other people's opinions affect their YouTube utilization. While P1 stated that her curiosity about using YouTube to learn English was triggered by seeing others around her doing so, P6 further discussed some sub-skills, such as taking notes and taking baby steps for her brain to emerge to English content with increased difficulties.

I was introduced to many different sources and useful channels on YouTube that teach English and essential skills to improve my understanding of English. I also learned from my friends how to take important notes and adapt to the most effective ways of learning the language. One most important things that I have learned is not to try to gain a bunch of new knowledge, but to go slowly and start from the tiniest things. From there, basic comprehension will be more likely to be retained in my brain, then I will be able to move on to the more complicated things. (P6)

Regarding skills, most students strongly agree that using YouTube helps improve their listening skills (41,62%). Writing skills are regarded as having the least improvement, with 3.6 as the mean. 3,89% of students strongly disagree, 6.59% disagree, and only 18.86% strongly agree that YouTube helps them with their writing in English.

In line with the quantitative results, interviewees said they improved their listening and speaking skills the most by learning English by watching videos on YouTube. They felt that these two skills improved the most for the following reasons. Regarding listening skills, most videos on YouTube talk about our daily lives, and there are very authentic English learning materials. Watching videos of native speakers of English helps learners come into contact with different accents and ways of using words in communication and daily life. Regarding speaking skills, watching YouTube videos helps learners understand how native speakers use idioms and phrasal verbs and can use them in daily life and studying. In addition, repeating sentences in videos helps learners improve pronunciation and expand vocabulary to communicate more fluently, as stated by Participant 6:

Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my listening and speaking skills. Hearing people talk in the videos provides me with opportunities to be exposed to different accents and how English is used every day in conversations. Additionally, I even try to repeat what they say in order to practice my speaking skills.

Participant 7 also believes that learning English through YouTube will help her improve her reading skills by reading subtitles, which will help her "absorb new vocabulary and diversify sentence structures." She also stated that content creators do a good job summarizing lengthy books.

Table 2
Students' Perceived Ease of Using YouTube

No.	Statement	Probability					Mean	SD
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
14	My interaction with YouTube is clear and understandable.	3,89%	0,90%	14,37%	49,10%	30,54%	4,03	0,92
15	I find YouTube easy to use.	2,69%	0,90%	6,29%	47,31%	41,62%	4,26	0,84
16	It is easy to get YouTube to do what I want.	2,99%	1,80%	16,77%	45,81%	31,44%	4,02	0,91
17	Interacting with YouTube requires a lot of mental effort.	21,56%	21,26%	14,07%	26,65%	15,57%	2,94	1,41

In terms of technicality, as shown in Table 2, a staggering number of students (almost 90%) believe that YouTube is very easy to use, and most of them agree that the interaction with YouTube is clear and understandable (about 80%). As an assistant for the English learning process, 82% of the students agree that they can use it to watch and learn from the videos on YouTube of the same subject that they missed or did not fully understand when they were at school, 69% agree that they can listen to the same lesson from different teachers on YouTube. The proportion of participants who learned new ideas on YouTube and those who could find the answers to their questions on YouTube was 82,33% and 68,57%, respectively. These factors lead to the attitude of liking using YouTube for learning amongst the students and the intention to keep using it outside the classroom regardless of its impacts on their grades (68.26%)

Table 3
Students' Intention to Learn English via YouTube

No.	Statement	Probability					Mean	SD
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
18	I prefer YouTube because it allows me to learn new knowledge.	2,10%	1,20%	18,56%	52,40%	24,55%	3,97	0,82
19	I prefer YouTube because it can arouse my interest.	3,29%	2,40%	22,75%	49,40%	20,96%	3,83	0,90
20	Even if I do not achieve good school grades, I will still choose YouTube because it develops my English skills.	2,99%	3,59%	23,95%	44,01%	24,25%	3,84	0,94

The data from the survey items on preferences towards YouTube for learning English reveal several insights into students' motivations and attitudes. Item 18 shows that a significant majority (76.95%) either agree or strongly agree that they prefer YouTube because it allows them to learn new knowledge, indicating a strong positive perception of YouTube's educational value. Item 19 similarly indicates that 70.36% of respondents find YouTube capable of arousing their interest, suggesting that its content diversity and presentation styles effectively engage learners. Item 20 highlights that 68.26% of respondents are willing to prioritize YouTube over school grades, emphasizing the perceived effectiveness of YouTube in developing English skills independently of traditional academic metrics. These findings collectively underscore YouTube's role not only as a learning resource but also as a motivator that caters to diverse learning preferences and interests among students.

YouTube utilization in class

For the integration of YouTube in class time, all interview participants realized that teachers combining lectures with students watching YouTube videos effectively teach language for the following reasons: interesting visual aids, concise information, and another way of absorbing innovative and time-saving information. While P1 emphasized the importance of YouTube for young learners, others agreed that such an idea is correct for all learners' age groups.

Yes. In many cases, showing YouTube videos to children can be very effective because it's a way to make the class more lively. If the teachers only give students the paperwork or make them do grammar-to-call questions or vocabulary quizzes, it'll be tedious for child students. But if teachers can integrate these YouTube videos into their teaching techniques, then students will be a lot more interested in the class, and they can learn, you know, from different sources. (P1)

Teachers incorporating watching YouTube videos into their lessons are effective in teaching. Videos on YouTube will have a certain condensation of the article or speech. To end and summarize the content of the lecture, a concise and coherent 4-5 minute video will help students fully understand the knowledge the teacher taught during the lesson. (P2)

Using YouTube in class makes learning much more interesting, as the videos help explain things differently, making it easier for me to understand. Watching videos with my classmates and discussing them afterward is also fun. (P6)

Depending on the topic and lesson objectives, teachers can choose to combine watching YouTube videos. For example, if the lesson is about social knowledge, the teacher should combine videos to make it easier for students to absorb. (P8)

The participants' opinions varied when asked whether YouTube or proper language schooling is the better way to learn English. Those who chose the former all said that learning via YouTube will bring comfort, convenience, and diversity in choosing topics to learn.

Yes, definitely because when I learn a language through YouTube there is less stress. I'm in my own space listening to it at my own. You know at my own pace and some things are more comfortable. And that's one of the things that make me absorb the knowledge more easily and also because that I can listen to whatever I want whatever topics that I've interested in at school I have to follow you know textbooks and teacher, so there are a lot of topics that I'm not interested in so I'd prefer YouTube. (P1)

Yes, Learning English on YouTube is way more fun for me compared to learning in school because I can pick any topic that I'm interested in. Due to the huge amount of different

videos to watch, it never gets boring. I can watch them whenever I want, which is extremely convenient. (P6)

Have. I feel that learning languages through YouTube is more interesting than learning languages at school. Because on YouTube there are many diverse topics for viewers to choose from. For example, if I like history, I can watch documentaries. Learners can actively choose topics. (P8)

Those who are of the latter opinion believe that learning at school will involve interaction between teachers and students. While two interviewees completely favored schools over self-study with YouTube, one sat on the fence.

I don't feel that learning a language through YouTube is more interesting than learning a language at school. Because it lacks interaction, although it is possible to interact through live broadcasts, it is only through words, while learning in class will have more activities, interaction will be clear and meaningful. More ways to learn. (P2)

The answer will be yes and no. Yes because learning through YouTube will have more vivid and interesting images and sounds at school. However, at school, there will be a teacher who can answer my questions.” (P3)

I don't feel that learning a language through YouTube is more interesting than learning a language at school. Because when you come to class, there will be more activities and lectures designed more vividly by the instructor. Because YouTube content is only condensed. Learners will not have interaction with instructors. (P4)

Research question 2: How does YouTube influence students' autonomy and motivation in English learning according to their perception?

Based on our earlier definition of student autonomy and motivation, it is clear that items 3–7 and 10–16 were used to rate student autonomy, and items 1, 2, 8–13, and 17–20 were used to measure student motivation. The specific explanation for this categorization is detailed in the following table:

Table 4

The Indication of each Item for Student's Autonomy and Motivation

Feature	Items	Item	Indication
Autonomy	3	I can watch videos on a subject that I missed or needed help understanding at school.	Students' responsibility for their own learning gaps
	4	I can listen to the same lesson from different teachers on YouTube	Students' freedom to choose different learning sources
	5	YouTube gives me more control over my learning	Chances for students to plan their own learning activities
	6	YouTube helps me learn new ideas	Students can seek knowledge and learn on their own
	7	I can find answers to my questions on YouTube	Students' Proactive learning behavior and problem-solving

	14	My interaction with YouTube is clear and understandable.	Students can effectively navigate and control learning resources.
	15	I find YouTube easy to use.	Students can easily use the platform on their own
	16	It is easy to get YouTube to do what I want it to do.	Students have control over the learning process.
	17	Interacting with YouTube requires a lot of mental effort.	Facing challenges encourages students to make informed decisions about their learning priorities and strategies.
Motivation	1	YouTube can improve my academic performance	Extrinsic motivation to achieve better grades
	2	YouTube increases my understanding of English.	Extrinsic motivation through the perceived improvement in all skills in general
	8	I have a lot of fun watching YouTube videos for educational purposes	Intrinsic motivation based on enjoyment
	9	The variety of content on YouTube covers all topics of interest to me	Intrinsic motivation driven by the availability of diverse and interesting content
	10	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my writing skills.	Extrinsic motivation to enhance respective skills
	11	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my speaking skills.	
	12	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my reading skills.	
	13	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my listening skills.	
	17	Interacting with YouTube requires a lot of mental effort.	Challenges can stimulate intrinsic motivation when students desire to learn.
	18	I prefer YouTube because it allows me to learn new knowledge.	Intrinsic motivation is driven by the desire to acquire new information
	19	I prefer YouTube because it can arouse my interest.	Intrinsic motivation based on engaging and interesting content
	20	Even if I do not achieve good school grades, I will still choose YouTube because it develops my English skills.	Intrinsic motivation is where the value of learning and skill development outweighs external rewards like grades.

Student autonomy

In line with the quantitative data, most interviewees are sure that self-study through watching YouTube videos helps them improve, making their English learning journey more independent. Because they can study on their own whenever they want, this is not limited by time like

studying in a classroom. In addition, when needing to learn knowledge related to lessons learned in class, learners can actively search for lecture videos on YouTube. Above all, the freedom to choose appropriate videos and the vividness of these videos also help increase the ability to absorb knowledge. Finally, learning through YouTube is unlimited in the amount of knowledge because this resource provides a rich amount of knowledge they cannot learn in school.

I definitely think that self-study through watching YouTube videos makes me more, makes my English learning journey more independent. Like, I don't have to rely on teachers at school or any classes. If I wanna study English, I can just turn on my computer and then I have these very reliable sources to study English. (P1)

I feel that self-study through YouTube promotes more learning autonomy because when watching YouTube, there are videos related to the knowledge I have already learned in addition to gaining new knowledge. Novelty and familiarity help me promote self-study. (P2)

Yes, because in addition to learning the basic knowledge learned in class, when I get home, I can search for that knowledge on YouTube if I forget, or can learn new knowledge that is not taught in class. (P3)

I feel that self-study through YouTube promotes more learning autonomy because when studying through YouTube, I will have to try to manage my time and thinking to motivate myself to study. (P4)

Students' motivation

Data analysis shows that in terms of extrinsic motivation, YouTube offers many engaging English learning materials such as tutorials, language lessons, and educational channels. This variety can cater to different learning styles and interests, motivating students to explore and learn. Regarding intrinsic motivation, the diverse content on YouTube can spark students' interest and curiosity in learning English, especially when they find content that aligns with their hobbies or passions. Furthermore, successfully learning from YouTube videos can boost students' confidence and belief in their ability to learn English independently.

However, it can be recognized from the interviews that the abundance of content on YouTube can overwhelm students, making it difficult for them to focus or commit to a structured learning plan. Furthermore, misleading information can also affect students' motivation to learn English in general.

Discussion

Students' perceptions of using YouTube to learn English

Overall, according to the results of the study, it is apparent that most students have found YouTube accessible, easy to use, and considerably effective in helping students learn English, especially in improving their English listening skills, according to the TAM model. This is in line with several studies, such as those of Kabouha & Elyas (2015) and Kabouha & Elyas (2018), which also claimed that YouTube is an effective means of obtaining vocabulary, which ultimately has a positive influence on their overall English abilities.

Most of the students in this research claimed that they find YouTube content very interesting and engaging, which is the factor that motivates them to use YouTube to learn English and ultimately helps them improve their English abilities. A great number of researchers have shared

the same view (Tarantino, 2011). He suggested that YouTube provides quick and enjoyable access to instructional videos and language-based content from around the world. YouTube videos give teachers and students a platform to share their videos, but more significantly, they give pupils the chance to interact with the language in a meaningful way. For example, one can find videos in which native speakers take the camera around their neighborhoods, constructing situations encountered in everyday life and showcasing how a native speaker would speak in those situations. These kinds of videos are interesting because they introduce learners to how language is used in real-life situations, but the knowledge is also thoroughly explained, accompanied by eye-catching media, making the learning process a lot more enjoyable for learners. In addition, Ngo's (2023) findings also concur with our findings that English is an effective practice platform for college students. This platform provides access to authentic spoken language in various contexts. Students can watch videos of native speakers conversing, giving speeches, participating in interviews, or engaging in everyday conversations. Exposure to authentic language helps students become familiar with natural speech patterns, accents, intonations, and colloquial expressions, thereby improving their speaking efficiency. This is in line with the study of Pham Manh, Nguyen, and Cao Thi Xuan (2023), which also found that social media plays a vital role in expanding vocabulary range from various sources, enabling students to improve their English skills in general. Social media also helps to create a platform where students can speak a second language and share their ideas verbally, enhancing speaking skills (Van Nguyen & Tran, 2024). Additionally, Alqahtani (2014) found that YouTube effectively enhances EFL students' listening skills. YouTube offers content suitable for learners at various proficiency levels. Beginners can find videos with slower speech and simpler language, while advanced learners can challenge themselves with more complex content such as lectures, podcasts, interviews, and debates.

From the data collected in the research, the perceived ease of use of YouTube contributes to the intention of use amongst the participants. The layout of YouTube is made to minimize users' efforts with a search engine that stands out on the top of the page and suggests videos underneath. Users can easily watch the videos they choose in the suggestion section by clicking on the preview image or putting the keywords into the search engine to search for what they want. Everything is straightforward and almost labour-free. Due to its easy-to-use interface, internet users are eager to continue using YouTube for their own purposes. This point of view is consistent with that put forward by Wu and Chen (2017), who also contended that perceived ease of use directly influences attitudes toward the use of technology, which ultimately affects the intention to use that technology.

However, it is also important to note that there are limitations to learning English through YouTube. Although the results showed a generally positive effect of YouTube on students' reading and writing skills, many of the participants are still uncertain and even suspicious as to whether or not (and if so, how) YouTube really helps them with their reading and writing skills in the classroom. As the content on YouTube is primarily presented in spoken form and in an informal context, it would be hard for learners to make use of the language they consume on YouTube for their formal academic reading and writing tasks. Bronowicki (2014) also concurs with this viewpoint. Moreover, excessive exposure to the media for a long time can also cause learners to be distracted from their academic tasks, addiction, and various adverse effects such as mental health problems and poor academic performance (Alroqi et al., 2023).

Students' perceptions of the impact of YouTube on students' autonomy

Participants' answers show that there is strong agreement on how useful YouTube is as a tool for boosting student autonomy. They can watch videos on YouTube about things they missed

or struggled to understand in school, listen to the same lesson from different teachers, and find answers to their questions. Most of the people who took the survey agreed or strongly agreed with these statements. They also said that YouTube helps them learn new things and gives them more control over how they learn. The people who took part also said that watching YouTube videos helps them speak, write, read, and listen better. They also thought that their interactions with YouTube were clear and easy to understand, as well as flexible and able to meet their needs. However, some of them did admit that interacting with YouTube takes a lot of mental effort.

These results are similar to those of other studies. In 2014, Budianto talked about how ICT-based learning, like YouTube, can help students learn on their own by giving them a variety of interactive resources that give them the power to be responsible for their own learning. According to Budianto, students using ICT tools like YouTube were more interested in and responsible for their learning. This led to better language skills and a more self-directed learning environment. This fits with what the people we surveyed said—that YouTube helps them learn new things and gives them more control over how they learn.

Chen (2013) also talked about how YouTube can motivate people by highlighting how it can engage students and help them learn on their own by providing a lot of content that is easy to find. Chen's research showed that students thought YouTube was a good way to learn because it was fun and interactive. The platform supported self-directed learning by letting students pick and choose their own learning pace and content. This is similar to what we found with YouTube, which helps participants catch up on subjects they missed, listen to different teachers, and find answers to their questions.

Nguyen, M. T. (2022) also found that YouTube helps students become more independent writers because it has real materials and many different ways to learn. Nguyen's research showed that YouTube videos helped students improve their writing skills by giving them access to real-life materials. This gave students more freedom as they looked for and watched relevant content on their own. The people who participated in our study said that watching YouTube videos helped them improve at speaking, writing, reading, and listening.

Students perceptions of the impact of Youtube on their motivation

Regarding the concept of intrinsic motivation, our study's findings show that students can increase their knowledge of foreign cultures through the use of YouTube, which also makes the learning process more interesting. Additionally, Nguyen, M. T. (2022)'s research demonstrates that students value a wide range of information that covers topics that are personally interesting to them. This enjoyment is an essential factor in the process of developing a constructive attitude toward learning. Additionally, Kelsen's (2009) research discovered that almost all students saw using YouTube in the classroom as a pleasurable experience. Given the high level of engagement on the platform, YouTube has the potential to make learning more enjoyable and interesting. Furthermore, our research has also received positive feedback from students about educational videos on YouTube. These videos feature a wide variety of innovative and diverse content designed to facilitate students' knowledge-acquisition processes.

Extrinsic motivation is characterized by the act of engaging in an activity to achieve positive outcomes, such as enhanced performance or better results. On a similar note, the research conducted by Nguyen, M. T. (2022) found that students reported higher levels of motivation, improved engagement, and better knowledge when exposed to a variety of video content suited for educational purposes. According to our study's findings, most students believe that watching videos on YouTube is beneficial to their academic performance. Almost all people who

participated in the survey believed that watching videos on YouTube helped them develop their English skills. Listening skills are the ones that make the most development among them. Previous research conducted by Nguyen, M. T. (2022) provided evidence of similar findings. Students are aware that watching educational videos can improve their skills and their performance in school. This is because the videos provide more practice and exposure to the language. The students pointed out that the visual and audio components of the video contributed to the reinforcement of linguistic concepts (Kelsen, 2009). The findings of the previous studies, as well as the findings of our research, all point to the beneficial effects that YouTube offers in terms of encouraging and motivating students to learn English. This is also consistent with Brophy (1998) and Pintrich and Schunk (1996), who found that YouTube creates motivation that includes both intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

The implication of this study suggests that teachers should create opportunities for students to use YouTube in class and at home to boost their autonomy and motivation, hence fostering their learning efficiency. The videos on YouTube are beneficial to students in terms of helping them to spark their interest in English as they can watch videos about the topics they are fond of, and the platform also allows them to find out the content related to the lessons in class if they want to understand and grasp the knowledge more carefully at their own pace. If teachers can make use of this great source of knowledge, this can enable students to learn more interestingly. This notion is also amplified by the research of Bui and Nguyen (2023), who investigated digital transformation in education. They highlighted how digital techniques were transforming education, proposing a paradigm shift in teaching and learning approaches and underscoring the necessity for educational institutions to adopt these changes actively. However, it is very important to categorize the resources according to students' levels and scope of background knowledge so they can understand the content effectively.

Conclusion

As technology continues to develop and become increasingly important in people's everyday lives, learning is no longer restricted to coming to school. Instead, social media platforms such as YouTube have become very efficient assistants to students, especially in their English learning, thanks to their interesting and diverse content. Students found that YouTube enhances their English skills, especially listening skills. Moreover, YouTube also offers students flexibility and greater autonomy in their learning process. This research sheds light on the impact and influence of YouTube on Vietnamese students' English-acquiring processes.

The limit of this study comes from qualitative sampling. The sample was selected using convenience sampling, which may introduce certain biases. Efforts were made to include a diverse group of students in terms of gender and academic levels, but the representativeness of the sample cannot be guaranteed. As Marshall (1996) described, this sampling technique has advantages and disadvantages. The main pros are its accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and utility for pilot studies and exploratory research. However, the findings of this study should be interpreted with caution due to the potential sampling biases. Future research with a larger and more representative sample is recommended to confirm and extend the results of this study. Despite these limitations, the current study provides valuable insights into Students' Perception of Using YouTube to Learn English: A Case Study at Van Lang University among English-major students at Van Lang University.

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Appendices

The questionnaire items with references

Appendix 1: Table 1 items

No.	Statement
1	YouTube can improve my academic performance
2	YouTube increases my understanding of English
3	I can watch videos on a subject that I missed or did not understand at school
4	I can listen to the same lesson from different teachers on YouTube
5	YouTube gives me more control over my learning
6	YouTube helps me learn new ideas
7	I can find answers to my questions on YouTube
8	I have a lot of fun watching YouTube videos for educational purposes
9	The variety of content on YouTube covers all topics of interest to me
10	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my speaking skill
11	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my writing skill
12	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my reading skill
13	Watching YouTube videos helps me improve my listening skill

Appendix 2: Table 2 items

No.	Statement
14	My interaction with YouTube is clear and understandable.
15	I find YouTube easy to use.
16	I think it is easy to get YouTube to do what I want it to do.
17	Interacting with YouTube requires a lot of mental effort.

Appendix 3: Table 3 items

No.	Statement
18	I prefer YouTube because it allows me to learn new knowledge.
19	I prefer YouTube because it can arouse my interest.
20	Even if I do not achieve good school grades, I will still choose YouTube because it develops my English skills.

Appendix 4: Interview questions

1. How often do you use YouTube for English learning?
2. Which skill do you think watching YouTube videos helps you improve the most? Why?
3. Do you think that learning a language through YouTube is more interesting than learning a language at school? Why?
4. Do you think learning English through watching YouTube videos is effective? Why?
5. Do you think that self-study through watching YouTube videos promotes autonomy in language learning? Why?
6. Do you think that teachers combining lectures with watching YouTube videos is effective in teaching language? Why?
7. How do people's opinions and habits of using YouTube affect your habit of using YouTube to improve your English skills?
8. What are the challenges that you face during the process of learning the English language through YouTube?

Biodata

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Conceptual Metaphor “MEDIA AS A TRAP” in Vietnamese and English online Newspapers

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: conceptual metaphor; mapping; media; trap; teaching & learning

The study explores the conceptual metaphor of "MEDIA AS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English, aiming to understand perceptions of media in these linguistic contexts. Using the theory of conceptual metaphor in cognitive linguistics, alongside descriptive and semantic analysis methods, the research establishes and analyzes the mapping from the source domain of "TRAP" to the target domain of "MEDIA." By examining metaphorical expressions in press texts, the study uncovers underlying cognitive models, including media as trickery and media as a scam. Survey data reveals similar frequencies of metaphorical expressions in both languages, with 110 instances in Vietnamese and 90 in English, indicating a shared understanding of the metaphor. The analysis highlights significant parallels and distinctions in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" between Vietnamese and English, underscoring its universal cognitive and linguistic significance. Both languages employ similar conceptual metaphorical expressions, yet exhibit subtle differences reflecting distinct cultural perspectives.

Introduction

The study of conceptual metaphors has attracted significant global interest due to their impact on various fields, including media. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), initially proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), posits that metaphors are not merely linguistic expressions but fundamental cognitive mechanisms that shape our understanding and perception of the world. Metaphors allow us to comprehend abstract concepts by mapping them onto more concrete experiences. The prevalence of metaphor is demonstrated through various studies. For instance, Geary (2012) observes that approximately every 10 to 20 words we speak may contain a metaphor, and we use about six metaphors per minute. Kövecses (2005) suggests that a

significant portion of conceptualization in the media involves metaphors. Despite this growing interest, there is a notable gap in understanding how specific metaphors, such as "MEDIA AS A TRAP," are used and interpreted across different languages and cultures. While metaphors play a crucial role in shaping media narratives and influencing public perception, existing research often overlooks the detailed mechanisms through which these metaphors operate in different linguistic contexts.

A trap, encountered universally in life, symbolizes unforeseen challenges and problems with the potential to confuse or harm us. Recognizing and avoiding traps is crucial for preventing unintended consequences. This research employs cognitive linguistics, particularly the theory of conceptual metaphor, to analyze "MEDIA AS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English online newspapers. The study elucidates the mapping mechanism between the source domain "trap" and the target domain "media," revealing the hierarchical structure of metaphorical expressions. This investigation enhances understanding of linguistic perspectives across different discourses by delving into diverse interpretations of media in Vietnamese and English contexts. Specifically, it analyzes metaphorical expressions from the data based on dimensions of frequency, mapping mechanisms, and perceptual characteristics.

The research investigates the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English contexts. It aims to scrutinize the mapping from the source domain "trap" to the target domain "media," offering a comparative analysis between the two languages. By delving into diverse interpretations of media in both languages, this investigation enhances understanding of linguistic perspectives across different discourses.

This study holds significance for professionals in journalism, language instruction, and media by highlighting how metaphorical language shapes media narratives. By raising awareness of the effectiveness of employing metaphors in propaganda articles, media expressions become vivid and distinctive, making communication messages deeper, more attractive, and more engaging to readers. Despite linguistic distinctions, the fundamental understanding of "trap" is unlikely to differ between the Vietnamese and English-speaking communities studied significantly.

Literature Review

Conceptual Metaphor

Over the past forty years, cognitive linguistics has emerged as a significant field of study, providing scholars with powerful tools to explain the nature of language and language learning. Through human mental and cognitive processes, people perceive their surrounding environment, including objects (Le, M.T.; Nguyen, T. B., 2023). The study of metaphors has evolved substantially from its classical origins. The Western tradition, dating back to Aristotle, long considered metaphor as a rhetorical and literary device, with literal meanings used by specialists for persuasion or imaginative expression. However, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) challenged this view, asserting that metaphors play a fundamental role in ordinary conceptual systems. They proposed that conceptual metaphor involves understanding one domain of thought through another, creating a perceptual model of the mind's inner workings. Although

Lakoff states that “metaphor is fundamentally conceptual, not linguistic, in nature” (1993, p. 244), most evidence for conceptual metaphor is based on linguistic data.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), conceptual metaphors replace abstract concepts with more concrete ones, aiding in the comprehension of abstract target domains through specific source domains. Kövecses (2002) further elucidates that the source domain provides a rich knowledge structure for the target concept domain through mappings between their attributes. These metaphorical mappings, crucial for conceptual expression, rely on shared human knowledge and experience, establishing correspondences between elements of source and target domains in the mapping structure. Pham, T.G. (2023) explains that the mapping mechanism works by mapping elements of the source domain onto the elements of the target domain so that the target domain can be comprehended through the source domain based on a set of mappings. Understanding a conceptual metaphor involves knowing this set of mappings that applies to a given source-target pairing. In conclusion, conceptual metaphor is a form of conceptualizing the world, a cognitive process that functions as a representation and formation of new concepts, which is essential for the acquisition of new knowledge (Tran, V.C. (2007)). Kövecses (2005) argues that cross-cultural variation in the conceptualization of a concept results from different experiences in cultural and social aspects. Although humans around the world share many bodily experiences, their ideologies and political-social beliefs vary greatly, leading to culture-specific characteristics of metaphors. According to Ly, T.T. (2015), similarities among metaphors are fundamental; they differ mainly in the aspects that are activated, which greatly depends on cultural variations.

This paper aims to analyze the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English, focusing on the mapping from the source domain TRAP to the target domain MEDIA. For instance, the expression "Quảng cáo phóng đại thực phẩm chức năng là hại người tiêu dùng" ("Exaggerated advertising of dietary supplements is harmful to consumers") metaphorically describes TRAP as "exaggerated," a concept further explored in this paper.

Media and Trap

Media, as depicted in "Media - Theory and Basic Skills" by Nguyen Van Dung and Do Thi Thu Hang (2018), is a multifaceted concept encompassing diverse interpretations and viewpoints. It delineates an ongoing process wherein individuals exchange information, ideas, emotions, skills, and experiences to cultivate mutual understanding, shape perceptions, influence behavior and attitudes, and cater to the evolving needs of individuals, groups, communities, and society. Additionally, the Oxford Advanced Dictionary characterizes media as the primary channels through which large populations access information and entertainment, including television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet.

The definition of 'trap' provided by the Oxford Advanced Dictionary illustrates it as a clever plan designed to trick somebody, either by capturing them or by making them do or say something that they did not mean to do or say. Likewise, The Cambridge Dictionary portrays 'trap' as a dangerous or unpleasant situation from which it is difficult or impossible to escape."

The category of "trap" can be observed in smaller metaphorical groups and suggests common attributes typical of the source domain. In this study, to explain the attributes of the concept of the source domain as a trap, the author divided the term "trap" into two main groups. "Trap" is understood as a set of concepts including: (1) Tricks such as exaggeration, abetting, fabrication, storytelling, misrepresentation, manipulation, and trapping; (2) Fraud such as cheating, lying, deceiving, and so forth.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How is the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" conceptualized in Vietnamese and English?
2. What are the similarities and differences in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" between Vietnamese and English?

Methods

The research paper delves into the metaphor "Media is a Trap," exploring its implications across Vietnamese and English online newspapers. To ensure thorough analysis, we gathered 110 Vietnamese and 90 English samples from various reputable sources such as Dan Tri, Nhan Dan, Thanh Nien, Tuoi Tre, Tien Phong, among others, as well as international sources like The New York Times, CNN, The Guardian, Forbes, NBC News, and The Washington Post. Employing cognitive linguistics as our theoretical framework, we conducted descriptive and semantic analyses, supplemented by statistical and classification methods to explore the nuances of the metaphor. Statistical methods were utilized to survey and analyze quantitative data, providing insights into the mapping mechanism and perceptual semantics of the metaphor. Classification methods were employed to categorize metaphorical expressions according to the conceptual category of "trap," thereby reconstructing the metaphor system to align with research goals.

To address potential subjectivity in metaphor identification, we followed the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), a systematic approach outlined by the Pragglejaz Group. This involved four key steps: (i) gaining a general understanding of the semantics by reviewing all media discourse; (ii) identifying words or phrases that seemed out of place within the context; (iii) examining these marked elements using dictionaries to assess their coherence within the context; and (iv) categorizing them as metaphors if they did not align semantically with other words or phrases. These identified words or phrases, causing initial semantic conflict, were labeled as "metaphorically-expressed words," and the discourse containing them was categorized as "metaphor expressions."

Data processing occurred in stages, initially identifying conceptual metaphors related to "Media as Trap" and further subdividing them into derivative metaphors. Subsequently, similarities and differences between Vietnamese and English metaphors were analyzed to explore cognitive characteristics across languages.

Results/Findings

It is clear from the survey that the concept of ‘MEDIA AS A TRAP’ is a prominent metaphor that regularly appears in Vietnamese and English online news reports. According to the rule of partial mapping, the attributes from the source domain “trap” are activated and mapped onto the target domain “Media”, causing the target domain to bear some properties of the source domain. From 200 news articles in Vietnamese and English online newspapers, the conceptual model MEDIA AS A TRAP can be visualized through the mapping structure in Table 1.

Table 1.

Mapping structure of Conceptual metaphor MEDIA IS TRAP

SOURCE: TRAP	Mapped onto	TARGET: MEDIA
Deceivers	→	social media platforms
distorting or manipulating reality for a particular purpose	→	presenting a skewed or exaggerated version of events to suit a certain agenda or attract audience attention
a trickster crafts elaborate schemes to deceive others	→	media professionals may craft compelling narratives that evoke certain emotions or shape public opinion
creating addictive behaviors	→	keeping users constantly engaged and seeking more interaction
luring someone into a situation they may not fully understand or benefit from	→	using enticing visuals or exaggerated claims to lure consumers
hiding their true intentions or methods from their targets	→	omitting important information or using misleading visuals or language to manipulate consumer perceptions

Based on the mapping structure of the conceptual metaphor MEDIA AS A TRAP in Table 1, we establish the cognitive metaphor models of Media, with the source domain being Trap, as follows.

Table 2.

Metaphorical Expression Statistics of Conceptual Metaphor MEDIA AS A TRAP

The shared attributes between the source and target domains	Metaphorical expressions	Vietnamese	English	Total number of metaphorical expressions
		Occurrences	Occurrences	
manipulation or deception, influence, impact	Exaggerate	15	5	200
	Abet	9	2	
	Expose	3	6	
	Fabricate	7	6	
	Embroider	10	0	
	Makeup	3	0	
	Distort	6	0	
	Lead	4	0	
	Fascinate	2	0	
	Trap	17	10	
lack of honesty, integrity, transparency, breach of trust	Fraudulent	4	8	
	Dishonest	6	0	
	Lying	7	10	
	Fake	5	0	
	Deceitful	5	11	
	Deceptive	5	32	
	Mislead	2	0	
Total		110	90	

The concept of Media can be understood through the concept of Trap thanks to metaphorical mapping. A trap is cleverly designed to catch and deceive, and when we use it as a metaphor for media, we see media as something that can ensnare and mislead us. In the metaphorical model, MEDIA IS A TRAP, the underlying mapping is the trickery, fraud, scam, which then evoke Trap. The model appears simultaneously in both English and Vietnamese news broadcasts. By leveraging the mapping structure outlined in Table 1 for the conceptual metaphor MEDIA AS A TRAP, we can understand different cognitive metaphorical models of media, with Trap serving as the source domain, as follows.

Table 3.

The cognitive metaphor models of MEDIA IS TRAP

Cognitive metaphor models	Vietnamese		English	
	Occurrences	(%)	Occurrences	(%)
Media is Trickery	76/110	69	29/90	32
Media is a Scam	34/119	31	61/90	68
Total	110	100	90	100

The conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" draws parallels between the domain of "TRAP" and that of "MEDIA". Through the analysis of 200 metaphorical expressions, the paper identified two cognitive models: (1) "Media is Trickery" and (2) "Media is a Scam". These

models encompass terms such as press, social media, fake news, rumors, advertising, and media. In Vietnamese, the predominant model is "Media is Trickery" (69%), followed by "Media is a Scam" (31%). Conversely, in English, the predominant model is "Media is a Scam" (68%), followed by "Media is Trickery" (32%).

The conceptual metaphor "Media is Trickery"

(1) *Nhưng có vẻ mọi chuyện đã bị báo chí phóng đại, Triệu Vy từng đăng tải những bức hình của cô và Châu Tấn lên Weibo để chứng minh tình bạn của hai người không hề sứt mẻ. (But it seems that everything has been exaggerated by the press, Trieu Vy once posted pictures of her and Chau Tan on Weibo to prove that their friendship is not broken)*

Both "trickery" and "media" involve manipulation or deception. Trickery relies on deceit or cunning to achieve an outcome, while media, especially in sensationalized reporting, manipulates facts or exaggerates events to capture attention or create a narrative. Trickery influences perception through deceptive means, similar to how the media shapes public opinion by presenting information. In the provided example, the term "phóng đại" suggests the media may have exaggerated the situation involving Triệu Vy and Châu Tấn to attract attention or create a sensational story, implying manipulation or distortion of details to fit a particular narrative.

(2) *Chăm dít tình trạng quảng cáo "tiếp tay" cho các nội dung xấu độc trên mạng (End advertising "abetting" malicious content online)*

In the example, the metaphor "tiếp tay" describes the media's role in facilitating harmful online content. "Tiếp tay" translates to "abet" indicating involvement in promoting actions or behaviors. Both "trickery" and "media" influence perceptions and behaviors; trickery involves deceitful tactics, while the media shapes public opinion through the content they promote. Just as aiding and abetting in trickery shares responsibility for consequences, the media is accountable for the content they support. If they promote harmful content, they are complicit in its spread. The use of "tiếp tay" suggests the media's complicity in supporting harmful online content, implying they may have knowingly or unknowingly aided its dissemination.

(3) *Loạn livestream bóc phốt: Hậu họa khôn lường*

In the given example, the metaphor "bóc phốt" is used to describe the action of the media in exposing or revealing scandalous or damaging information about someone. "Bóc phốt" can be translated as "to expose" or "to reveal someone's secrets" in English, often with a negative connotation. In the example provided, the use of "bóc phốt" suggests that the media has engaged in the exposure of scandalous or damaging information, possibly through investigative reporting or sensationalized coverage. This metaphorical usage implies that the media's actions in revealing such information may have unforeseen and significant consequences, both for the individuals involved and for society as a whole.

(4) *Ronaldo tố truyền thông bịa đặt, tuyên bố phơi bày sự thật (Ronaldo accuses the media of fabrication, claims to expose the truth)*

In the Vietnamese phrase "bịa đặt," which translates to "fabrication" in English, the metaphor is deeply rooted in the concept of deception or trickery. When Ronaldo accuses the media of

"bịa đặt," he is essentially alleging that they are engaging in dishonest practices, such as spreading false information or manipulating the truth. This metaphorical usage suggests that the media's actions are akin to a deceitful scheme or a fraudulent act. By associating the media with the concept of "bịa đặt," Ronaldo is suggesting that they are engaging in deceptive practices that hurt their trustworthiness and honesty. This metaphorical framing not only highlights Ronaldo's distrust or dissatisfaction with the media but also emphasizes the seriousness of the accusations being made.

(5) *Đó là những gì **truyền thông thêu dệt** về vợ chồng ông chủ cà phê Trung Nguyên cho đến khi hai người đưa nhau ra tòa trong những ngày qua (That's what the media was weaving about the Trung Nguyen coffee owner and his wife until the two took each other to court in recent days).*

The metaphor of "thêu dệt" (embroidering) in the example refers to the act of fabricating or embellishing stories, especially in the context of media coverage. In this metaphor, the image of embroidering is used to convey the idea that the media weaves together narratives about the husband and wife of the Trung Nguyen coffee owner, implying that these stories might not be entirely truthful but rather embellished or manipulated for various purposes. The mechanism of attribute transfer from the concept of "trickery" to the concept of "media" in this metaphor relies on shared attributes between the two domains. Both "trickery" and "media" share attributes related to manipulation, fabrication, and the shaping of narratives.

(6) *Nam diễn viên 68 tuổi cũng cho hay ông và vợ chỉ “tạm thời xa cách” và điều này tạo cơ hội cho **báo chí dựng chuyện** (The 68-year-old actor also said he and his wife were only "temporarily separated" and this provided an opportunity for the press to make up stories).*

The metaphor of "dựng chuyện" in this example refers to creating or inventing narratives, particularly in media coverage. It suggests that the media may fabricate or exaggerate stories about the separation between the 68-year-old actor and his wife, implying these stories might lack truth and be sensationalized for various purposes. Both "trickery" and "media" involve deception and manipulation: trickery deceives through various means, while media coverage may manipulate facts or create sensationalized stories to attract attention. By linking these attributes, the metaphor suggests that media coverage can employ similar tactics of manipulation and fabrication. It indicates audiences should approach media reports critically, recognizing that not all stories are truthful or objective.

(7) *Triệu Thị Hà nói rằng phát ngôn của cô đã bị **báo chí xuyên tạc**, trong khi phía ban tổ chức cũng cho rằng cô đã vu khống họ (Triệu Thị Hà stated that her statements had been distorted by the press, while the organizing committee also accused her of fabricating them).*

The metaphor "xuyên tạc" in this context refers to distortion or falsification, implying that the media has misrepresented the statements made by Triệu Thị Hà. "Xuyên tạc" carries connotations of deceit, manipulation, and dishonesty. Just like someone who tricks others by pretending to be trustworthy, the media can use its reputation to spread false or wrong information. When the media changes facts or doesn't tell the truth, it makes people doubt if

they can trust it to give them accurate information, similar to how people stop trusting someone who tricks them when they find out the truth. By recognizing these shared attributes between trickery and media, the metaphor of "xuyên tạc" effectively conveys the idea that the media is not always objective or truthful in its reporting and may engage in deceptive practices similar to those employed by tricksters. This highlights the importance of critical thinking and verifying information from multiple sources in consuming media content.

(8) *Thật nực cười là Trump cho rằng những người ủng hộ Dân chủ hay nghiêng về phe Dân chủ, với hơn 75 triệu người đã bỏ phiếu cho Biden, lại không có khả năng phân tích độc lập và đều bị **truyền thông dắt mũi** (It's quite ironic that Trump believes those who support the Democrats or lean towards the Democratic side, with over 75 million people who voted for Biden, are incapable of independent analysis and are all led by the media).*

In Vietnamese, "dắt mũi" means to control or manipulate someone. In the context of the sentence provided, it implies that the media is manipulating or controlling the actions or opinions of those who support the Democratic Party or lean towards it, especially after Joe Biden won the presidential election with over 75 million. Trickery often involves controlling or distorting information to achieve a desired outcome. Likewise, the media can control the flow of information by choosing what to report, how to report it, and what narratives to prioritize, which can shape public perceptions and behaviors. By leveraging these shared attributes between trickery and media, the metaphor "dắt mũi" shows how the media might be influencing or tricking people who support the Democratic Party into thinking or acting a certain way.

(9) *Vì sao thanh thiếu niên bị **mạng xã hội "mê hoặc"**? (Why are teenagers "fascinated" by social media?)*

In the context of the question "Vì sao thanh thiếu niên bị mạng xã hội 'mê hoặc'?" the Vietnamese term "mê hoặc" translates to "fascinated" in English. It suggests being deeply absorbed or even obsessed, like being addicted. Both being tricked and using social media too much can make you lose control. If you use social media a lot, you might spend too much time online, forget about other things you need to do, and find it hard to stop. By comparing these ideas, it's like saying social media platforms, just like tricksters, can draw you in, control you, and keep you stuck in their digital world. This shows why people worry about the negative effects of spending too much time on social media on both individuals and society.

(10) *Bệnh nhân '**sập bẫy**' **quảng cáo** của phòng khám có bác sĩ nước ngoài (Patients 'trapped' by clinics with foreign doctors)*

In Vietnamese, "bẫy" means "trap" in English. The phrase "sập bẫy" in the example ("Patients 'fall into a trap' of advertisements from clinics with foreign doctors") suggests that patients were tricked by ads from clinics with foreign doctors, which implies they were deceived or manipulated. Trickery involves tricking someone into a situation they might not fully understand or benefit from. Media ads often use attractive pictures or exaggerated claims to attract customers. Recognizing parallels between trickery and media, the metaphor of "bẫy" illustrates how persuasive marketing tactics can mislead individuals.

(11) King says foreign **media exaggerate** unrest in Bahrain (King nói truyền thông nước ngoài phóng đại tình trạng bất ổn ở Bahrain)

In this case, "exaggerate" implies manipulation or misrepresentation, akin to "trickery." By associating "trickery" with foreign media, the metaphor suggests their reporting involves manipulation or deception. This transfer of attributes occurs due to shared qualities between "trickery" and "media," both involving spreading information and sometimes changing it to fit a certain narrative. "Trickery" involves intentional deception, while media manipulation comes from things like having a particular point of view or trying to make a story more exciting. By applying "trickery" to media, the metaphor implies manipulation or deception in foreign media's reporting on Bahrain unrest, whether intentional or not.

(12) The president is now claiming that the **media fabricated** a conflict between himself and his intelligence chiefs (Tổng thống hiện đang tuyên bố rằng các phương tiện truyền thông đã bịa đặt một cuộc xung đột giữa ông và các giám đốc tình báo của ông.)

In the phrase "the media fabricated a conflict between himself and his intelligence chiefs," "fabricated" means making up something that isn't true. It suggests that the media purposely lied or manipulated the situation, like trickery or deceit. Just as a trickster manipulates circumstances or information to achieve a desired outcome, the media, when accused of fabrication, is perceived as manipulating information to shape public perception or advance a particular agenda. Both trickery and media fabrication can influence how events are perceived. Just as a trick can distort reality or create false impressions, fabricated media stories can shape public opinion and influence attitudes towards individuals or events.

(13) How Western **Media Abet** Israeli Crimes? (Truyền thông phương Tây tiếp tay cho tội ác của Israel như thế nào?)

The concept of "trickery" typically involves deceit, manipulation, and misleading actions. This metaphor transfers the negative connotation associated with "trickery" to the term "media." Both "trickery" and "media" can change how people see things and what they do, even though they're in different situations. Just like someone using trickery tricks others for their own benefit, the metaphor suggests that the media, especially Western media in this case, may be engaging in actions that manipulate or mislead the public regarding Israeli actions or policies. Basically, the metaphor "Western Media Abet Israeli Crimes" suggests that media outlets, particularly those in the Western world, are perceived as complicit in facilitating or supporting actions by Israel that are considered unethical or unlawful by some observers.

The conceptual metaphor "Media is a Scam"

(14) Rất khó để phát hiện **gian lận trong quảng cáo** trực tuyến (It is difficult to detect fraud in online advertising)

"Scams" and "media" both involve lying, tricking, and not being honest. Scams are about tricking people to get something for themselves, often by making fake promises. Similarly, online ads, which are a type of media, can lie or trick to make people buy something for the advertiser's benefit. When people encounter "scam" in relation to online ads, they apply scam attributes to media, especially online ads. This helps them understand the challenge of

distinguishing honesty from deceit in online advertising, similar to detecting scams elsewhere. This metaphorical mapping suggests that online ads might be as tricky as scams, so it's important to be careful and think twice before believing everything you see in ads online.

(15) Ông Trump vẫn phát biểu trên Twitter rằng: “Dù một số hoạt động **truyền thông gian dối** và thiếu trung thực, nhưng vẫn có nhiều phóng viên tuyệt vời khiến tôi tôn trọng và đưa những tin tức tích cực khiến người Mỹ tự hào.” (Mr. Trump still states on Twitter that, "Although some media activities are deceitful and lack honesty, there are still many excellent journalists whom I respect and who deliver positive news that make Americans proud.)

Scams involve deception to mislead individuals, and the concept of "deception" in media suggests a similar manipulation of information. This shared attribute facilitates linking the concept of "scam" to certain practices within the media industry where dishonesty or misleading content may exist. Scams typically breach trust or lack integrity, prioritizing personal gain over ethical standards. Similarly, when media outlets engage in deceptive practices or fail journalistic integrity by presenting biased or fabricated information, they're seen as lacking integrity. This shared attribute forms common ground between scams and certain aspects of media. By leveraging these shared attributes, the metaphor of "deception" effectively conveys dishonesty within media, highlighting the importance of integrity and transparency in fostering trust between media organizations and their audience.

(16) **Quảng cáo ‘láo’ có thể sẽ bị xử lý hình sự** ('False' ads could face criminal penalties)

The Vietnamese phrase "Quảng cáo ‘láo’ có thể sẽ bị xử lý hình sự" uses "láo" as a metaphor for deceptive or fraudulent advertising, translating to "fake," "deceptive," or "misleading" in English. Both scams and deceptive advertising involve misrepresenting information. Scams use false promises to trick individuals, while deceptive advertising presents false claims to persuade consumers. The metaphorical transfer of attributes from "scam" to "media" likely draws on shared characteristics such as deception, manipulation, and erosion of trust. This underscores the media's responsibility to uphold ethical standards and integrity in communication with the public.

(17) **Phạt nghiêm nghệ sĩ tiếp tay quảng cáo lừa dối** (Severely penalize artists who abet deceptive advertising)

Both scams and misleading media can have significant impacts on their respective audiences. Scams can result in financial loss, emotional distress, or damage to reputation for the victims. Similarly, misleading media can shape public perceptions, influence decision-making based on misinformation. Both domains raise ethical concerns regarding the responsibility of those involved. Engaging in scams or deceptive advertising is widely regarded as unethical behavior, as it involves exploiting others for personal gain. Likewise, ethical considerations are crucial in media practices, as journalists and media organizations are expected to adhere to principles of truthfulness, accuracy, and fairness. By drawing parallels between the attributes of "scam" and "media," the metaphor in the given example underscores the critique of artists who participate in deceptive advertising. It implies that just as scams deceive and manipulate individuals,

misleading media practices can similarly deceive and manipulate the public, highlighting the responsibility of media professionals to uphold ethical standards and truthfulness in their work.

(18) *If you run into a scam, you should always report it to the listing source to immediately remove the **fraudulent advertisement**. (Nếu bạn gặp phải một trò lừa đảo, bạn nên luôn luôn báo cáo nó cho nguồn danh sách để ngay lập tức loại bỏ quảng cáo gian lận).*

In this example, "fraudulent" describes the advertisement as deceitful or misleading, akin to illegal scams. Just as scams erode trust by deceiving victims, media sources are expected to be trustworthy. When media content is fraudulent, it violates this trust. Scams harm individuals, causing financial and emotional distress. Likewise, fraudulent media content can influence public opinion, spread misinformation, and harm individuals or society..

(19) *At both the national and state level, this campaign has been disfigured by **deceitful advertising** and ruthless distortion. (Ở cả cấp quốc gia và tiểu bang, chiến dịch này đã bị biến dạng bởi quảng cáo gian dối và bóp méo tàn nhẫn).*

In example (19), "deceitful" describes the advertising and distortion in the campaign as dishonest and manipulative. This implies intentional deception aimed at manipulating the audience. The context is a political campaign characterized by "deceitful advertising and ruthless distortion," suggesting a connection between the concept of a "scam" and the "media." Negative traits of a "scam," like deceitfulness and manipulation, are associated with the "media" due to shared deceptive practices in political advertising. Public perception of the media reinforces this association. If there's widespread distrust in the media's integrity, negative attributes linked to scams become easier to attribute to the media.

(20) *Twitter bans deepfakes and **deceptive media** ahead of US elections. (Twitter cấm deepfake và phương tiện truyền thông lừa đảo trước cuộc bầu cử Mỹ)*

The metaphor of "deceptive" in the example, "Twitter bans deepfakes and deceptive media ahead of US elections," connects general deception with media manipulation. Here, "deceptive" suggests the media content is misleading or false. By linking attributes of "scam" and "media," the metaphor extends negative associations with scams to media, emphasizing the harm of manipulative content. It underscores the importance of platforms like Twitter taking action, especially during elections, to combat such content.

Similarities and Differences of the Conceptual metaphor of "MEDIA IS A TRAP" in Vietnamese and English

The research highlights significant parallels and distinctions in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" between Vietnamese and English.

Both the English and Vietnamese languages employ metaphorical mappings for "MEDIA IS A TRAP," with corresponding expressions. To be more specific, they both use terms like "phóng đại/bịa đặt/tiếp tay/bẫy" and "exaggerate/fabricate/abet/trap" to illustrate how the media can lure audiences and shape public opinion. Additionally, terms like "deceptive/lừa đảo" and "deceitful/gian dối, fraud/gian lận" are used to convey the dissemination of false information, potentially harmful to individuals or society.

Survey data reveals a similar frequency of "MEDIA IS A TRAP" metaphorical expressions in both languages, with 110 instances in Vietnamese and 90 in English, indicating a shared understanding of the metaphor. This metaphor can be broken down into two underlying cognitive metaphors: Media as Trickery and Media as a Scam. In describing various facets of media, both Vietnamese and English employ similar metaphorical expressions related to "Trap," highlighting qualities such as manipulation, deception, impact, and breach of trust.

In both languages, the metaphor vividly evokes a sense of being ensnared or manipulated by the media. Vietnamese employs 17 metaphorical words, while English uses fewer, at 9. Nevertheless, "Trap" is a recurring term in both languages, underscoring its significance in conveying the idea of media as trapping or deceiving. Vietnamese accentuates "trap" and "exaggerate," whereas "deceptive" appears most frequently in English (32 times), compared to only 5 times in Vietnamese. This variance suggests nuanced cultural perceptions or linguistic preferences in understanding the relationship between media and manipulation, despite the shared metaphorical foundation.

Overall, the "MEDIA IS A TRAP" metaphor showcases striking similarities between English and Vietnamese, underscoring its universal cognitive and linguistic significance. While both languages employ similar conceptual metaphorical expressions to depict the dynamic nature of media, they also exhibit subtle differences reflecting distinct cultural perspectives.

Discussion

Analyzing the attribute transference between the "source" and "target" spatial domains in the conceptual metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" across Vietnamese and English news articles reveals that reporters' and editors' perceptions of traps are influenced by their background knowledge and personal experiences with various forms of deception and trickery. By decoding the mechanisms involved in forming and mapping this metaphor, it becomes clear that "TRAP" is consistently associated with concepts such as deception, fraud, deceit, manipulation, and the dissemination of information. The data analysis identifies a total of 200 instances of the metaphor "Media is a Trap," indicating its prevalence as a common metaphorical expression. Notably, linguistic expressions representing the concept of "Trap" in both Vietnamese and English exhibit similarities, with both languages employing metaphorical terms related to deception, fraud, deceit, manipulation, and information dissemination to conceptualize the media.

Using the metaphor of "Trap" to conceptualize the abstract concept of media allows for a vivid depiction of various aspects of media. While the structure and expression of the "Trap" metaphor in Vietnamese and English share some similarities, not all Vietnamese metaphorical expressions have direct equivalents in English. Vietnamese has 17 metaphorical words, while there are only 9 in English. In the metaphorical concept of MEDIA AS A TRAP, Vietnamese people demonstrate cunning and professionalism in knowledge about hunting, gathering, and conquering prey. In the chase, conquest necessarily requires certain tactics to attract and captivate the emotions of the opponent. Thus, the skillful tactics in Media can include exaggeration, assistance, exposure, fabrication, weaving, storytelling, deception, or using

trapping methods. Furthermore, with experience in living terrain and the ability to craft hunting tools, Vietnamese people have the basis for forming unique metaphorical expressions such as setting traps, getting trapped, collapsing traps, getting caught in traps, trapping, a trap, etc.

The findings of this study align with the theoretical framework proposed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), who asserted that metaphors are fundamental to ordinary conceptual systems and not merely rhetorical or literary devices. Our analysis corroborates their claim that metaphors involve understanding one domain of thought through another, as seen in the consistent mapping of "trap" attributes onto media-related concepts. Kövecses (2002) further elaborates that metaphorical mappings rely on shared human knowledge and experience, establishing correspondences between elements of source and target domains. This study supports Kövecses' view by demonstrating how both Vietnamese and English speakers utilize the concept of "trap" to depict media, despite cultural differences. However, the cultural-specific characteristics of metaphors, as argued by Kövecses (2005), are evident in the greater variety of metaphorical expressions in Vietnamese compared to English. This reflects the different cultural experiences and practices related to hunting and trapping, which influence the richness of metaphorical language. Ly (2015) highlights that while metaphors may share similarities, the specific aspects activated can vary greatly due to cultural influences. This study's findings resonate with Ly's assertion, showing that Vietnamese metaphorical expressions often include nuanced tactics and strategies derived from hunting practices, which are less prevalent in English metaphors.

The study's results contribute to the broader understanding of conceptual metaphor theory by illustrating how metaphors function as cognitive tools for comprehending abstract concepts through more concrete experiences. The frequent use of the "trap" metaphor in both languages underscores its effectiveness in conveying complex ideas about media manipulation and deceit. Moreover, the cross-cultural analysis reveals that while certain metaphorical concepts are universal, the specific linguistic expressions and the richness of metaphorical language can vary significantly due to cultural contexts. This supports the notion that metaphorical thinking is both universal and culture-specific, shaped by shared human experiences and distinct cultural practices. In conclusion, the metaphor "MEDIA IS A TRAP" provides a powerful framework for understanding media's role in shaping perceptions and manipulating information. The study's comparative analysis of Vietnamese and English expressions highlights the interplay between universal cognitive processes and cultural specificity in metaphorical language.

Conclusion

This study marks a notable progression in conceptual metaphor theory within cognitive linguistics, particularly concerning media analysis. It illustrates the metaphorical interpretation of the abstract concept of media as a tangible entity, likening it to a trap due to shared trap-like attributes. This facilitates the extension of other concepts onto it.

By examining the "MEDIA IS A TRAP" metaphor in both Vietnamese and English, the study identifies and analyzes two metaphorical models: "Media is Trickery" and "Media is a Scam." These models reveal the prevalence of trap-related terminology in discourses, providing valuable insights into the cognitive processes of English and Vietnamese speakers and

significantly contributing to the understanding of the cognitive foundations of both languages. However, the study acknowledges its limitations, indicating avenues for further research in cognitive linguistics.

Within the scope of the article's research, the author does not cover all source domains but only chooses one source domain as a "trap" for analysis. In the concept of the source domain, "trap" contains negative attributes, bad things, and tricks. Hopefully, in future studies, the author will explore other metaphors with positive meanings such as "Media is a soldier" or "Media is Health" in languages to provide a more balanced view and make it more interesting for people to perceive the media, enriching language and thought comprehension, and fostering effective communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries.

This paper holds substantial value for both teaching and research, serving as a crucial reference source. It enhances understanding of how Vietnamese and English speakers perceive the objective world through communication and supports translation, teaching, and research efforts within language departments at universities and colleges.

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Biodata

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A Qualitative Study into How Non-English Major Students Emotionally Respond to Teacher-Written Feedback

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: *emotion, written feedback, non-English major students, learning*

Despite extant literature on the interplay between pedagogical practices and emotional impact, the emotional responses of non-English major undergraduates to teacher-written feedback in L2 writing classrooms remain underexplored. This research, employing semi-structured interviews and document analysis as primary data collection tools, aims to explore how different functions of feedback, including praise, criticism, and suggestions, evoke students' emotions in higher education settings. The study, conducted in the context of a single university's L2 writing courses, involved 88 undergraduates for document analysis and 5 for semi-structured interviews. Findings reveal that personalized feedback significantly impacts students' self-perception, learning motivation, and engagement, underscoring the importance of empathy and clarity in feedback delivery. This paper highlights tailored feedback's crucial role in enhancing academic growth and emotional well-being, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of feedback dynamics in language education.

Introduction

It is indisputable that feedback plays a pedagogically significant role in language teaching and learning (Leng, 2014; Ryan & Henderson, 2017), as it is a two-way interaction (Agbayahoun, 2016; Lee, 2014) and “not simply a disembodied reference to student texts but an interactive part of the whole context of learning, helping to create a productive interpersonal relationship between the teacher and individual students” (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 86). Due to the interpersonal nature of feedback, it is considered as “a social act” (Lee, 2008, p. 146).

Although a wide range of studies have been conducted on teacher-written feedback, they mainly concentrate on its effectiveness, utilizing quantitative research methods, and results related to

students' emotional responses remain mixed. Meanwhile, little research in the field of language education focuses on what functions are present in a teacher's feedback and their influence on emotions experienced by non-English major students.

As a result, there is a need to examine how non-English major students emotionally respond to teacher-written feedback, especially in the context of higher education where non-English major students participate in general English language courses to fulfill language proficiency requirements. This imperative stems from the widespread concern over the inadequate writing skills exhibited by this heterogeneous student population on a national scale and multiple challenges in developing writing skills faced by this group of students, underscoring the importance of gathering comprehensive data and devising tailored feedback strategies to address their diverse needs (Do & Tran, 2020; Le & Nguyen, 2022).

This study, therefore, seeks to shed light on the nuanced ways in which feedback influences students' emotions and subsequent engagement with it. Understanding how non-English major students emotionally react to teacher-written feedback can make significant theoretical and methodological contributions to the field of language education, enhancing the practical aspects of teaching and feedback in academic settings.

Literature Review

Teacher-Written Feedback

In the context of an L2 writing classroom, teacher-written feedback, referring to written responses offered by teachers on students' written work, is the indispensable component of a teacher's instruction (Ferris, 2018; Leng, 2014; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2022). As a pedagogical form, teacher-written feedback conveys substantial information to facilitate writing improvement and consolidate students' learning by offering commentary on a text's form and content (Hyland, 2019). It also acts as a constructive evaluation of students' texts, bridging the gap between current writing performance and desired improvement of writing skills via the students' implementation of feedback (Hyland & Hyland, 2019; Leng, 2014; Värlander, 2008). Providing this form of feedback is essential for the enhancement of students' writing abilities, as it constructively directs individuals to re-examine and rebuild their pre-existent ideas and beliefs, calling for one's constant development of flexible strategies for properly and holistically understanding the world (Han & Hyland, 2019; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Nguyen et al., 2021).

Beyond the information transmission feature of teacher-written feedback, teacher-written feedback also serves social purposes beyond the "stimulus-and-response routine" and transmission of information (Gan et al., 2021). Värlander (2008) argues that teacher-written feedback should be viewed and conceptualized as an ongoing teacher-student dialogue rather than a tool passively received by the students without meaning negotiations. For teacher-written feedback to truly facilitate learning development, teachers should meticulously choose collaborative, dialogic and student-centered approaches to optimally induce students' engagement in the feedback (Ferris, 2018).

Teacher-written feedback is primarily examined in this paper in terms of its three functions:

praise, criticism, and suggestion, as proposed by Hyland and Hyland (2001). In their study, Hyland and Hyland interpreted praise as recognizing and commending another's positively valued trait, skill, and characteristic. Praise, in this context, is seen as more detailed and intense than mere agreement. They described the criticism as an expression of dissatisfaction or a negative remark, often focusing on mistakes in a student's work (Ferris, 2018). As per Hyland & Hyland (2001), suggestions are differentiated from criticism by their explicit remediation recommendations, providing a clear, achievable course of action for improvement. Although it may contain elements of criticism, Suggestion is considered more expansive and possibly less explicitly critical (Hyland & Hyland, 2001).

Student Emotions

Historically, emotion was viewed as a construct separate from and inferior to intellect, a perspective that prevailed until the twentieth century when such a rational understanding was criticized and eventually relinquished, making room for the re-examination of affective factors, with emotions included as a crucial element, and the recognition of the intricate relationship between emotion and cognition (Richards, 2020; Rothermund & Koole, 2018, White, 2018).

Emotion, beyond reasoning and decision-making capacity, is a dynamic and context-dependent social phenomenon emerging from meaningful interpersonal interactions within a particular sociocultural setting (Swain, 2013). Owing to its social complexity, emotion exerts a significant influence on one's learning progress and personal behavior within a particular context, encompassing a student's reactions during their learning process, as Carless and Boud (2018) define: "the understandings, capacities and dispositions needed to make sense of information and use it to enhance work or learning strategies" (p.1316).

Emotions significantly shape how students perceive learning activities in a classroom and their personal approach to the activities, especially those that necessitate active collaboration and co-construction of knowledge (Hill et al., 2021). The research evidence and findings from second language education have shown that student learning cannot occur without meaningful teacher-student interactions (Swain, 2013; Wu et al., 2019).

Emotional Responses to Teacher-Written Feedback

Students' emotional responses to the three functions of feedback - praise, criticism, and suggestions - often significantly vary and are generally complex (Ferris, 2018; Mahfoodh, 2017; Ryan & Henderson, 2018).

Praise in teacher-written feedback is associated with positive emotions such as happiness, confidence, and pride, boosting motivation to improve writing performance (Leng, 2014). However, it may not emotionally trigger students to take action for improvement in multiple cases, and completely positive feedback might not facilitate skill development due to neglect of weaknesses and errors (Hyland & Hyland, 2001; Razali & Jupri, 2014).

Criticism of teacher-written feedback can cause negative emotions, including guilt, sadness, and disappointment, in students (Ryan & Henderson, 2017; Silver & Lee, 2007). Nevertheless, criticism, while sometimes undermining a student's confidence and motivation to fully perceive feedback, can also spur positive emotions and introspective thoughts if delivered appropriately and supplemented with clear instruction (Leng, 2014). Too many critical comments on a writing

text can emotionally damage students and demotivate them to make improvements in the future (Hyland & Hyland, 2001).

Suggestions used by teachers with an intention to recommend certain ways to enhancement in their written feedback can give rise to a sense of satisfaction and feedback acceptance of emotional responses from their students (Mahfoodh, 2017). One unique feature of suggestions in teacher-written feedback is its respect for students' decisions regarding whether they should use their teachers' comments, and suggestions make room for students' reflections on writing expectations, criteria, and conventions (Värlander, 2008). Therefore, suggestions can lower anxiety and insecurity in students as they are conducive to teacher-student interactions.

The three functions are often utilized in harmony rather than separately, which is crucial for arousing students' emotions (Hyland & Hyland, 2001; Mahfoodh, 2017). It is suggested that teachers combine the three functions, resulting in a host of feedback patterns such as praise-criticism, criticism-suggestion, and praise-criticism-suggestion, with hedges, question forms, and their own attributions, as this feedback-giving practice can contribute to developing teacher-student relationships, minimizing effects of judgments and mitigating criticism and suggestions (Hyland & Hyland, 2001). Addressing students' emotions evoked by teacher-written feedback often entails a mindful, strategic, and reflexive approach to adopting feedback functions (Värlander, 2008).

Previous Studies

Hyland and Hyland (2001) conducted a detailed text analysis of teacher-written feedback to explore the combination of feedback functions - ranging from praise and criticism to suggestions - on ESL students' writing assignments over an English proficiency course at a university in New Zealand. The researchers indicated that praise was the most commonly used function among the teachers participating in the study, yet it was mainly utilized to mitigate the impact of criticism and suggestion instead of truly complimenting the students' assignments. They also claimed that indirectness inherent in the feedback delivery could bring about miscommunication and incomprehension, limiting student revision quality. The formation of three functions of feedback used by teachers in response to students' writing performance was also investigated in research conducted by Silver and Lee (2007) in a primary school in Singapore. The study's data were collected from student compositions, teacher-written feedback, and student questionnaires. The majority of the pupils demonstrated pre-intermediate and intermediate English language proficiency. Silver and Lee found that the students revised their narrative compositions primarily based on suggestions, while compliments were regarded as unnecessary. Criticism was not preferred by the majority of the students, even if it had been given constructively.

Agbayahoun (2016) examines teachers' feedback on students' paragraphs included in writing tests in a secondary school in the republic of Benin with the main purpose of identifying the nature of the teachers' feedback and rationale for feedback provision as well as the students' perspectives on the feedback. The research employs a mixed-method design, integrating data from students' written texts, close-ended questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. It was found that two-thirds of the students needed help understanding their teachers' feedback, and some admitted that they were overwhelmed with the feedback. Additionally, one-third of the

students paid almost no attention to the feedback from the teachers due to their emphasis on grades over writing revisions. Meanwhile, qualitative data from the feedback showed that the teachers in the study tended to focus on errors and weaknesses in the students' paragraphs, which resulted in strong negativity in their corrections and comments.

In another study conducted as a part of a larger project on teacher-written feedback in a state university in Yemen, which is one of the Arab countries, Mahfoodh (2017) investigates the emotional responses of undergraduates in the Department of English Language teacher-written feedback. From qualitative data collected from think-aloud protocols, students' written texts, and semi-structured interviews, the researcher found that the students expressed a wide range of positive emotional responses, including feelings of happiness, satisfaction, and acceptance of feedback. According to the researcher's explanations, this positive emotional pattern stemmed from learning encouragement, useful suggestions, and straightforward correction of linguistic features. However, the students also endured negative emotions arising in their learning experiences as a result of dissatisfaction, rejection of feedback, surprise, disappointment, and frustration. Such emotional responses were triggered due to their inability to comprehend the feedback, exposure to overwhelmingly large amounts of information and criticism in it, and their personal disagreement with their teachers' feedback. This resulted in the students' lack of readiness to revise their compositions with the feedback's guidance.

The extant literature shows that the interplay between students' emotional responses and teacher-written feedback remains multifaceted, calling for more information about the relationship between emotional experiences and educational outcomes. Furthermore, little information is available on the interplay between emotions and writing skills, entailing a notable scarcity of published research on how students' emotional responses to teacher-written feedback (Mahfoodh, 2017; Pilotti et al., 2023). As White (2018, p. 29) aptly notes, there is "an urgent need to develop and adopt more contextual and domain-specific approaches to understanding the nature and impact of complex emotional experiences." This call underscores the necessity of moving beyond generic models of emotional responses to tailor approaches that recognize the unique contexts in which feedback occurs.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, it is set out to answer the following research questions:

1. What patterns are observable in the functions of teacher-written feedback?
2. What are the emotional responses of students to the manner in which teachers provide feedback?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The research was conducted at a public multidisciplinary school located in the southern region of Vietnam. The school trains multiple non-English departments and majors, including Business Administration, Information Technology, and Accounting. The university is committed to teaching non-English major students English as a Foreign Language (EFL), equipping them

with essential communication skills in English and fulfilling language requirements for their career paths.

In this study, there were 88 non-English major undergraduates from two general English classes and one university lecturer at Sai Gon University. The students were enrolled in the English General III course, which is at the pre-intermediate level. The course covered four skills, reading, listening, writing, and speaking, across six units. The researchers' choice stemmed from the acknowledgment of the heterogeneous academic landscapes within higher education, aiming to yield a comprehensive understanding of feedback preferences discovered from multiple perspectives.

All the undergraduates were required to write a review about their favorite TV program. Students then submitted their review assignments on Padlet to receive feedback. The lecturer provided feedback on 88 essays. After receiving the lecturer's feedback, the students revised their essays accordingly. Out of all the students, seven were invited to participate in the interviews to share how they emotionally reacted to the feedback on their essays with purposive sampling. However, only five students participated in the interviews, while others could not due to hectic schedules and personal issues. Consent forms were sent to and signed by the participants before each interview session was conducted. The selection criteria were determined on the basis of the participants' varied academic background, course enrollment, and willingness to participate in the research to share their experiences and emotions related to feedback on their written essays. This sampling technique was chosen due to the need to gain an emergent, in-depth understanding that is important to grasp the context or phenomenon under investigation, fitting the purpose of the research (Silverman, 2022). Table 1 depicts more details about these interview participants.

Table 1

Profiles of participants in semi-structured interviews

Name	Gender	Major	University year	Learning experience (years)	English language qualifications
Tony	Male	Information Technology	4	16	None
Daisy	Female	Finance - Accounting.	3	13	None
Adele	Female	Office Administration - Library	3	13	None
Terry	Male	Literature Teacher Education	4	11	None
Hayley	Female	Law	4	14	None

In addition, the study involved only one lecturer from the classes, possessing a Master's degree in education, overseeing the teaching of each class individually, drawing from extensive experience in instructing writing skills to learners at the corresponding proficiency level. to provide written feedback to the students' essays. She was instructed to give feedback while assuring the three functions, with attention to four writing skill assessment criteria: Task Fulfillment, Organization, Vocabulary, and Grammar. This decision was made deliberately to facilitate the examination of consistent patterns and variations in feedback practices within a particular context and their impact on student emotional responses, allowing for a more in-depth exploration of the dynamics between the lecturer's feedback style and the emotional reactions elicited from students.

Design of the Study

In this study, the researchers employ qualitative methodology to answer the research questions. Qualitative research, context-dependent in nature, is designed to collect and analyze in-depth data in multiple forms, mainly non-numeric. It identifies themes, patterns and causal relationships underlying lived experiences of research participants, thereby exploring as much depth as possible (Silverman, 2022). The nature of qualitative methodology will guide the researchers to have an in-depth exploration of emotional responses to teacher-written feedback and the feedback itself in a particular setting by gathering rich subjective data.

Data Collection & Analysis

The research employs two primary data collection tools. The first research question is answered using document analysis, utilized to systematically examine feedback functions in feedback on 88 essays to identify patterns and characteristics of the feedback. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the five students' emotional responses to teacher-written feedback attached to their essays, answering the second research question. This method aims to collect rich data on how students perceive and react to feedback provided by their lecturer.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the data analysis, the researchers adopted inter-coder reliability checks, resolving any coding discrepancies through discussion and consensus. Furthermore, the trustworthiness of the interview data was enhanced by employing member-checking techniques, allowing research participants to review and confirm the accuracy of interview transcripts.

Qualitative content analysis with inductive category application was utilized to code data of teacher-written feedback on essays. Using this technique, researchers systematically classify and count text units to condense them into categories or themes using subjective interpretation and inference (Silverman, 2022). In other words, what distinguishes it from other typical qualitative data analysis techniques is the transformation of words into numbers, representing the process of quantification in a qualitative procedure (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). This method is conducive to identifying the frequency, characteristics, and distribution of feedback functions, and the data analysis method also enables the researchers to explore in depth the feedback functions the lecturer applied within comments, enabling the researchers to gain meaningful insights into how the lecturer uses feedback to mediate students' writing skill development.

Additionally, the data from semi-structured interviews and students' comments in response to the feedback on their essays were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. At the basic level, thematic analysis is "a method for developing, analyzing and interpreting patterns across a qualitative dataset, which involves systematic processes of data coding to develop themes" (Braun & Clarke, 2021, p. 4). Comprehending the experiences, thoughts, and actions of research participants is valuable, requiring researchers using reflexive thematic analysis to critically reflect upon their own role, practice, and process, becoming subjective, conscious, questioning, and situated in a particular context (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Reflexive thematic analysis was utilized in this research to flexibly and critically explore the nuanced emotions of non-English major undergraduates resulting from the written feedback given by their lecturer.

Results/Findings

Research Question 1: Patterns of Teacher-Written Feedback

The findings of the first research question from document analysis and qualitative content analysis are presented in this section. In order to analyze teachers' feedback patterns (praise, suggestion, and criticism) in the 88 essays, the theories of Hyland and Hyland (2001) were used. Table 2 identifies patterns of teacher-written feedback by examining the frequency of praise, suggestion, and criticism across four assessment criteria of writing, including Task Fulfillment, Organization, Vocabulary, and Grammar.

Table 2

Feedback functions in relation to four writing assessment criteria

Criteria	Praise	Criticism	Suggestion
Task Fulfillment	110	2	30
Organization	49	0	21
Vocabulary	21	3	67
Grammar	29	5	99

Praise was most commonly awarded for Task Fulfillment, with 110 instances, compared to only 30 suggestions and two criticisms. This emphasis on Task Fulfillment suggests that the teacher prioritizes clarity and relevance in student arguments, with the high frequency of praise indicating that most students met these expectations. Consequently, fewer suggestions for improvement were needed in this area. In contrast, considerably less praise was directed to Vocabulary and Grammar, with 21 and 29 instances, respectively, highlighting potentially challenging areas and suggesting a need for increased support in improving their vocabulary and grammatical precision.

Suggestions were primarily allocated to Grammar, where the lecturer offered 99 pieces of feedback, significantly higher than any other area. This focus emphasizes the priority placed on grammatical competence, aiming to guide students to pay more attention to precision and clarity in their essays. Vocabulary received the second-highest attention with 67 suggestions, indicating it as another critical area requiring improvement. This feedback pattern suggests that Grammar and Vocabulary are common challenges in student writing, with both being targeted for enhancement.

Less frequent than other feedback functions, criticism was mainly used to target Grammar, with five mentions, suggesting it as the primary area that students needed to improve. Meanwhile, Task Fulfillment and Vocabulary received notably fewer criticisms, with only 2 and 3 mentions, respectively, indicating that issues in these aspects were less prevalent or less severe in the evaluated submissions.

To conclude, the data suggests that the lecturer prioritized positive feedback content and constructive suggestions over negative comments. This strategy fosters a supportive learning environment where students are encouraged to maximize their writing strengths while making use of guidance on areas for improvement, thereby enhancing their overall educational experience.

Research Question 2: Emotional Responses to Teacher-Written Feedback

The reflexive thematic analysis indicated that the five undergraduates participating in the interviews exhibited strong emotional reactions to the lecturer's feedback on their essays. According to the participants, such intense emotions were triggered by praises, criticisms, suggestions, and other aspects of the feedback, particularly highlighted errors, error explanations, suggested corrections, or interactive notes. Notably, the emotions intensified as they showed admiration for their lecturer and gratitude towards the lecturer's dedication, diligence, enthusiasm, and even personal characteristics implicitly manifested via the feedback. Moreover, while the participants found feedback that integrating the three feedback functions eye-opening and helpful, the lecturer's qualities and dedication to the feedback content profoundly evoked their emotions.

Theme 1: Respect for Teacher's Dedication (All)

All the participants cherished the lecturer's dedication and effort in providing detailed feedback, recognizing the significant investment of time and energy it entailed. The students expressed immense respect and gratitude, keenly aware of the tremendous undertaking. Notably, the undergraduates from disadvantaged English language learning backgrounds were deeply moved by the lecturer's unique determination in feedback delivery, a stark contrast to their past experiences with previous teachers. According to the undergraduates, the lecture was "*far too dedicated*" and "*paid attention to every single part and every single sentence.*"

As the students received the feedback, their admiration and appreciation for the lecturer's efforts grew into a keen recognition of her dedication.

"It's like she is extremely dedicated to me." (Daisy)

"The way she corrects is really heartfelt. She corrects with so much care." (Hayley)

"[...] the way she does it makes you feel the care from her and the true dedication of a real educator. At that time, the teacher was like a kind mother to me." (Terry)

"As long as she gives feedback, I'm already very happy." (Adele)

"As I said, she was truly dedicated, [...]" (Tony)

Further illustrating this theme, the quotes highlight the tangible impact of the teacher's dedication on the students, linking it to both academic improvement and increased emotional engagement. The undergraduates became more emotionally invested in the feedback since they felt the lecturer's care, enthusiasm, and devotion.

This recurring sentiment of respect for the teacher's dedication illustrates its significant influence on the students' academic success and personal growth. The interviews revealed that this profound respect extended beyond mere appreciation, embodying a deeper acknowledgment of the teacher's role in shaping their educational journey.

Theme 2: Striving for Recognition (Hayley, Terry, Adele)

The data analysis showed that Hayley, Terry, and Adele strongly preferred praise and validation, as manifested in the lecturer's feedback. The compliments given in the feedback underscore the motivational role of positive recognition of written language in student engagement and

learning. A few undergraduates became emotionally attached to the content of each compliment since their output language performance has never or seldom received positive feedback, and some even said that only feedback focusing on errors or criticisms was present in their learning experiences.

According to Hayley, her previous teachers and tutors “*only focused on what was inaccurate*” or gave vague feedback such as “*finding something better*”, which caused desperation and distress in her past experiences. As a result, she was profoundly surprised and elated as she received compliments from the lecturer.

In addition, due to the strong emotional responses to the positive feedback, Hayley would make every attempt to memorize some portions of her essays with praise from the lecturer in the light of writing skill improvement.

“It's like when I read it, it's really profound! And then, I have to, like, memorize the line, like 'Wow', oh my goodness!” (Hayley)

The compliments in the feedback also elicited a profound and significant emotional experience for Terry. Drawing on his background in Literature Teacher Education and past learning experiences, he highlighted that the lecturer stood out for her appreciation of the students' writing efforts and achievements, describing her as “*a co-author*” of the essays. According to Terry, the compliments differentiate the lecturer from other educators who only seek faults and offer criticisms.

“I felt a great uplift in spirits, like, yes, the effort I put in is seen by the teacher and acknowledged by the teacher, and not just that. The teacher also gives suggestions and even praises my strengths, not like other teachers who only seem to find faults to criticize all day. Because from the student's perspective, it always seems like teachers are always looking for something wrong to point out. That's what I think anyway.” (Terry)

While praise prompted Terry to compare the lecturers to other educators, Adele engaged in a personal comparison with her peers. Although she profoundly valued positive notes over her written language and constantly checked for further improvement, she felt somewhat dissatisfied with the distribution of praise in her essay, especially since a number of her peers in the same classroom received more compliments. She paid close attention to how the compliments were distributed to other essays: “*Oh my goodness, my friend even received praise for her good introduction!*”. Drawing on her own essay, she was not content with some feedback portions: “*She wrote 'quite good', which is not specific [...] I don't know whether 'quite good' means good or it just remains at the average level*”. In spite of the jealousy, the emotion reveals that she was highly attentive to and engaged with the lecturer's praise. Not only was she concerned about how the lecturer had given feedback to her peers, but she also desired to get positive, detailed, and helpful information.

Theme 3: Wholehearted Acceptance (Adele, Daisy, Tony, Terry)

Despite varying degrees of acceptance, Adele, Daisy, Tony, and Terry uniformly expressed strong or complete approval of their lecturer's praise, criticism, suggestions, and corrections. The differences were evident in how the undergraduate emotionally and cognitively responded

to the feedback, leveraging it to refine and develop their writing.

Having engaged in the feedback, Adele embraced much of the lecturer's advice on her essay. Despite initial slight confusion and resistance, she recognized the value of the feedback, influenced by factors such as future examinations and her esteem for the lecturer.

Interviewer:

So generally, you don't really accept her feedback here, right? You think you are still right, don't you?

Adele:

Yes. But later I will use "are" because she corrected it already.

Unlike Adele, Daisy and Terry accepted all the feedback despite their varied emotional reactions to it. On the one hand, as Daisy was immersed in the content of the feedback, she made significant attempts to understand and explain it so that she could better revise her essay. What is vital is the participant's ongoing engagement with the feedback, as she subjectively discerns the reasons for her mistakes and the lecturer's suggestions for different ways to convey similar thoughts. One prominent example is how she interpreted the lecturer's suggestions on her use of vocabulary:

"Yes, I think her approach would be better because it will reflect the meaning of 'contribute to the development of Vietnamese culture'. My previous sentence was just about development. Her sentence, saying it will contribute, implies something stronger, contributing to the foundation of Vietnamese culture." (Daisy)

Meanwhile, Terry, an undergraduate who "absolutely trusts teachers", accepted every piece of feedback on his essay. Although he had used an online translation tool to write his essay, he acknowledged that the lecturer's feedback was significantly better than the software's assistance owing to the lecturer's comprehensive linguistic understanding, linguistic sensitivity and capacity to profoundly grasp his ideas expressed in the essay.

"Of course, I mean, like, I cannot understand why I made such small, minor mistakes."

"I didn't think she would read my paper in detail and thoroughly enough to understand the issues I'm talking about like that!" (Terry)

These strong emotions caused Terry to decide to evaluate his writing shortcomings consistently and remind himself not to depend excessively on translation software. The disillusion, resulting from his full recognition of the feedback's value, compelled Terry to truly learn the foreign language and enhance his writing skill accuracy with his own efforts.

"That point has to be etched in my mind, not just noted down! It's like I've ingrained it already. When I read it, I finally understood why I made such trivial mistakes and I should never... After all, I've learned not to trust Google Translate ever again, but rather to understand the grammar of what I'm writing; that will be more accurate than relying on it. If I trust Google Translate 100%, I keep thinking that whatever it produces must be mechanically correct and better than me, but that's not the case! Machines don't have emotions!" (Terry)

In conclusion, the analysis of interview data reveals distinct patterns of emotional responses to teacher feedback. The data provided deep insights into participants' backgrounds and learning experiences shaped by varied emotional reactions. All participants expressed surprise at the volume of feedback received and held deep respect for the lecturer's linguistic expertise and pedagogical dedication, viewing the support provided as unparalleled in their academic journey. Some participants even described feeling rescued from previous negative learning experiences, leading to a more positive outlook on language improvement. Additionally, a subset of participants actively sought and valued compliments from the lecturer, experiencing a sense of pride and motivation to build upon their strengths. Importantly, most participants exhibited whole-hearted acceptance of feedback, demonstrating a willingness to engage with it constructively to further enhance their language skills.

Discussion

This study aimed to explore (a) the inclusion of feedback functions - praise, criticism, and suggestions - driven by writing skill assessment criteria, and (b) how non-English major undergraduates emotionally reacted to the three feedback functions.

The findings demonstrated a well-intended and constructive application of feedback functions, incorporating a flexible range of writing skill assessment criteria. Similarly, it was found that the undergraduates experienced an emotional nuance, predominantly positive, as they received feedback from their lecturer. The emotions not only heightened their awareness of language proficiency and motivated them to improve but also fostered dynamic teacher-student interactions and engaging learning experiences.

Our study reveals that the teacher predominantly used praise and suggestions rather than criticism to provide feedback to non-English major undergraduates. Praise was frequently allocated to aspects of Task Fulfillment. At the same time, suggestions primarily focused on enhancing Grammar and Vocabulary, with minimal instances of criticism noted (209 instances of praise, 217 instances of suggestions, and only 10 instances of criticism). This approach aligns with Hyland and Hyland's observation that praise is often the most common form of feedback, contrasting with Connors & Lunsford's (1993) observation of a rarity in positive comments. Additionally, our findings diverge from Hyland and Hyland's (2001) earlier observation that criticism comprised about a third of feedback. The considerable use of suggestions and minimal criticism in our study suggests a strategy to enhance student confidence and motivation by offering support rather than direct critique. Regarding the four test writing skill criteria, praise was most frequently directed at Task Fulfillment, indicating that most students met this criterion well. Conversely, Vocabulary and Grammar were identified as the main challenges, receiving the most suggestions, which is consistent with literature indicating that lower proficiency students often receive more feedback on form, such as grammar and vocabulary. This feedback strategy is appropriate for pre-intermediate level students, focusing on areas critical to their language development.

In terms of the emotional reactions, the interview data analysis highlights distinct emotional reactions to teacher feedback, influenced by participants' backgrounds and previous learning

experiences. Some participants noted that the feedback significantly counteracted previous negative learning experiences, fostering a more positive attitude towards language improvement. Nonetheless, the connections between students' emotional reactions to teacher-written feedback and their past learning experiences were not clearly examined in previous studies, mainly focusing on the relationship and its effects on writing revisions. Furthermore, numerous participants showed profound respect for the lecturer's expertise and commitment, appreciating the support as a pivotal part of their educational experience. These positive emotional patterns are similar to the research findings of Ferris (2018), as the students in her research expressed appreciation and satisfaction with written feedback. Additionally, a group of participants particularly appreciated receiving compliments, which bolstered their pride and motivation to enhance their strengths. The participants' strong preferences for positive feedback contrasted with the results of research conducted by Mahfoodh (2017), who found that praises did not profoundly impact students' emotions, although they generally liked them. Most importantly, the majority of participants accepted the feedback with openness, demonstrating a readiness to use it constructively to advance their language skills, which is closely aligned with the findings of Mahfoodh's (2017) study, indicating that many students accepted their teacher's feedback and relied on it for writing skill improvement. However, while Ferris (2018) and Mahfoodh (2017) found negative emotions such as frustration, sadness, disappointment, and rejection primarily due to vague and critical feedback, the participants in this study experienced very few similar emotions due to predominantly positive and constructive feedback.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this research underscores the crucial role of teacher-written feedback in cultivating student learning and emotional engagement within an educational setting. The findings demonstrate that when feedback is detailed, personalized, and includes elements of praise, it improves academic skills and significantly boosts students' motivation, respect for their educators, and meaningful interactions. Furthermore, the positive reception of feedback across the undergraduates, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, highlights the need for feedback practices that are culturally aware and tailored to meet diverse student needs. The study advocates adopting feedback strategies that are both corrective and supportive, fostering an environment where students feel valued and motivated, which is critical to maintaining learner motivation and cultivating engaging learning experiences in the context of language education.

This study has several limitations. Due to the nature of qualitative research studies, our findings may only be restrained in a particular context, not being able to be generalized elsewhere. Furthermore, owing to the complex nature of emotions, it is clear that the semi-structured interviews may only cover some emotional aspects or their entire impact on a student's learning process. The same can be judged regarding teacher-written feedback, as the study primarily focuses on the three functions of the teacher's feedback. In contrast, the corrections and other aspects, such as linguistic features, comment length, use of hedges, and text focus, were not analyzed. Therefore, it is still being determined whether the linguistic features of feedback, its place in the student's writing, and other facets influence the emotions of the students

participating in the study. Finally, the study emphasizes the students' emotional responses, which means there is a need to observe how emotions lead to actions, make changes to the compositions, and have participants write journals to reflect upon their emotions immediately after receiving feedback.

This study suggests several promising directions for future research that can enhance our understanding of the interplay between emotions and feedback in educational settings. Comparative analyses across different cultural backgrounds could shed light on how cultural norms influence emotional responses to feedback, aiding in the development of culturally adaptive strategies. Moreover, longitudinal studies are also valuable for understanding the lasting effects of feedback on academic achievement, emotional well-being, and motivation. Also, incorporating quantitative methods alongside qualitative insights could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of specific feedback strategies on student learning outcomes. Finally, investigating the relationship between teacher identity and feedback dynamics, including factors like gender, ethnicity, teaching style, and personal philosophy, could inform the development of professional identities that enhance feedback effectiveness and promote positive student interactions.

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Unrevealing the Professional Identity of Indonesian English Teachers in the Tapestry of Global Englishes: Opportunities or Obstacles?

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ABSTRACT

The rising prevalence of English as a global language has questioned numerous foundational beliefs underpinning English language teaching (ELT). Although there has been extensive research on identity construction among EFL teachers and students in recent years, little research addresses how Indonesian English teachers who are continuing their studies in various countries negotiate their professional identities within the intricate dynamics of Global Englishes (GEs) during their academic and professional experiences. This study examines the professional identity of four Indonesian English teachers within the Global Englishes (GEs) framework, exploring whether the proliferation of English as a global language presents an opportunity or an obstacle to their professional development. Through a narrative case study, semi-structured interviews were used to capture their experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding the role of GEs in their professional identity. Preliminary findings suggest a nuanced interplay between perceived opportunities and obstacles in adopting Global Englishes. The implications of this research extend to teacher education programs and professional development initiatives, aiming to empower Indonesian English teachers to embrace their evolving roles within the global English-speaking community.

Keywords: *Global Englishes, Identity, Professional Development, GELT*

Introduction

Currently, English is increasingly prevalent and widely discussed globally, spanning conversations among individuals of the same nationality and native language, as well as those of diverse nationalities and languages (Khanh, 2022). In the same vein, the widespread dissemination and diverse characteristics of the English language globally have resulted in various variations, as outlined by the GEs (Global Englishes) and WE (World Englishes) theories. In addition, the concepts of GEs, ELF (English as a Lingua Franca), EIL (English as

an International Language), WE (World Englishes), and other similar frameworks have garnered significant attention from researchers and academics. However, Rose and Galloway (2019) explain that GEs is an umbrella term encompassing WE, ELF, and EIL. In this paper, we will focus on GEs.

Rose & Galloway (2019) emphasized that GEs serve as an inclusive paradigm that observes linguistic, sociolinguistic, and sociocultural diversity and then examines how English is used fluently worldwide. In other words, GEs advocate a more adaptable view of language, foster linguistic creativity, recognize multilingualism as the norm, and liberate non-native speakers from native-speaker norms (Galloway, 2024). In that context, Yunhua, D., & Budiman, A. (2024) also emphasized that GEs present a promising strategy for addressing racial disparities in language education by highlighting effective practices for applying the GELT (Global Englishes Language Teaching) framework to combat these inequalities.

There is an intense debate regarding the influence of the English language by GEs, methods of integrating GEs into ELT (English Language Teaching), implementing GEs-based ELT in teacher professionalism development, and how GEs have become central in pedagogical research (Bernando, 2023). The GEs framework and linguistic landscape also urge English language teachers to reconsider current English language pedagogical models and objectives. This is crucial, especially as the number of non-native speakers exceeds that of native speakers (Widodo et al., 2020; Thien Bao & Lo, 2022). Thien Bao & Lo also argued that the traditional concept of teaching standard English pronunciation, whether American or British, along with the exclusive use of English in the classroom, is no longer regarded as predominant. Additionally, the presence of ELF has also raised significant concerns about the necessity of changing approaches in ELT (Montakantiwong, 2023). Therefore, teachers are expected to actively contribute to preparing students to be aware of the English language variations currently used among native and non-native speakers.

In this context, the development of GELT plays a significant role, especially in an increasingly interconnected global educational environment (Rose & Galloway, 2019). In other words, failure to integrate ELT into GEs may potentially negatively impact the learning process in various aspects. For instance, learners might be unprepared to communicate with diverse English language users or have narrow views regarding the types of English used outside the classroom, as highlighted in the research findings by Lu and Buripakdi (2022). It is essential to transform the ELT approach to address these negative impacts to meet English language learners' diverse needs and goals (Prabjandee & Fang, 2022). This should be taken into account when assessing the acceptability and consistency of GEs with the learners' context. At this point, it is also important to explore teachers' perceptions to gauge their likelihood of implementing it.

The discussion about GEs has created the emergence of a distinction between two identities of English teachers: native English-speaking teachers (NESTs) and non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) (Prabjandee, 2000). This distinction shows the privilege of NESTs as role models, as they are seen as representatives of Western cultures (Holliday, 2005). Such views have influenced language teacher education and have significant pedagogical implications regarding the legitimacy of being an English teacher (Matsuda, 2017). From the perspective of NNEST (non-native English-speaking teachers), understanding the changes in English, particularly in the scope of GEs, might be easily conceptualized but challenging to implement in the classroom. This issue forced the understanding of NNEST's perceptions, beliefs, and knowledge in their teaching context, as well as other factors that influence the educators' overall professional identity and experience (Montakantiwong, 2023). The increasing prevalence of

GEs has questioned many of the fundamental beliefs underlying ELT. Several studies have shown teachers' positive and negative attitudes toward GEs and their recognition of the complexities associated with their implementation in practice (Montakantiwong, 2023; Monfared, 2020; Prabjandee & Fang, 2022).

Another important point that justifies this view is that the introduction of the GELT concept in the classroom faces significant challenges due to the deeply rooted belief in native-speakerism, which holds that the only standard for English language pedagogy and assessment, especially within the Expanding Circle Context in which English as a foreign language (Kachru, 1990). The ideology of native-speakerism has shaped NNESTs' perceptions of NESTs as possessing power and authority in the field of ELT. This perspective places EFL teachers worldwide, particularly in Indonesia, in a dilemma as they are expected to provide diverse viewpoints regarding integrating GEs into their teaching.

Professional identity refers to an individual's perception of how they interpret their role and practices within a profession (Beijaard et al., 2004). In Indonesia, junior high school EFL teachers possess diverse identities and continue to navigate between the native and non-native English speaker paradigms. The influence of teacher identity on their teaching practices varies, and some teachers have not fully implemented the Global Englishes concept in their teaching (Ubaidilillah et al., 2023). Although extensive research on identity construction among learners, lecturers, and EFL teachers has been conducted recently, little research addresses how Indonesian English teachers negotiate their professional identities within the intricate dynamics of GEs. This study examined the professional identity of Indonesian English teachers within the framework of GEs and explored whether the proliferation of GEs presents an opportunity or an obstacle to their professional development.

Literature Review

Global Englishes for Language Teaching

The widespread use of English has led to a proliferation of its variations. In this context, Global Englishes refers to the diverse forms of English worldwide. The GEs perspective acknowledges the existence of multiple dialects or forms of English, which, despite their differences, are still mutually intelligible. These variations are often adapted to particular groups' needs and uses (Toker, 2012). GEs serve as an inclusive approach, recognizing linguistic, sociolinguistic, and sociocultural diversity and examining how English is used extensively globally.

Kachru (1990) categorizes countries into three groups: the Inner Circle (IC), the Outer Circle (OC), and the Expanding Circle (EC). The IC countries refer to those where English is the first language (Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States, etc.). The OC countries are positioning English as a second language (India, Malaysia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Singapore, etc.). Meanwhile, the EC countries refer to countries where English is a foreign language (China, Korea, Indonesia, etc.). This concept helps in understanding the role of English in various global contexts.

The development of GEs has led to the emergence of several research areas in applied linguistics, including EIL, ELF, and WE. Rose and Galloway (2019) integrate this research by exploring how the global influence of English impacts TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). The emergence of GELT is an innovative attempt to consolidate discussions on the pedagogical implications of the global spread of English into a single text

for researchers and other practitioners (Galloway, 2017). To understand the impact of GELT, it is necessary to compare it with the traditional ELT.

Table 1

The difference between GELT and traditional ELT (Rose & Galloway, 2019)

Aspect	Traditional ELT	GELT
Target interlocutor	NES	All English users
Owners	Inner Circle	Global
Target culture	Static native English culture	Fluid cultures
Norm	Standard English	Diverse, flexible, and multiple forms
Teachers	Non-native English-speaking teachers (same first language) and native English-speaking teachers	Qualified, competent teachers (same and different first languages)
Role model	NES	Expert users
Sources of materials	NNES and NES	Salient English-speaking communities
Other languages and cultures	Seen as a hindrance and source of interference	Seen as a resource as with other languages in their linguistic repertoire
Needs	Inner Circle defined	Globally defined
Assessment criterion	Accuracy according to prescriptive standard	Communicative competence
Goals of learning	Native-like proficiency	Multicompetent user
Ideology	Underpinned by an exclusive and ethnocentric view of English	Underpinned by inclusive GEs perspectives
Orientation	Monolingual	Multilingual/translingual

The spread of GEs shows various significant challenges for the ELT context. In other words, practitioners, for example, English teachers, must prepare different approaches to equip students to face the sociolinguistic realities of English language users outside the classroom (Kumaravadivelu, 2006) if they want to commit and implement GELT in the classroom. In this respect, the traditional approach, which used native speakers as the benchmark for learning English, is now inadequate as it fails to prepare students for real-life communication (Fang & Widodo, 2019), particularly in the EFL context. Therefore, educators need to reconsider the content of the English language curriculum that should be taught, reconceptualize the goals of ELT, and redesign their teaching methods to prepare students more effectively and meaningfully.

Rose and Galloway (2019) have attempted to develop or expand their initial GELTS ideology. They advocate for a paradigm shift in ELT and offer more practical proposals for GELT. Within the GELT framework, they put forward six 'calls to action' to move towards teaching English as a pluricentric language:

- (1) Enhancing integration between WE and ELF in the English language curriculum;
- (2) Increasing emphasis on multilingualism in ELT;
- (3) Raising awareness of GEs in ELT;
- (4) Enhancing understanding of ELF strategies in the English language curriculum;
- (5) Strengthening cultural diversity and identity in ELT;

(6) Transforming the practices of recruiting English language teachers in the ELT industry. (Rose & Galloway, 2019)

However, these 'calls to action' have not been widely utilized in practice, particularly in many EC contexts in Asia (such as China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Saudi Arabia) due to the entrenched belief in the native speaker ideology as the sole norm in English language pedagogy and assessment (Holliday, 2006). This aligns with the research conducted by Lu and Buripakdi (2022) regarding the perceptions of eighty-two students enrolled in the elective course 'Introducing Global Englishes' at a university in China. The study found that students still perceive native speakers in IC countries as better instructors than non-native speakers in EC countries, and the native speaker culture is regarded as the standard or ideal. Nevertheless, they still demonstrate an interest in openly learning the diversity of English with diverse materials and about intercommunication processes among non-native speakers. Lu and Buripakdi (2022) also emphasize that English has proven to be easily exportable, flexible, and adaptable, leading to several non-British and non-American English variations worthy of inclusion in standard curricula. For instance, English on the Indian subcontinent, spoken by over a billion people, surpasses more than half the populations of both Britain and the United States combined.

However, GELT is not a method that can be applied for all teaching purposes and situations; rather, it is a pedagogical approach that requires educators to consider how the strategy should be implemented in each specific context (Galloway, 2017). Galloway (2017) also stated that the GELT framework places learners' needs in a global environment inhabited by diverse English language users with varied cultural norms, considering that English is widely used and important to acknowledge its global dimensions. Moreover, English language teaching models should focus on developing multicompetent users rather than attempting to produce English users who mimic native speakers. In fact, the sociolinguistic reality of English language users emphasizes the need to integrate materials reflecting various cultures rather than solely focusing on native-speaker norms (Rose & Galloway, 2019). Furthermore, educators need to understand that students' first language should be considered a resource rather than a barrier. Similarly, assessment criteria should measure communication abilities with multilingual English users, not just compliance with 'English language standards' (Prabjandee & Fang, 2022). With the presence of GELT, stakeholders and other educational institutions should be encouraged to prioritize the recruitment of qualified instructors rather than solely relying on native-speaker instructors (Fang & Ren, 2018).

In Indonesia, many cases have shown that teachers and pre-service teachers are aware of GEs; however, they still face several challenges in implementing this. For instance, Rahmawaty et al. (2024) revealed that eight Indonesian English teachers are aware of the need to prepare students for the GEs era; however, promoting intercultural competence among English teachers is needed to support teachers' quality in implementing GEs in their classrooms. In addition, Zacharias (2016) found that most pre-service teachers in Indonesia agree with the importance of GEs; however, some still refer to traditional ELT. Some of them still believe Standard English is the most important due to its marketability potential. In the same vein, Suroso (2022) reported that English lecturers in Indonesia hold diverse perspectives on World Englishes in English language teaching. While they understand the importance of communication, there is debate regarding using English variations in the classroom. Many lecturers still adhere to standard English norms and native speaker models despite recognizing the importance of English variations in the current globalized world. This means that they are still navigating the balance between embracing GEs and adhering to conventional standards of English teaching. As a result, ongoing professional development and support are crucial to fully integrating GEs into the Indonesian education system.

Professional Identity and Development

Professional identity is constantly evolving across time and space, influenced by the interplay between individuals and their social environments (Beijaard & Meijer, 2017), and is strongly linked to their beliefs in the field of education (Beijaard et al., 2004; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). The development of teacher professionalism involves teacher learning, understanding how they know, and then applying that knowledge in practice to support student growth (Prabjandee and Fang, 2022). According to Prabjandee and Fang (2022), exploration in teacher learning relates to analyzing teacher changes through various models. Initially, changes in teachers' knowledge and beliefs are expected to occur, followed by changes in classroom teaching practices and changes in student learning outcomes. However, this complex process requires teachers' cognitive and emotional engagement to reflect on their beliefs. Teachers' professional identity is a dynamic variable inherently interconnected within relationships and highly sensitive to context (Beijaard et al., 2004). Therefore, a profound understanding of teachers' professional identity is crucial in enhancing teaching quality.

Additionally, according to Avalos (2011), the core of teacher professional development is "the understanding that professional development is about teachers learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth" (p. 10). She further argues that teacher learning is a complex process involving cognitive and emotional engagement, which enables teachers to critically review or reflect on their existing beliefs and enact alternatives for change (Avalos, 2011). This highlights the importance of creating opportunities for teachers to reflect on their teaching practices and continually adapt to meet the evolving needs of students.

Prabjandee & Fang (2022) examined the effects of professional development on fourteen teachers in Thailand, focusing on their knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to GELT. These fourteen teachers valued this professional development by giving positive feedback, especially in terms of their instructional competencies. Similarly, Montakantiwong (2023) explored the perceptions of seven lecturers about GELT in the context of Thailand. They were still skeptical about the implementation of GELT in the local contexts, which indicated a gap between theoretical advancements and practical implementation due to low confidence in GELT pedagogy.

Apart from this, ten Indonesian English teachers face multiple identities within the Global Englishes context, influenced by their awareness of various English varieties and their beliefs about ELT (Ubaidillah, 2023). Despite recognizing the existence of GEs, they still strongly adhere to the "native speaker fallacy," often favoring inner-circle varieties of English and viewing native speakers as superior language users and educators. Silalahi (2021) further highlighted the complex relationship between native speakers and World Englishes in Indonesian English teaching. Although the emergence of new language varieties is acknowledged, the dominance of traditional models remains largely influenced by the societal stigma surrounding native speakers. Teachers recognize the need for a more globally oriented approach, highlighting the importance of communication and cultural awareness. However, the persistence of native-speakerism challenges progress towards a more inclusive and diverse English language teaching paradigm.

Previous studies reveal both positive and negative attitudes toward GELT. Teachers acknowledge GEs' benefits for cultural awareness, real-world relevance, and linguistic diversity but face challenges due to native-speakerism, limited resources, and implementation complexities. Indonesian English teachers recognize GEs but struggle with integration due to societal norms and institutional pressures favouring traditional ELT models. However, previous

studies are lacking on how Indonesian English teachers navigate their professional identities within the context of GEs. Understanding this is crucial for applying GEs effectively in classrooms, as it sheds light on whether teachers view GEs as opportunities or obstacles. This research can identify how they develop their identities in response to GEs based on their professional experiences, highlighting the need for professional development programs that address these challenges and equip teachers with the skills to implement GEs effectively.

Research Questions

This study examined the professional identity of Indonesian English teachers within the framework of GEs. It explored whether the proliferation of GEs presents an opportunity or an obstacle to their professional development. To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the perceived opportunities and obstacles presented by the proliferation of GEs in the professional development of Indonesian English teachers?
2. How do they shape their identity to become legitimate English teachers?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The population of this study consists of Indonesian English teachers. The main characteristics of this population are as follows:

1. English teachers who have teaching experience in various educational contexts, both formal and non-formal.
2. English teachers who are currently pursuing master's studies in English education or applied linguistics. This is related to their professional development.

Based on these criteria, the research population includes English teachers with a strong academic background and significant practical experience in teaching in various contexts.

Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who met the necessary characteristics for this study (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). We recruited four Indonesian English teachers who are continuing their studies to master's degrees in three different countries: Indonesia, South Korea, and Australia. All participants had teaching experience that went beyond the required teaching practice during their undergraduate studies. They were still actively teaching when the research was conducted. These selected countries aimed to obtain diverse perspectives in the context of Global Englishes (GEs). The selection of English teachers continuing their studies to master's degree was intentional, as they are expected to have a deep interest in the field and ideally embody the qualities of lifelong learners as they shape their professional identities as English teachers. Additionally, the South Korean and Australian countries selected were aimed at gaining diverse perspectives. The participants in this study were carefully chosen to encompass a wide range of experiences and viewpoints relevant to the research objectives. To ensure confidentiality for all parties involved, the identities of the participants, including their personal information and their institutions or schools, were anonymized. The researcher used the terms 'Teachers 1, 2, 3, 4' or 'T1, T2, T3, T4' to explain and describe the participants.

Table 2**The participants' demographic data**

Name	Gender	Direct Interaction with NESTs	Teaching Experience	Going Abroad	University Country Undergrad level	University Country Graduate level
Teacher 1	Male	Yes	7 years	Yes	Indonesia	Indonesia
Teacher 2	Male	Yes	4 years	No	Indonesia	Indonesia
Teacher 3	Female	Yes	4 years	Yes	Indonesia	Australia
Teacher 4	Male	Yes	2 years	Yes	Indonesia	South Korea

Design of the Study

This study was conducted as a qualitative study which using a narrative case study approach. Semi-structured interviews were chosen to capture the participants' experiences, challenges, and perceptions regarding the role of GEs in their professional identity. This narrative case study was used to explore the lived experiences of NNESTs in the evolving GEs landscape (Widodo et al., 2020). The selection of semi-structured interviews was based on guidelines that provided direction while allowing participants to express their experiences and perspectives freely (Richards, 2003). Here are the following questions:

Please describe to what extent you are familiar with the term GEs and tell us your experience with GEs.

- 1) As an English teacher, what is your opinion about the development of GEs in the ELT context, especially in your country?
- 2) Please share your experience collaborating with NESTs and NNESTs in the workplace or university.
- 3) What specific opportunities do you perceive as a result of the increasing presence of GEs in the English teaching profession?
- 4) What obstacles have you encountered in your professional development due to the proliferation of Global Englishes?
- 5) How has exposure to GEs affected your view of your identity as an English teacher?
- 6) Can you discuss any particular experiences where the diversity of GEs has shaped your beliefs as an English teacher?
- 7) What strategies have you employed to navigate the challenges presented by Global Englishes in your professional development?

Data collection & analysis

This study started with an information search regarding previous studies about GEs, identity, and professional development, particularly in Indonesia. The researcher gave participants a consent form before they engaged in the research. This is essential in research because it helps ensure that research is carried out with due regard to the principles of ethics, fairness, and the protection of participants. Using concern form, research can be carried out in a manner that complies with applicable research ethical standards.

Furthermore, the data was collected through semi-structured interviews with three participants, which were conducted online via Zoom, and one participant was interviewed in person at the participant's university. The duration of the interview was approximately 40 minutes to an hour.

During the interview, participants were asked about their knowledge of Global Englishes and were shown the provided examples of GE-oriented ELT materials developed by Widodo et al. (2022) to ensure participants clearly understood the direction of the research and the specific GEs concepts to be discussed. They were prompted to recount their experiences related to GEs during their studies, including their knowledge about GEs, their decision to pursue a master's degree, their active involvement in professional development, their perspectives between NESTs and NNESTs, and the attributes of effective English teachers.

Follow-up interviews were conducted to investigate any unequal treatment experienced by participants in their workplaces or universities, particularly in interactions involving different cultural backgrounds. After the study, participants were asked to articulate their principles or values to be recognized as legitimate and professional English teachers. Initially, the interviews were conducted in Indonesian. However, some participants responded bilingually (in English and Indonesian). All collected data were transcribed, with Indonesian data translated into English as necessary.

The data analysis process was conducted using thematic analysis, which involves repeated data reading, coding, categorizing data extracts, and organizing them under thematic headings (Bakhuizen et al., 2013). This method is useful for identifying points of similarity and difference across narratives, ensuring that researchers consider all data with the same analytical lens (Bakhuizen et al., 2013). Interview transcriptions were carried out to convert spoken recordings into written form (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), which were then adapted to meet the research needs (Lapadat, 2000). The interpretation used the three-dimensional narrative framework that Connelly & Clandinin (1999) exemplified, reflecting Norton's (1997) conceptualization of identity.

- (1) The personal and social dimensions (inward and outward) refer to the participant's personal and relational experiences, aiming to examine social interactions as participants engage with one another.
- (2) The past, present, and future dimensions pertain to the temporal experiences involving memory, current experiences, and future imagination. This dimension is particularly relevant for prospective English language teachers as they navigate through these dimensions to reflect on their self-legitimacy as future educators in the context of the development of GEs.
- (3) The dimension of place or sequence of places refers to the physical locations or settings in which participants live out their stories or experiences.

Results/Findings

Between Me and Global Englishes

The four English teachers gained an understanding of the GEs concept during their undergraduate and postgraduate studies through both implicit and explicit instruction. Implicit instruction refers to the absence of dedicated GEs courses. Still, the lecturers introduced diverse varieties of English on several occasions, not solely relying on the American English standard and native speaker norms. In contrast, explicit instruction involves specific courses dedicated to GEs, such as World Englishes Pronunciation, Intercultural Communication, and Teaching Modern English. All four teachers are familiar with the terms English as an International Language (EIL), English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), Global Englishes (GEs), and World Englishes (WE).

They have been implementing the GEs concept in their learning and working environments. T1, for example, participated in a nine-month teaching internship at an English language course in Turkey in 2017. His fellow teachers were from Turkey, Iran, the Philippines, Africa, India, and Pakistan. No NESTs were present; only colleagues from the Philippines, Pakistan, and India were English as a Second Language (ESL) speakers. Although T2 has never been abroad, he actively engages with the international English language community, interacting with other NESTs and NNESTs from various countries, such as Thailand, the US, and the UK. T3 also actively interacts with NESTs while working at a private school in Indonesia and with Chinese students and lecturers while studying in Australia.

Interestingly, her lecturers and classmates were predominantly NNS (non-Native Speakers). T4 shared a similar experience to T3, as his classmates come from diverse backgrounds, including Thailand, Mongolia, and Korea. All four teachers acknowledged that these experiences have made them aware of the GEs concept. Each colleague exhibited different accents, dialects, and even English slang, all of which were easily understood by the teachers. The diversity of their interactions has demonstrated the reality of GEs, where various varieties and forms exist and are utilized effectively for communication.

Four teachers demonstrated an open attitude towards developing GEs, although one teacher, T2, needed some time to grasp these developments. In Indonesia, which is rich in cultural and linguistic diversity, T4 and T1 view this diversity as an advantage in teaching English. They believed that speaking English confidently while respecting linguistic diversity is a good approach. T4 added that a clear policy on implementing GEs is necessary so that English teachers in Indonesia have proper guidelines.

T1 emphasized the importance of understanding that English no longer belongs to just one country but has become a global language.

Excerpt 1:

"We can never truly reach the same level as native speakers; we can only be like-native. The fact is, we coexist with different communities. If we only lean towards one type of English, we will tend to see other types as incorrect. Meanwhile, the status of English itself is no longer owned by one country but has gone global." (T1)

T4 also stressed the importance of introducing cultures from various countries in English teaching.

Excerpt 2:

"It's not just about teaching Western culture but also cultures from other countries so we can be more open-minded. We can adapt. For example, someday, maybe we will go abroad to study or work and already have background knowledge about the countries' cultures so that we won't be shocked." (T4)

T3 has already applied the concept of GEs in her classes.

Excerpt 3:

"I have indeed implemented the concept of GEs in my class. However, only in certain materials depending on the learning objectives. But I still teach standardized English because the school has TOEFL subjects." (T3)

However, T1's understanding of the development of GEs only emerged during his master's studies in 2023. Before this, he focused on acquiring English in a manner aligned with native-

speaker norms. Now, he embraces the concept of GEs, recognizing that it encompasses more than just standardized English.

Excerpt 4:

"It helps students face real-world contexts. If this concept is not taught, they will be shocked because the teaching doesn't align with real-world contexts. However, teachers need to accommodate this by providing various materials related to the concept of GEs." (T1)

Overall, the participants showed that recognizing and implementing the concept of GEs in English teaching in Indonesia is crucial. They see value in preparing students to interact in diverse global contexts while appreciating and utilizing local culture's richness.

The four teachers unanimously agreed on a combined approach to teaching, incorporating both GEs and traditional ELT rather than choosing one over the other. However, one participant expressed a degree of pessimism regarding its implementation. T1 and T4 shared a similar perspective; traditional ELT should be taught first as a foundation before introducing GEs. As T4 stated:

Excerpt 5:

"We need to teach them 'where the language originally comes from?' so they have a basis. If don't, students might think, 'Did English come from Singapore? Indonesia' That's weird. That's why the basics are important." (T4)

T3 suggested a combined approach based on learning objectives. She explained that traditional ELT could be taught for subjects like TOEFL, while the GEs concept could be introduced in general English courses. On the other hand, T2 supported the teaching of GEs but expressed pessimism about its implementation in Indonesia. He stated:

Excerpt 6:

"I agree with GEs, but that doesn't mean I have to commit to teaching the GEs concept. We're not ready for that yet; it's too complex. We must choose what fits the Indonesian context, which still takes time. So, in my opinion, still use standardized English, at least for now." (T2)

T1 acknowledged the lack of relevant teaching materials and the challenges associated with implementing GEs in Indonesia, leading him to favour standardized English as a temporary solution.

Do I Deserve Enough to be an English Teacher?

Three teachers interviewed stated that they experienced marginalization when working with their international colleagues, especially NESTs. T1 felt marginalized when his NEST colleagues could choose which grade level they wished to teach. T1 stated:

Excerpt 7:

"My NEST colleague didn't want to teach kids students because he didn't want to engage in dance activities. I felt envious that I wasn't given the same option. I could have used that excuse too, but I still carried out my duties." (T1)

Furthermore, T1 and T3 felt excluded when programs or events outside of school involved their NEST colleagues because they were not required to attend. T1 shared that the NEST was used to visit other schools for promotional purposes at his previous workplace. At the workplace, T3

pointed out that the stakeholders still believed that NESTs could have a greater impact than local English teachers in Indonesia. T3 recalled:

Excerpt 8:

At my school, GEs are still not fully accepted. Students often ask, 'Miss, how do you pronounce the word 'water' in British and American accents?' This poses a challenge for us as NNESTs, as the favouritism towards NESTs is still very strong." (T3)

T4 has experienced marginalization differently in the context of English teacher recruitment. Currently, he is applying for jobs in Korea and several other countries outside Indonesia. He has frequently encountered a requirement that applicants must be 'native speakers.' T4 shared his feelings on this matter:

Excerpt 9:

"It's so sad. My qualifications can be just as good as theirs, but maybe because of the stigma since it's their language. I know their English is more sophisticated than mine, but I think it is still unfair." (T4)

Implementing GEs in an educational context presents a complex landscape, where the positive outlook of the four teachers often clashes with parental preferences that still prioritize native-speakerism. While the teachers demonstrate an openness towards GEs, challenges arise in confronting parental perceptions and expectations, as well as school policies that tend towards favouritism towards NESTs. Nonetheless, awareness of this influence provides valuable insight into the teachers' efforts to broaden perspectives on the English language.

Four teachers emphasized that salary should be based on qualifications, not nationality. This is because NESTs often receive higher wages compared to NNESTs. T3 shared that her colleague from Thailand had experienced the same situation. However, T4 highlighted an interesting dilemma he faced. He stated:

Excerpt 10:

"It's conflicting. In Korea, if I get accepted as a teacher here even though I'm not a NEST, my wages would be higher than that of Korean English teachers even if we have the same qualifications because I am considered an expat/international teacher." (T4)

I am the Legitimate English Teacher

In this case study, the four teachers presented diverse responses regarding the role of GEs in their professional development as educators. T3 viewed it positively, considering GEs as an opportunity to teach English according to the individual characteristics of each student, without discrimination based on their country of origin. On the other hand, T2 perceived it as an obstacle. He was concerned about the availability of relevant teaching materials in the Indonesian context, even though he secretly supported the development of GEs.

T1 and T4 offered answers beyond the scope of the interview questions. T4 tended to be neutral when asked about the development of GEs. On the one hand, he shared concerns similar to those of T2, where the teaching materials related to GEs still needed to be increased. On the other hand, he has been exposed to internationalism as he was joining a teaching internship in Australia and is currently continuing his studies in Korea. As a result, he can implement the GEs concept in any context, particularly in Indonesia and Korea. In contrast, T1 saw GEs as a unique characteristic that broadened his understanding of the use of English around the world, which he saw as a part of his identity as an English teacher. To sum up, the four Indonesian English teachers' views on the role of GEs in their professional development range from

positive to skeptical, with them perceiving it as an opportunity, an obstacle, a neutral phenomenon, and a unique characteristic.

In shaping their identities as legitimate English teachers in the landscape of GEs, the four Indonesian English teachers have various values and approaches that strengthened their professionalism and relevance as English teachers. T1 believed that cultural awareness and diversity are two important principles to teach his students. He emphasized that a teacher must always be critical, open-minded, and sensitive to cultural differences to be relevant when the world keeps changing. Meanwhile, T2 and T4 stressed the importance of adjusting their teaching materials to the students' needs. T2 believed that the more diverse the teaching methods used, the better the student's needs can be accommodated. He always tries to connect English learning to the real world that is relevant to students. T4 added that educators must have a growth mindset to learn and update their knowledge to provide accurate and relevant information. On the other hand, T3 highlighted the importance of student involvement in the learning process. She believed that teaching is dictating or delivering material and actively involving students to make learning more meaningful and sustainable. In addition, the inspiring quote that guided T3, "*Tell me, and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn,*" reflects her participatory and interactive approach to teaching.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the professional identity of Indonesian English teachers within the framework of GEs and explore whether the proliferation of GEs presents an opportunity or an obstacle to their professional development.

Perceived Obstacles and Opportunities

RQ 1: What are the perceived opportunities and obstacles presented by the proliferation of GEs in the professional development of Indonesian English teachers?

Research Question 1 (RQ 1) investigated the perceived opportunities and obstacles arising from the proliferation of GEs in the professional development of Indonesian English teachers. Teachers acknowledge several opportunities presented by GEs, including increased cultural awareness and cultural diversity, as they viewed GEs as an opportunity to broaden their perspectives on English, become more culturally sensitive teachers, and embrace diversity in the use of language. This is in line with Rahmawaty et al. (2024) that increasing intercultural competence among teachers is important to improve their effectiveness before implementing GEs in their classroom contexts. Additionally, GEs also offer authenticity as they show real-world relevance, connecting English learning to students' everyday contexts and making it more engaging. Furthermore, accepting GEs can increase teachers' confidence in their English abilities and allow them to embrace their linguistic identities without imitating NEST. Teachers also recognize the opportunity to develop new skills and approaches by engaging with GEs and exploring innovative teaching methods and materials that accommodate diverse language use and cultural contexts. These points are in accordance with what Prabjandee & Fang (2022) stated: teachers need to transform their teaching approaches so that they meet the needs of diverse learners. If teachers do not have this perspective, this has the potential to fail in implementing GEs in the classroom (Lu & Buripakdi, 2022).

However, the proliferation of GEs also brings forth various obstacles. Teachers face challenges from societal norms and institutional pressures prioritizing NESTs and standardized English, potentially leading to a sense of marginalization and undervaluation of other English varieties.

In this regard, Silalahi (2021) found that even though the emergence of GEs has been recognized, societal stigma in Indonesia is still influenced by traditional ELT and is oriented towards NES (native English speakers). Concerns arise regarding limited resources and support for teaching GEs in the Indonesian context, including a lack of relevant materials and professional development opportunities. The complex implementation of GEs further complicates matters, as teachers acknowledge the need for a deeper understanding of its nuances and significant adaptations to teaching practices, which may require considerable time and effort. Moreover, some teachers perceive a lack of readiness within Indonesian educational settings to fully embrace GEs, possibly due to a deficit in awareness and support mechanisms. In a different context, Montakantiwong (2023) also found that university lecturers experienced difficulties in integrating GELT into teaching practice. They worry that GE teaching is not relevant to their local context, especially in classrooms at Thai universities. They also feel inferior in their knowledge of GELT pedagogy.

Teacher Identity

RQ 2: How do they shape their identity to become legitimate English teachers?

Research Question 2 (RQ 2) examines how the four teachers shaped their identity to become legitimate English teachers amidst the globalizing English language landscape. They employ diverse strategies to define their identity and efficacy as educators. T1 emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness and diversity, recognizing the diverse origins of English as crucial to his identity as an effective teacher. According to GELT ideology, especially in terms of norms (Rose & Galloway, 2019), T1 agrees with GELT because T1 believes that diversity and flexibility are important for teaching GEs in a classroom context. T1 and T4 prioritize a student-centered approach, adapting their teaching to meet student needs and embracing various methods. They see value in connecting English learning to real-world contexts and continually updating their knowledge to remain relevant. Rose & Galloway (2019) stated that English teachers have the potential to have relevant qualifications and become competent teachers in teaching or introducing GEs in their context. T3 highlights the importance of active student engagement, promoting an interactive learning environment to create a more meaningful learning experience. She believes that teachers should be facilitators rather than simply delivering information. All four teachers recognize the evolving nature of English and are open to adapting their teaching practices to reflect the realities of Global Englishes. T3 shows a willingness to learn and improve knowledge in practice for the benefit of student growth (Avalos, 2011), which means T3 succeeded in developing T3's professionalism even though this was a complex process. Their approaches highlight the need for continued discussions, resources, and support for Indonesian English teachers to fully embrace the concept of Global Englishes.

Overall, the participants demonstrated their identity as legitimate English teachers by shaping their commitment to embrace cultural diversity, belief in student-centered approaches that affect student engagement in the learning process, and commitment to continuous professional development. These values are held firmly to ensure that they deliver English and prepare students to face a dynamic and diverse global world that keeps changing.

Conclusion

This study aims to explore the professional identities of four English teachers in Indonesia in the face of the increasing influence of GEs. The study reveals that although these teachers acknowledge the existence and importance of GEs, they also grapple with challenges stemming from the persistence of native-speakerism and its impact on their professional development.

The findings highlight a nuanced interplay between the perceived opportunities and obstacles in embracing GEs. The teachers realize the potential of GEs to increase cultural awareness, connect learning to real-world contexts, boost their confidence, and expand their teaching skills. However, they also face obstacles related to societal norms, limited resources, and the complex implementation of GEs in their teaching practices. The research identified a strong commitment to cultural awareness, student-centered approaches, active student engagement, and continuous learning as core values shaping the teachers' identities as legitimate English educators.

The findings of this study have significant implications for teacher education programs and professional development initiatives. In other words, this study emphasizes the need for more targeted professional development programs that acknowledge the complexities of GEs and provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and support to implement these concepts effectively. It also seeks to enable Indonesian English teachers to adapt to their changing roles in the global English-speaking community. While the qualitative approach offers rich insights, the findings may not be generalizable to Indonesia's broader population of EFL teachers.

For further research, it is suggested that the scope of participants be expanded as this study was conducted with a small sample size of four Indonesian English teachers. For instance, English teachers at different levels of education (elementary, high school, university) or teachers from diverse geographical locations within Indonesia. In addition, exploring the impact of GEs on classroom practices would be an interesting topic in the future. For example, observing lessons to see how teachers integrate GEs into teaching materials and activities after they learn and understand the concept of GEs.

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Biodata

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Students' Attitudes towards Teaching and Learning Semantics through Pop Culture

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: Semantics training, pop culture, students' attitudes, Van Lang University

Meaning is undeniably the core of human communication, with semantics, the study of meaning, playing a crucial role in linguistics programs. Traditional teaching methods in semantics are often considered dry and reliant on memorization, potentially hindering student motivation. While some research suggests that authentic materials can improve language learning, there needs to be more research on their impact in Vietnamese university contexts. This study explores Van Lang University English majors' perceptions of integrating pop culture materials into Semantics courses, offering insights for educators to make Semantics more engaging and effective. The study was designed quantitatively with a survey questionnaire administered to 113 English-majored seniors. Results show that students had positive attitudes toward using pop culture in Semantics training, finding it made the course more comprehensible and engaging. However, opinions on the challenges of this approach were unclear. The study provides implications for students, teachers, and future research.

Introduction

As humans, it is the meaning that we live for. Understanding meaning is key to a deeper understanding of our communication and cognition. From there, we become effective communicators, avoid misunderstandings, enhance social interactions, and probably achieve professional success. Learning linguistic semantics is even more crucial for English majors, as it enables them to uncover the meaning behind words, sentences, and utterances once they have grasped concepts such as sense relations and pragmatics. Students can express themselves with greater precision and clarity, and their other skills, including vocabulary, reading comprehension, writing, and speaking, are likely to improve (Alsayed, 2020). Semantics, therefore, is compulsory for juniors and seniors in any linguistic training program, including those of the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Van Lang University.

However, this subject is considered dry and hard by many since it features a lot of abstract concepts and extensive reliance on tasks that require students to memorize and recall learned phenomena (Nguyen et al., 2015). Also, as Cudney and Ezzell (2017) suggested, instructional

approaches could impact students' motivation. The translanguaging method, though widely employed both generally in EFL classrooms (Nguyen et al., 2022) and in linguistic classes in Vietnam (Cao & Nguyen, 2018), should be accompanied by more comprehensive inputs to boost students' motivation. Therefore, authentic materials such as literary and journalistic texts, songs, and movies may come as a solution. Despite being proven to be effective for language learners (Csomay & Petrović, 2012; Gilmore, 2004; Tegge, 2017), authentic materials, especially those taken from pop culture, and their effectiveness in promoting students' understanding and motivation in learning linguistic courses such as Semantics are little studied in both international and Vietnamese contexts. Therefore, this study aims to bridge the gap in the body of existing research.

Literature review

Linguistic Semantics training and its challenges

Semantics

Though the term "Semantics" can be defined differently across different disciplines (Partee, 1999), Semantics in linguistics has been consistently defined by different scholars. According to Kreidler (1998, p.3), "Semantics is the systematic study of meaning, and linguistic Semantics is the study of how languages organize and express meanings." Hurford et al. (2007), Partee (1999), and Yule (2013) concurred that Semantics is the study of meaning in language. They claimed learning Semantics aids language users and linguistics researchers in getting the meaning of language, which traditionally seems vague and intangible.

Semantics training in the Vietnamese context

Comparing semantics training across several universities in Ho Chi Minh City, including Van Lang University, HCMC University of Technology and Education, Foreign Trade University, HCMC University of Law, and HCMC University of Foreign Languages - Information Technology, it is evident that while syllabi and coursebooks may vary, the core content remains similar. Commonly used coursebooks include those by Hurford et al. (2007), To (2007), and Kreidler (1998). These courses typically cover how meaning is encoded in words, sentences, and utterances. Students are introduced to lexical semantics, including the semantic features of lexical items, their denotative, connotative, literal, and figurative meanings, as well as sense relations such as synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, homonymy, and polysemy. Sentence semantics covers participant roles, ambiguity, sentence types, and presupposition, followed by areas of pragmatics like implicatures and speech acts (Lyons, 1995; Saeed, 2016).

Challenges in Semantics training

Tondl (1981) detailed the difficulties in teaching and learning semantics, emphasizing that concepts such as meaning, reference, and truth conditions are particularly challenging for students, especially early in their linguistic studies. At Van Lang University, students study other linguistic areas, such as phonetics, phonology, syntax, and morphology, before tackling semantics. This sequential learning can support their understanding of semantics (Hussein & Elttayef, 2018). However, each branch of linguistics deals with distinctive areas, and students may encounter difficulties, including confusion between concepts like "predicate" in semantics versus syntax (Hoang, 2021).

For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, mastering a theoretical subject like semantics requires strong language skills. Despite using grammatical structures correctly, many EFL learners struggle with appropriate word choice, collocations, and idioms (Tilavova, 2023).

In Vietnam, Ly (2022) found that a lack of lexical resources and semantic knowledge are significant challenges for English-majoring students in learning translation. Pham and Truong (2019) highlighted pragmatic errors as common weaknesses among linguistic students. Consequently, EFL learners face additional challenges in specialized areas like semantics due to existing semantic and pragmatic mistakes.

Tondl (1981) argued that semantic concepts are language-specific and not universally applicable. Watzinger-Tharp et al. (2018) emphasized that each language has a unique semantic system, reflecting significant differences across languages. Vietnamese, an isolated language, differs greatly from English, a fusional language. Therefore, Vietnamese learners cannot directly apply their native language knowledge to understand English semantics, often leading to misunderstandings and paradoxes (Tondl, 1981). Studies by Wierzbicka (1996) and Goddard (2002) also highlight the cultural specificity of semantic concepts, underscoring the challenge of teaching semantics in a cross-linguistic context.

As Kreidler (1998) noted, studying linguistics requires extensive engagement with data—words, phrases, sentences, and discourse. Thus, the materials used in semantics training are crucial. Watzinger-Tharp et al. (2018) suggested that enhanced inputs, alongside explicit explanations, can facilitate semantic instruction. In Vietnam, where translanguaging methods are common (Nguyen et al., 2022), well-chosen and intentionally developed materials could improve the quality of semantics training. Recent studies by Nguyen and Hamid (2020) further emphasize the need for contextually relevant and engaging materials to enhance learning outcomes in linguistics courses.

Despite an extensive literature on general semantics and semantic errors in language use, specialized studies on the challenges facing EFL learners in studying semantics, especially in the Vietnamese context, are scarce. Recent research by Pham (2021) highlights the necessity of developing tailored pedagogical strategies that address the specific needs of Vietnamese EFL learners, suggesting that a more localized approach to semantics training could yield better educational outcomes.

Pop culture as authentic material in semantic training

Scholars in cultural studies and sociology have extensively discussed pop culture. According to Storey (2021), pop culture is not a fixed category but rather a dynamic and contested site where different social groups, ideologies, and values clash and negotiate meaning. Storey (2021) also highlights how power structures and hierarchies influence these struggles, shaping what becomes popular and how different audiences engage with it. Synthesizing the discussions of various scholars, including Dyer (2023), Fiske (1989, as cited in Curran and Sparks, 1991), McRobbie (1994), Miller (2012), and Storey (2021), pop culture encompasses prevalent and broadly popular ideas, expressions, and practices of a particular society at a given time. It includes various aspects of daily life, such as art and entertainment, trends, social values and norms, consumerism, and public figures, primarily expressed through mass media like television, press, and social media.

Several educators have investigated the effectiveness of pop culture materials in language learning. For instance, compared to traditional textbook inputs, realistic dialogues better equip learners with the skills needed to handle natural conversations (Gilmore, 2004). Integrating English movies and clips into vocabulary learning has improved vocabulary recall and knowledge (Aygün, 2016). Tegge (2017) emphasized the potential of popular songs in ESL and EFL classrooms, highlighting their accessibility, low vocabulary demand, and positive impact on vocabulary acquisition and other language skills. Similarly, Polat and Eristi (2019) found

that authentic videos are valuable tools for enhancing English listening skills and reducing anxiety among EFL learners. Dinh (2023) found that audio-visual aids benefit EFL students' language skill development and vocabulary repertoire. Hoang (2022) suggested that materials from real-world media can motivate EFL students to speak more readily, although success varies. (Liu (2023) highlighted the promise of podcasts, with their mix of common and discipline-specific vocabulary, as valuable resources for English for academic purposes learners, especially if used strategically in lesson plans. Werner and Tegge (2022) provided a comprehensive overview of how a wide array of pop culture - from rap songs and movies to game shows, YouTube clips, podcasts, video games, cartoons, and memes - plays "pervasive and socially highly relevant roles" in the life of every language learner, emphasizing the impactful employment of pop culture inputs in language classrooms.

Moreover, contemporary studies have extended these insights. A study by Richards (2020) showed that using pop culture references in teaching semantics improves students' engagement and helps them grasp complex semantic concepts more effectively. Johnson (2021) found that the use of memes and viral videos can significantly enhance students' ability to understand and apply semantic theories in practical contexts. Nguyen (2022) demonstrated that Vietnamese EFL students showed improved retention and application of semantic concepts when lessons incorporated popular Vietnamese media and cultural references.

However, it is essential to mention the biases that pop culture may carry. For example, Rowsell and Pahl (2015) raised concerns that pop culture's perceived shallowness and fleeting nature, compared to the richness and permanence of 'high culture,' make it unsuitable for school education. Rets (2016) found that three-quarters of the teachers believed pop culture did not contribute to students' critical thinking or broaden their perspectives. Additionally, Western cultures, particularly American, dominate pop culture, potentially leading to cultural biases (Liu and Lin, 2017). Rets (2016) also highlighted that pop culture might lack human sympathy and include ideas associated with violence or taboos, potentially leading to hate speech in the classroom. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds or subcultures might feel offended. Furthermore, such materials could contain swear words and offensive language, which are unsuitable for academic environments and require teachers to filter the inputs more rigorously.

Despite numerous studies on pop culture's benefits and possible drawbacks in language learning, research on its use in linguistic semantics instruction, both internationally and in the Vietnamese context, remains limited. Additionally, there is a lack of studies from learners' perspectives on this topic. This research aims to bridge this gap in the existing body of knowledge.

Research objectives and research questions

Research objectives

This study aims to uncover the student perspective on enriching the Semantics and Pragmatics classroom with pop culture, specifically US-UK pop culture, by looking at Van Lang University as a case. It seeks to understand their preferences for integrating songs, movies, and social media, exploring both their perceived benefits and challenges for learning key semantic concepts.

Research questions

The research is driven by the purpose of answering three questions as follows.

1. How do students at VLU think the use of pop culture can enhance their understanding of semantic concepts and language usage?
2. How do the students think the integration of pop culture in Semantics instruction can impact their engagement and motivation to learn?
3. According to the students, what are the potential challenges and limitations associated with using pop culture in teaching Semantics?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting

At Van Lang University, English-major students learn Semantics as a compulsory subject. This subject usually comes after the students have completed other linguistic courses such as Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, and Syntax. However, none of these courses are prerequisites for another.

The course spans 15 weeks and includes 12 face-to-face class sessions and three online sessions. Students learn three large concepts: word, meaning, sentence meaning, and utterance meaning. Each is divided into smaller areas: semantic features, referent, reference, sense, sense relation, figures of speech, proposition, truth values of different sentence types, paraphrase, entailment, presupposition, implicature, and speech acts.

The main expected outcomes are students' understanding, distinguishing these concepts, and applying what they understand to analyzing the meaning of words, sentences, and utterances. The input for their learning comes mainly from the textbooks, as discussed in the literature review. Additionally, they are encouraged to take various corpora outside the textbook, such as literature books, TV, podcasts, movies, songs on streaming platforms, and other social media.

For instance, public figures in pop culture such as Taylor Swift, Blackpink, and contemporary people working in the Vietnamese show business who were gaining the spotlight on social media were taken as examples while students were learning referent and reference. In figures of speech, US-UK greatest hits including those of Beyonce, Bruno Mars, Rihanna, Selena Gomez, Katy Perry, Taylor Swift, Shawn Mendes, Christina Peri, etc., as well as standup comedies by Ali Wang and Phuong Nam Sai Gon Teu, or podcasts of Vietcetera between Thuy Minh and Ocean Vuong were discussed and analyzed. For some lessons, movies were employed as practice tasks for students to learn about speech acts, presuppositions, and implicatures, such as *Forrest Gump* and *Beef*.

In class, students work in groups of four to six, discussing and supporting each other. They also take turns giving group presentations on the topic assigned to them at the very first-class meeting. At home, they have homework in the textbook and quizzes prepared by the teacher on the school's learning management system.

Participants and sampling technique

The research participants were 113 seniors majoring in English at Van Lang University who were studying Semantics. The researcher instructed them in four Semantics classes, each with around 40 students.

This research employed the convenience sampling method. The researcher picked the

participants from all four of her classes, which were among the 13 semantic classes in the Faculty of Foreign Languages that semester. This simple sampling technique was feasible, economical, and time-efficient to conduct.

Design of the study

This is a quantitative descriptive study with a survey questionnaire. Since there was a lack of previous studies on the same topic, the researcher designed the whole questionnaire. The 5-point Likert scale with a midpoint was chosen instead of a 4-point one because the former functions as an interval scale rather than an ordinal as in the latter, and it is perfectly combined with mean and standard deviation in the data analysis phase (Carifio & Perla, 2008). Therefore, the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) was utilized throughout 17 questionnaire items.

The table below shows the instrument of the research, with example items from the three categories.

Table 1.

Number of items, Cronbach's alpha (α), and example items.

Criteria	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Example item
Using pop culture and the understanding of Semantic concepts	6	0.752	Using realistic stories of public figures helps me better understand the concepts of reference- referent, sense, and sense relation in word meaning.
Using pop culture and the motivation in learning Semantics	5	0.73	Using movies, songs, and stories on social networking sites makes the lessons more engaging.
The challenges of using pop culture in a Semantics classroom	6	0.81	The diverse nature of pop culture can make it tricky to find examples that effectively illustrate foundational concepts in Semantics.

These 17 items, as displayed in Table 1, were divided into three categories, each addressing how students perceive the role of pop culture materials in their Semantics training. The three groups of questions cover all the possible impacts of the new form of materials on students' cognitive and emotional learning. The content and structure of the questionnaire, together with the consistency in its format, contribute to the validity of the test.

The Cronbach's alpha of the items (all above 0.7) shows that the reliability of the questionnaire was acceptable.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was emailed to students as a Google Form so they could complete it on their device. Thanks to Google Forms, data collection was more efficient, economical, and environmentally friendly because no papers were used, and data were automatically transformed into a spreadsheet for analysis.

Before they agreed to participate, all the participants were fully informed about the research, including its purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits. They were also told they could withdraw at any time.

In addition to their consent, the researcher ensures the participants' privacy, including all email addresses. No data were collected for other purposes, and their responses were kept confidential. Personal data were deleted when the data analysis phase was completed. Finally, participants had the total freedom to complete the survey questionnaire on their own devices, at their own pace, without being rushed, allowing them to give the responses as they truly thought.

These data were then analyzed on SPSS. Descriptive statistics, including mean (M) and standard deviation (S.D), were calculated to interpret the responses. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, ensuring its consistency and reliability. To interpret the mean scores from the Likert-scale survey, the following qualitative descriptions, based on Pimentel (2010), were used.

Table 2.

Likert-scale interpretation

Likert-Scale Description	Likert-Scale	Likert Scale Interval
Strongly disagree	1	1.00 - 1.80
Disagree	2	1.81 - 2.60
Neutral/Uncertain	3	2.61 - 3.40
Agree	4	3.41 - 4.20
Strongly agree	5	4.21 - 5.00

Findings and Discussion

Table 3.

Using pop culture and the understanding of Semantic concepts

		n	M	S.D.
1	Using realistic stories of public figures helps me better understand the concepts of reference- referent, sense, and sense relation in word meaning.	113	4.2	0.96
2	Compared to the examples in the textbook, those from songs and movies help me understand and distinguish figures of speech such as metaphor, metonymy, simile, hyperbole, irony, etc. more easily.	113	4.5	0.89
3	Songs, movies, and discussions on social networking sites help me better understand semantic concepts, including ambiguous sentences, homophony, homography, homonymy, synonymy, and antonymy.	113	4.5	0.89
4	Trending topics on social media help me understand one-way entailment and paraphrase better.	113	4.2	1.00
5	Conversations in movies or social media help me grasp pragmatic concepts such as presupposition and implicature.	113	4.0	1.06
6	When analyzing examples from songs, movies, interviews, and standup comedies, I better understand how semantic concepts are applied in reality.	113	4.2	0.98

As shown in Table 3, a majority of the respondents strongly agreed that they understand the

semantic concepts better with the use of materials taken from pop culture.

Especially with a striking $M=4.5$ and $S.D.=0.89$, many of the students believed that areas of Semantics such as figures of speech (metaphor, metonymy, irony, etc.) and sense relation (homonymy, synonymy, antonymy, etc.) could be made clearer through examples from songs, movies, and discussions on social networking sites. It is statistically proved that most of the students concurred that social media could provide rich and relatable materials compared to the examples from the textbook.

Despite not being as high as criteria 2 and 3, the M value of criteria 1, 4, and 6 is at 4.2, with $S.D.$ under 1. This shows that most students agreed that they better comprehended other semantic concepts, such as reference-referent, sense relation in word meaning, one-way entailment, and paraphrasing, and knew how these concepts were applied in reality.

However, in criterion 5, with $M=4.0$ and $S.D.=1.06$, the students' opinions were quite varied. Not all of them thought that the pragmatic section of the course, in this case, presupposition and implicature, could become more comprehensible with the support of authentic materials like movies and social media conversations.

Compared to other studies, these findings are somehow similar to what Aygün (2016), Gilmore (2004), Polat and Eristi (2019), and Tegge (2017) found in their works in the sense that movies, clips, songs, and other authentic materials are efficient in improving students' understanding of the course in ESL and EFL contexts. However, this study is probably among the very few ones that reveal such findings in a theoretical linguistic subject like Semantics.

Table 4.

Using pop culture and the motivation in learning Semantics

		n	M	S.D.
1	Using movies, songs, and stories on social networking sites makes the lessons more engaging.	113	4.6	0.87
2	I find myself proactively researching the concepts in this course by studying materials from shows, movies, songs, or trending topics on social networking sites.	113	3.9	1.14
3	Using movies, songs, and trending stories on social networking sites makes the homework in this course less boring.	113	4.5	0.96
4	I find group discussions with materials from movies, songs, and trending stories on social networking sites more interesting.	113	4.5	0.93
5	I invest more time in this course when learning concepts through movies, songs, and trending stories on social networking sites.	113	4.1	1.01

This second category (Table 4) investigates how incorporating authentic pop culture examples, such as movies, songs, and social media narratives, influences student motivation in a Semantics course. The data in criterion 1 reveals a statistically significant increase in student engagement through the use of these real-world references ($M = 4.6$, $SD = 0.87$).

Furthermore, with a mean of 4.5 and standard deviations of 0.96 and 0.93, criteria 3 and 4 indicate a positive shift in students' perception of homework and group discussions when integrated with relevant pop culture content. Findings suggest that employing relatable cultural elements may serve as a pedagogical tool to enhance student engagement at home and in class

discussions.

These results complement the conclusions by Polat and Eristi (2019) that authentic materials like videos can reduce EFL students' anxiety or what Hoang (2022) claimed that those materials can motivate students to engage in the lesson. The results also align with Werner and Tegge's findings (2022) in the sense that pop culture could provide linguistic students with impactful inputs.

Nonetheless, students held varied opinions about whether using pop culture content could elevate their self-regulation in Semantics training. This shows in the S.D. above 1 of the criteria 2 and 5 in this category. They did not unanimously feel that authentic materials could make them spend more time on this subject or become proactive in getting further research outside the class, although the mean of the responses is more or less 4.0 (meaning agree).

Table 5.

The challenges of using pop culture in a Semantics classroom

		n	M	S.D.
1	The diverse nature of pop culture can make it tricky to find examples that effectively illustrate foundational concepts in Semantics.	113	3.8	1.03
2	Materials from pop culture may be informal for this course.	113	2.8	1.25
3	Teachers have to get updated constantly to catch up with the rapid changes in pop culture.	113	4.3	0.91
4	I cannot get myself updated with pop culture, so I find myself left behind while other team members eagerly discuss the topics.	113	2.9	1.22
5	Some content from pop culture used in this course may promote stereotypes, discrimination, or violence.	113	2.8	1.28
6	Accessing pop culture materials is difficult because it requires an internet connection and accounts on social networking sites or paid platforms such as Spotify or Netflix.	113	3.0	1.36

When asked about the possible challenges of using pop culture in a Semantics classroom, students did not have a clear opinion about this, as shown in Table 5. Most of the responses had a mean value of around 2.8 to 3.0, meaning no opinion. Furthermore, the corresponding standard deviations are quite high, at least 1.2. This means that there were no patterns in the student's perception of the difficulties of integrating pop culture materials in Semantics classrooms. Specifically, in criteria 2, 4, 5, and 6, not all students supported or opposed the idea that the materials from pop culture appear informal for a Semantic classroom or the idea that they may feel left behind in group discussions because they could not get themselves updated with the changing pop culture while their teammates could. Likewise, they held no clear opinion on whether pop culture content may stem any stereotypes, discrimination, or violence. Especially with a big standard deviation of 1.36; while some students did not think assessing pop culture materials was challenging, others thought this was a problem because they had to get accounts on paid platforms such as Spotify or Netflix.

Hence, none of the above criteria in the table are similar to the literature by Liu and Lin (2017), Rets (2016), or Rowsell and Pahl (2015) about the problems that pop culture, as an authentic source of materials, may bring to a language classroom because of its shallowness, improper nature, or possible association with violence or taboos.

Nevertheless, students thought one thing could be a difficulty, though the problem was not discussed in the previous studies. Teachers are required to employ authentic materials from pop culture. The students agreed that teachers had to constantly update themselves to catch up with the rapid evolution of pop culture to make their lessons appealing.

Conclusion and Implications

From the above analysis and discussion of the data, there is evidence for the positive impact of pop culture integration on student understanding of semantic concepts and their motivation in semantics classrooms. The findings align with prior research regarding criteria for student engagement in group discussions and homework assignments (Gilmore, 2004; Tegge, 2017). These results reinforce the idea that authentic materials, like those derived from pop culture, can enhance the educational experience by making learning more relatable and engaging.

Some findings contribute new insights to the body of research. Notably, the study reveals that pop culture materials can significantly enhance students' comprehension of semantic concepts related to word meaning and sense, sentence meaning, and utterance meaning. This suggests that incorporating elements from pop culture can make abstract semantic concepts more concrete and understandable for students, an area that previous research has not extensively explored.

The study also uncovers mixed opinions regarding the impact of pop culture on self-regulation in learning. While some students believe that pop culture facilitates self-driven learning efforts, such as proactive research outside of class, others are less convinced. This divergence highlights the need for further investigation into how different types of pop culture materials can influence self-regulation and independent learning among students.

Regarding the challenges associated with pop culture adoption, the study could not confirm any clear pattern in the students' opinions regarding potential issues such as informality, stereotypes, or violence in pop culture content. Additionally, there was no consensus on whether access to pop culture materials due to paid plans on social platforms posed a significant barrier. However, the research indicates that students believe their teachers should constantly update their knowledge and familiarity with the rapidly evolving landscape of pop culture. This underscores the importance of continuous professional development for educators to integrate contemporary materials into their teaching practices effectively.

The study's findings suggest several practical implications. Firstly, equitable access to pop culture resources should be carefully considered. Schools and educators should ensure that all students have access to necessary materials, possibly through institutional subscriptions or alternative means to mitigate the cost barriers associated with paid platforms. Also, there is a need to develop comprehensive guidelines for teachers on the responsible selection and implementation of pop culture materials. This can help minimize potential risks, such as reinforcing stereotypes or exposure to inappropriate content and ensuring ethical and inclusive practices in the classroom. As for students, they should be encouraged to take an active role in their learning by investing more time and effort into the subject matter. While teachers play a crucial role in innovating lessons, students should also seek new approaches to make theoretical subjects like semantics more engaging.

The study has limitations, such as the average sample size, which may not represent a broader student population. Moreover, the research is primarily descriptive and relies on self-reported data, which can introduce bias. Future research should aim to address these limitations by employing larger and more diverse samples and utilizing experimental designs to gain deeper

and more reliable insights.

Further studies could explore the specific types of pop culture materials that are most effective in enhancing semantic understanding and examine the long-term impacts of pop culture integration on student learning outcomes. Additionally, investigating the role of teacher training in successfully implementing pop culture in the classroom could provide valuable insights into best practices for educational innovation.

In conclusion, integrating pop culture into semantics education shows significant promise in enhancing student engagement and understanding of complex concepts. While there are challenges and mixed opinions, the overall findings suggest that pop culture can be a valuable educational tool when used thoughtfully and equitably. Both educators and students have roles to play in optimizing the benefits of this approach, and future research should continue to explore and refine these strategies to maximize their impact.

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Biodata

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Exploring Teachers' Perspectives on Adaptive Learning in Undergraduate Programs, Vietnam National University, Hanoi

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Adaptive learning,
adaptive education,
teachers' perspectives,
undergraduate programs

This study addresses the growing trend of adaptive learning in higher education, focusing on the under-explored area of faculty perspectives at Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VNU). The research aims to understand how 68 instructors perceive and implement adaptive learning in undergraduate programs. Conducted within the context of VNU, the study employs a mixed-methods approach: quantitative data collected through survey questionnaires and qualitative insights gained from semi-structured interviews. The results reveal diverse attitudes among instructors, highlighting varying levels of comfort and familiarity with adaptive learning strategies. Key findings suggest a need for targeted support and discourse to enhance the implementation of adaptive learning. This study contributes to the ongoing discourse by providing practical recommendations for improving adaptive learning at VNU, ultimately aiming to elevate the educational experience for both students and faculty.

Introduction

Adaptive learning has emerged as a significant trend within higher education, providing personalized learning experiences tailored to meet each student's unique needs (Cavanagh et al., 2020; Kim & Maloney, 2020). Higher education institutions worldwide are increasingly adopting adaptive learning technologies to enhance the learning environment and improve educational outcomes. The need to develop dynamic and responsive learning experiences that use technology to accommodate different learning preferences is what is driving this shift (Mulyadi et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2022; Phan, 2022).

The integration of technology in educational settings is crucial, as it offers potential solutions for personalized learning, which is becoming increasingly important to students (Webster & Hackley, 1997). As technological advancements continue, the role of computer-based learning is expected to grow, emphasizing the need for effective instructional delivery that ensures students not only learn and retain information but also apply it in the future (Lepper & Malone, 2021; Jannah et al., 2020; Burbules et al., 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Dinh, 2023).

Adaptive learning systems aim to replicate the personalized interaction between a human tutor and a student on a larger scale. This involves studying one-on-one learning processes (Kaplan-

Rakowski & Gruber, 2021) and implementing similar procedures through computer-based platforms. While sophisticated intelligent tutoring systems remain less common, limited systems designed for specific types of questions are more prevalent (Forsyth & Ponce de Leon, 2001; Huynh, 2022).

In this context, Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VNU), is a pivotal example of applying adaptive learning technologies within higher education. VNU is a prestigious educational institution in Vietnam, known for its diverse educational programs and research initiatives. It plays a crucial role in Vietnam's academic and economic development, striving to uphold high standards in research, education, and innovation (Ryu & Nguyen, 2021; Tien et al., 2021).

Our study focuses on exploring VNU instructors' perceptions of the integration of adaptive learning technologies into their courses. This research is essential for understanding the factors influencing instructors' acceptance and use of these technologies at VNU. VNU lecturers bring diverse perspectives to teaching, often viewing technology as a tool for knowledge dissemination that aligns with their preferred teaching methods. These perspectives significantly impact their attitudes toward the utility of technology and their willingness to incorporate it into their teaching practices.

Our research aims to provide valuable insights into the successful implementation and promotion of adaptive learning technologies within the university curriculum by examining specific aspects such as technological usability, pedagogical impact, and organizational integration. This study contributes to the existing literature on higher education by offering guidance for effectively integrating adaptive learning technologies into academic programs, enhancing the educational experience for both instructors and students.

Literature Review

An Overview of Adaptive Learning

According to researchers' findings, adaptive learning may be seen as both a technology and a process. On the one hand, it is used in educational technology to describe a tool that gives each student incredibly thorough and carefully tailored personalized teaching and direction to meet and exceed their specific needs. Discovery learning is mostly about independence and exploration. On the other hand, adaptive learning goes to a whole new level of personalization and individualization (Cavanagh et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2021). Additionally, error diagnosis and correction is an interesting example of adaptive learning (Bonavita & Laloyaux, 2020). It is comprehensive and innovative, adapting the teaching approach to students' diagnoses. This strategy analyzes and interprets students' replies to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Teachers can simply and specifically instruct them to match their requirements and maximize learning. It basically makes a virtual classroom that changes and grows along with the students, easily responding to their growth and always pushing the limits of what they can do in school (Barron et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2020).

On the other hand, adaptive learning is still considered an educational process requiring a learning-friendly infrastructure and environment. This requires seamless integration of disruptive technologies, communication tools, and online distribution settings to deliver personalized challenges that fit learners' goals. Personalized adaptive learning accommodates diverse learning methods and preferences (El-SabSabagh, 2021; Maaliw III, 2020). Adaptive learning also acknowledges the need for diverse professional roles and methodologies in education. Using varied teaching methods, educators may meet each student's needs. A flexible

and adjustable educational environment promotes engagement, motivation, and progress (Mirata et al., 2020).

In short, adaptive learning considers individual differences, resulting in a unique learning experience (Liu et al., 2017). This contributes to improving the academic pathway, the learning process, and learner satisfaction in a diverse array of learning scenarios (Rosita et al., 2016). Adaptive learning can be classified as either a technology or a process.

Benefits and Challenges of Adaptive Learning

Adaptive learning technologies offer numerous benefits by providing personalized learning experiences tailored to each student's unique needs. These systems utilize software that adapts to students' interactions, creating distinct learning paths that enhance engagement and effectiveness. According to Muñoz et al. (2022), this tailored approach addresses individual student requirements, thereby improving learning engagement and outcomes.

One key advantage of adaptive learning technologies is their ability to provide real-time personalization, feedback, and adjustments, offering a viable alternative to traditional education methods. By assessing student performance data, digital tools enable educators to customize support and instruction for diverse learners, catering to their specific strengths and weaknesses. This approach not only enhances the educational experience but also saves time and resources for instructors (Alqahtan, 2021; Marienko et al., 2020).

Furthermore, adaptive learning technologies support teachers rather than replace them, allowing educators to focus on providing personalized support and fostering stronger teacher-student interactions. This leads to improved educational outcomes, as teachers can dedicate more time to addressing individual student needs and facilitating meaningful learning experiences (Wang et al., 2023).

Implementing adaptive learning technologies in education presents several challenges that must be addressed to ensure their effectiveness. One major challenge is providing students with the necessary resources and environments to maximize their learning potential. Training educators to effectively use these platforms is crucial, yet it can be time-consuming. Additionally, the rapid pace of technological advancement may hinder the full integration of adaptive learning systems.

Motivating educators to adopt innovative ideas is essential, but implementing new technologies in low-cost, independent schools or other resource-limited settings can be challenging (Mirata et al., 2020; Muñoz et al., 2022). Successful implementation of new teaching methods and educational initiatives requires careful planning, efficient organization, and positive collaboration among instructors, administrators, and support staff. Teachers must also be proficient in using cutting-edge teaching techniques to adapt to evolving educational landscapes (Rana & Rana, 2020; Yurtseven et al., 2020).

Another critical concern is the data privacy and security associated with adaptive learning systems. These systems monitor student interactions, preferences, and performance across various learning scenarios. Ensuring this data's proper utilization and protection is vital, as the increasing complexity of online environments poses new privacy risks. Continuous awareness and updated safeguards are necessary to protect individuals' well-being, identity, and personal boundaries in a connected society (Cavanagh et al., 2020; Muñoz et al., 2022).

Research Framework

Mirata et al. (2020) examined barriers to higher education institutions using adaptive learning techniques in teaching. Using a four-stage Delphi approach, they experimentally identified,

classified, and prioritized adaptive learning concerns from experts from two Swiss and South African institutions. With eight categories, the researchers found three primary dimensions: technology, teaching and learning, and organizational problems. Figure 1 shows the eight categories: infrastructure, hardware, and software; perceptions and beliefs about adaptive technology (lecturers and students); instructional and curriculum elements; lecturer and learner characteristics; institutional strategies; management; and resources. This research adopted these three dimensions and eight categories of adaptive learning. However, this study uses the term *pedagogy* to replace the third dimension - teaching and learning.

Figure 1

Dimensions and Categories of Adaptive Learning (Adopted from Mirata et al., 2020)

DIMENSIONS	ORGANIZATION	<p>1. Institutional strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advancing digital equity • Effective strategy for adaptive learning • Management commitment <p>2. Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support & training to lecturers • Support services for students • Participative implementation • Building competences & expertise of staff • Financial incentives • Conducting research • Communicating advantages of technology use <p>3. Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring instructional designers • Providing personnel, financial, time resources 	TEACHING & LEARNING
	TECHNOLOGY	<p>4. Infrastructure, hard- & software</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usability • General technical infrastructures • Affordable internet access • Internet quality • Robustness of technology <p>5. Perceptions & beliefs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology acceptance • Recognising advantages • Attitude towards technology use 	
		CATEGORIES	

Previous Studies on Adaptive Learning in Higher Education

In recent years in Vietnam, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic, adaptive learning has gained popularity due to its benefits. Research on adaptive learning in Vietnam may focus on factors involved in adaptive learning, such as learners, teachers, etc., or its implementation process.

In the world

In the world, recent systematic reviews on adaptive learning cover methodologies and technology by Martin et al. (2020) and Muñoz et al. (2022). Using PRISMA, Muñoz et al. (2022) reviewed the literature on adaptive learning technologies in higher education. They analyzed 112 adaptive learning studies to determine their status and identify literature gaps.

Research indicated that adaptive learning studies focused on study focus, adaptive methods, and adaptive technology. The writers employed content, instructional, and adaptive sources to study adaptive techniques. The most studied adaptive objectives were learner attributes, including learning style, adaptive feedback, and navigation. This study highlights potential research gaps for adaptive learning designers and researchers. While previous theoretical reviews focused on methodological challenges and techniques and a narrower application of adaptive learning, this study used varied implementation techniques, a qualitative literature review, and a systematic selection and analysis of research studies to broaden the application areas.

A 2020 systematic review by Martin et al. examined adaptive learning research designs, context, tactics, and technology from 2009 to 2018. They strategically searched for adaptive learning research by focus, publishing trends, instructional context, study methodological components, and technology. By analyzing 61 papers, they assessed the present level of adaptive learning research and literature gaps. This study affects adaptive learning designers and future researchers by identifying research needs. Future research may examine adaptive learning's growing availability and capabilities as a learning technique for tailored growth.

In addition to reviewing literature related to adaptive learning, researchers have also paid attention to various perspectives on this topic. Case studies by Bray (2017), Smith (2018), and Ramdani et al. (2021) probe educators' opinions about adaptive learning in a range of learning settings. Ramdani et al. (2021) examined Indonesian teachers' perceptions and readiness for adaptive learning during pandemics. Qualitative research with theme content analysis models was employed to achieve these goals. 327 teachers chosen through purposive sampling completed online surveys. Respondents' views on learning process modifications vary, depending on their readiness and adaptability. Teachers' excellent change management practices showed their readiness. These results show that respondents understood that face-to-face learning was still adaptive for them to teach. Teachers thought an adaptive learning guide was essential throughout the adjustment. This analysis identifies current learning ideas and predicts adaptive learning guides.

Smith (2018) examined US preservice teachers' views on adaptive learning programs in K-8 mathematics. This qualitative research included 17 undergraduate teacher education students. A survey, semi-structured interviews, and archival notebooks from K-8 Math Methods students were used to examine the data. This study found that preservice teachers believe adaptive learning tools benefit students and know they have numerous choices about what to use and how to incorporate them into the classroom. The study also indicated that preservice teachers' K-8 Math Methods course helped them understand the many possibilities of adaptive learning programs. These studies help to clarify the benefits, challenges and need for flexible guides, as well as the growth of research on the possibilities of adaptive learning to support customized education.

In Vietnam

In terms of learners, in order to improve adaptive learning, Nguyen et al. (2019) developed a model to monitor and identify students' postures and gestures during class to assess their participation in teachers' content and teaching methods. Based on this conclusion, the researchers believe they can advise trainers and training managers on topic material and teaching techniques for each object. In another adaptive learning study, Nguyen et al. (2020) used a competency-based approach to give learners who are high school principals individualized learning paths to acquire educational management competencies.

In terms of adaptive learning implementation, Nguyen and Ho (2006) developed a Bayesian network-based learning activity model to pick adaptive learning activities for each learner that meet their knowledge and help them learn topics. The Vietnam National University, Hanoi University of Engineering and Technology research project partially funds this work. Bui et al. (2022) examined adaptive education research, theoretical foundations, and practical applications in several countries, including Vietnam, and then suggested an adaptive educational model for general education in Vietnam. This paradigm addresses educational goals, content, delivery, evaluation, facilities, and the law. This concept works for general education, not higher education. Another piece of research relating to adaptive learning implementation is the technical evaluation, which outlines adaptive learning advice and examines its use in the UK and Vietnam (see Gransden et al., 2024). Next, practical issues and strategies for building and maintaining adaptive learning were derived. Questions were then created to assess if adaptive learning should be used in teaching and learning.

There has been little research on adaptive learning in higher education in Vietnam, notably from the perspectives of learners, teachers, or managers. Thus, this study should fill the research vacuum and examine Vietnam National University, Hanoi lecturers' views on this problem.

In short, adaptive learning has been the subject of a number of research initiatives throughout the world; however, there is no evidence of any study having been conducted on lecturers' perceptions in undergraduate programs. Therefore, this study aims to fill the research gap and investigate the perspectives of lecturers at Vietnam National University in Hanoi on this matter.

Research Questions

The main objective of this research was to explore teachers' perspectives on the adoption and practice of adaptive learning in the context of the VNU with the following research questions:

1. What are lecturers' understandings of adaptive learning?
2. What are lecturers' perceptions towards adaptive learning implementation from different aspects at their institutions?

Methods

Settings

Vietnam National University, Hanoi (VNU) is a leading institution in Vietnam, encompassing numerous affiliate members dedicated to innovative teaching pedagogy. VNU actively encourages its lecturers to continuously update their teaching methodologies, particularly by incorporating adaptive learning strategies, because they share common educational missions and regulations. This steadfast commitment ensures that VNU remains at the forefront of educational advancements, fostering a dynamic and responsive learning environment across its diverse academic units. Specifically, VNU has released a project entitled "*Innovating Teaching Activities at VNU*" in order to innovate teaching and learning practices in an urgent response to technological advancement applied from 2019 to 2025 (Vietnam National University, Hanoi, n.d.). That explains why this study seeks to explore the viewpoints of lecturers about adaptive learning in undergraduate programs across several majors at Vietnam National University, Hanoi. Through examining their perspectives and practices, our objective is to understand the reality of integrating adaptive learning in higher education within this particular setting.

Participants

The study includes a group of 68 lecturers, with 74.5% females participating in various undergraduate programs at Vietnam National University, Hanoi. This pool of participants majors in different areas of expertise, in which language and education account for the biggest part—more than 70%. The others specialize in technology and the natural sciences. The majority of the participants are between 36-55 years old, with 10 to 20 years of teaching experience. A subset of 7 instructors is chosen from this pool for in-depth, semi-structured interviews, guaranteeing a varied representation and different viewpoints within the sample.

Instruments of the Study

This study uses a mixed-methods approach, which means it uses qualitative and quantitative methods to determine how lecturers perceive adaptive learning. Both the survey questionnaires and the interview questions were adapted from the framework, which comprises dimensions and categories of adaptive learning" (Mirata et al., 2020).

Carefully crafted with two main sections, the first to assess lecturers' knowledge of adaptive learning and the second consisting of 35 Likert-scale questions to evaluate three dimensions of adaptive learning implementation, specifically excluding proper information. The survey questionnaire investigated dimensions of technology, pedagogy, and organization. Questions 1–8 were divided into views and benefits (6–8), infrastructure, hardware, and software (1–5) in the technical component. The pedagogy component examined instructional and curricular aspects (9–13), teacher/lecturer characteristics (14–19), and learner characteristics (20–23). Questions 24-35 covered organization, 24-26 institutional techniques, 27-33 management, and 34-35 resources.

In addition, a set of semi-structured interviews was created, consisting of 14 in-depth questions that required open-ended responses. The 14 items were organized in the following manner: Questions 1-6 gathered information about the participants' demographics; question 7 investigated their understanding of the concept of adaptive learning; and questions 8-14 sought to obtain a thorough understanding of their opinions on specific topics, such as technology (question 8), pedagogy (questions 9-11), and organization/management (questions 12-14).

Data Collection & Analysis

The electronic distribution of structured questionnaires through Google Forms facilitated the efficient collection of data from 68 instructors. The electronic distribution of structured questionnaires through Google Forms facilitated the efficient collection of data from 68 instructors. The questionnaires were distributed to 108 academics from seven member universities within VNU over a four-week period (from the end of March to early April 2024). However, only 68 responses were received. Explicit instructions were implemented to ensure confidentiality and uniformity. Furthermore, in order to guarantee adaptability and privacy, seven interviews were conducted in person (three respondents) or via Zoom (four respondents). We randomly selected seven lecturers from various member units within VNU to participate in in-depth interviews to obtain more detailed information on the three aspects of adaptive learning. These interviews were conducted in the final two weeks of April 2024.

A multiple-choice question was used to find out the way lecturers define adaptive learning, and the data was illustrated in percentages. For other question items to explore lecturers' perceptions towards adaptive learning implementation from different aspects at their institutions, R software was used during data analysis to calculate the mean value and standard deviation (SD). Each question in the questionnaire consists of a 5-point scale ranging from 1 to 5. The level of interpretation for the mean value is as follows: 1.0 - 2.4 (negative attitude), 2.5 - 3.4 (neutral

attitude), and 3.5 - 5.0 (positive attitude). The standard deviation is a single number that summarizes the variability in a dataset. It represents the typical distance between each data point and the mean. Smaller values indicate that the data points cluster closer to the mean - the values in the dataset are relatively consistent. Conversely, higher values signify that the values spread out further from the mean. Data values become more dissimilar, and extreme values become more likely. As a rule of thumb, a standard deviation that is equal to or greater than 1 indicates a relatively high variation, while a standard deviation below one can be considered low.

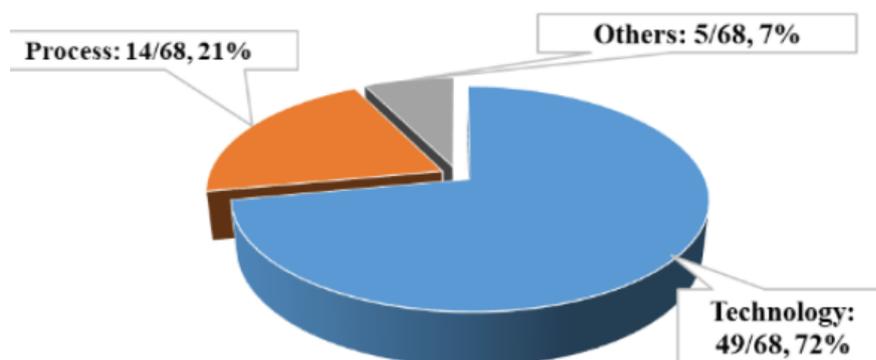
This study examined the perspectives of lecturers on adaptive learning in undergraduate programs at Vietnam National University, Hanoi, using R software for analysis. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis. The content is classified as previously described, and the data analysis results are presented to address two research questions.

Results/Findings

The first part is an investigation of teachers' understanding of adaptive learning. The survey results show what lecturers thought about adaptive learning; the details are as follows:

Figure 2

Lecturers' Understanding of Adaptive Learning



The data demonstrates that the majority of participants (72%) predominantly view adaptive learning through the lens of educational technology, demonstrating a strong connection to tools and platforms that support individualized learning experiences in the given field. This viewpoint underscores the significance of technological solutions in the execution of learning strategy applications. Therefore, the instructors at VNU have comprehended the notion of adaptive learning as an educational technology, which aligns with the perspectives of earlier scholars (Barron et al., 2020; Bonavita & Laloyaux, 2020; Cavanagh et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2020; Taylor et al., 2021).

In contrast, more than one-fifth of lecturers (21%) view adaptive learning as an educational process, having found the truth focused on teaching methods and strategies adapted to the needs of individual learners. This emphasizes an understanding of adaptive learning as a dynamic and ongoing process aimed at tailoring education to a student's unique abilities and progress. According to the findings of researchers (El-Sabagh, 2021; Maaliw III, 2020; Mirata et al., 2020), this understanding is in agreement with their perspectives.

The remaining 7% of participants were given alternative definitions, which could include a variety of explanations, a combination of technology and process, or malicious framework concepts that could not be included in the remaining two types. This diversity in definitions reflects the evolving nature of appropriate learning and how it can be understood and applied in an educational context.

The second result of the study is lecturers' perceptions of adaptive learning implementation from different aspects at their institutions. The results are presented in alignment with eight groups designed in the theoretical framework of the study, as follows:

Technology

In this case, technology is characterized by two components: a) infrastructure, hardware, and software, and b) perceptions and beliefs. The first component - infrastructure, hardware, and software - is characterized by such factors as usability, general technical infrastructure, affordable internet access, internet quality, and robustness of technology.

Overall, lecturers do not strongly believe that the infrastructure, hardware, and software at their institution can facilitate the implementation of adaptive learning. It can be seen in the following table:

Table 1

Lecturers' Perceptions Towards the Institution's Infrastructure, Hardware, and Software in Implementing Adaptive Learning

No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	The adaptive learning system at the university is easy to use.	3.8	0.90
2	The university invests in technical infrastructure on campus (software, hardware, licenses).	4.0	0.87
3	Internet access at the university is affordable for students.	4.0	0.80
4	The university invests in appropriate technological infrastructure (e.g., Wi-Fi) to ensure internet quality.	4.1	0.77
5	The information technology (IT) team works on improving the stability of an adaptive learning system.	4.1	0.79

Table 1 shows that the lecturers have rather positive feedback about their institutions' infrastructure, hardware, and software, with the average mean scores centering around 4.0 on the 5-point Likert scale. The standard deviation (SD) for the five aspects (usability, general technical infrastructures, affordable internet access, internet quality, and robustness of technology) is below 1.0, which indicates that data are clustered tightly around the mean value and there is a low level of variability in the opinions of lecturers.

The second component in technology is perceptions and beliefs, which are characterized by such factors as technology acceptance, recognizing advantages, and attitude towards technology use. It is illustrated in the following table:

Table 2

Lecturers' Insights on Perceptions & Beliefs about Technology in Implementing Adaptive Learning

No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	You are willing to accept changes in teaching when using technology.	4.3	0.68
2	The use of technology in teaching brings about a lot of benefits.	4.4	0.63
3	The use of technology in teaching is an obvious trend nowadays.	4.6	0.70

As revealed in Table 2, the average mean score on the Likert scale is around 4.5, indicating that the professors had exceptionally favorable feedback regarding the infrastructure, hardware, and software at their respective universities. The standard deviation for the three characteristics (technology acceptance, identifying advantages, and attitude towards technology usage) is still below 1.0, which suggests that the data are clustered closely around the mean value and that there is variety in the opinions of lecturers. In addition, the data reveal a significant amount of variation around the mean value. With a mean score of 4.6 on the Likert scale, the lecturers are more than anything else in agreement that the utilization of technology in the classroom is a trend that is becoming increasingly apparent in today's world.

Pedagogy

Within the frame of this research, pedagogy involves the three following components: a) students, b) instructional and curriculum elements, and c) lecturers.

The first component, - student - is characterized by four factors: commitment motivation, self-regulated learning, digital competence, and digital literacy.

Table 3

Lecturers' Perceptions towards Benefits of Adaptive Learning on Students

No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Adaptive learning helps to increase learner's commitment.	4.0	0.76
2	Adaptive learning helps to increase a learner's motivation.	4.2	0.70
3	Adaptive learning helps to increase a student's self-learning ability.	4.2	0.78
4	Adaptive learning helps to increase learner's digital literacy.	4.3	0.72

As can be seen from Table 3, the lecturers have really positive feedback about the benefits of adaptive learning for students at their institutions, with average mean scores ranging from 4.0 to 4.3 on the 5-point Likert scale. The standard deviation for the four aspects (student's commitment, motivation, self-regulated learning, digital competence, and digital literacy) still centers around 0.7, which indicates that the data are clustered tightly around the mean value and there is low variability in the opinions of lecturers.

The second component involved in pedagogy is instructional and curriculum elements. This includes the following factors: adaptive pedagogy, paradigm shift in teaching and learning, communication and interaction online, and creating Communities of Practice (CoP).

Table 4

Lecturers' Perceptions towards the Implementation of Adaptive Learning at their Institutions

No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	The university provides time for course instructors to adopt adaptive pedagogy in teaching practices.	4.2	0.74
2	Faculty members put effort into the didactically sound course design.	4.1	0.70
3	Faculty members spend time redesigning instructional materials and courses for adaptive learning.	4.1	0.72
4	The faculty members have frequent online communication and interaction.	4.0	0.68
5	The faculty members create Communities of Practices (CoP).	4.0	0.76

What can be seen in Table 4 is that the lecturers have really positive feedback about the practice of implementing adaptive learning at their institutions, with average mean scores ranging from 4.0 to 4.2 on the 5-point Likert scale. The standard deviation for the related aspects, including adaptive pedagogy, paradigm shift in teaching and learning, communication and interaction online; creating groups of people who share a common interest or profession and learn from each other through regular interaction and knowledge sharing called Communities of Practice (CoP) (Wenger, 1998)., still centers around 0.7, which indicates that data are clustered tightly around the mean value and there is a low variability in the opinions of lecturers.

The last component involved in pedagogy is the lecturer. This includes the following six factors: additional workload, changing lecturer's role, commitment, motivation, need for professional development, digital competence, and literacy.

Table 5

Lecturers' Perceptions towards the Effect of Adaptive Learning on Lecturers

No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	Adaptive learning will give lecturers additional workload.	3.9	0.92
2	Adaptive learning will change the lecturer's role.	4.0	0.87
3	Adaptive learning will increase a lecturer's commitment.	4.0	0.76
4	Adaptive learning will increase the lecturer's motivation.	4.0	0.74
5	Adaptive learning is necessary for a lecturer's professional development.	4.2	0.72
6	Adaptive learning helps to improve lecturer's digital literacy.	4.3	0.81

As can be seen from Table 5, it is clear that lecturers at VNU have positive perceptions towards the impact of adaptive learning on them. There are a great deal of changes if a lecturer implements adaptive learning, such as their workload, their role in class, their commitment, their motivation, their professionalism, and their digital literacy. The changes are obvious and inevitable due to the rapid changes in education nowadays, especially in the era of 4.0.

Among ideas relating to lecturers in the implementation of adaptive learning, the highest mean value (0.92) goes to the statement that adaptive learning will give lecturers additional workload. This suggests that lecturers have a variety of opinions about how adaptive learning will affect them; whether adaptive learning will result in increased workload or benefits is something lecturers perceive to be rather contentious.

Organization

Within the framework of this research, the aspect of organization involves the three following components: a) institutional strategies, b) management, and c) resources.

The first component is institutional strategies, which include digital equity, effective strategies for adaptive learning, and management commitment. The three statements in the questionnaires—described in the table below—contextualize this.

Table 6

Lecturers' Perceptions towards the Institutional Strategies for Adaptive Learning Implementation

No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	The university ensures students have equal access to technology-enhanced learning.	4.2	0.76
2	The university dedicates sufficient time to lecturers for adopting adaptive learning in teaching practices.	4.0	0.83
3	University management aligns the adaptive learning strategy with the broader institutional goals to ensure the long-term leadership support of the adaptive learning program.	4.1	0.74

As seen from Table 6, the lecturers have really positive feedback about their institutions' strategies in implementing adaptive learning, with the average mean scores centering around 4.1 on the 5-point Likert scale. The standard deviation for the three aspects (advancing digital equity, effective strategy for adaptive learning, and management commitment) centers around 0.8, which indicates that the lecturers' opinions exhibit minimal variability and the data are tightly concentrated around the mean value. The universities where these lecturers work have policies facilitating the implementation of adaptive learning, which is good news for educational innovation.

The second component relating to the organization is management, which includes support and training for lecturers, support services for students, participative implementation, building the competence and expertise of staff, financial incentives, conducting research, and communicating the advantages of technology use. As shown in the table below, the statements in the questionnaires contextualize these ideas.

Table 7

Lecturers' Perceptions towards Organizational Management for Adaptive Learning Implementation

No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	The university management provides ongoing support and training to lecturers during adaptive learning implementation.	4.1	0.71
2	The university management provides ongoing support services to students during adaptive learning implementation.	4.1	0.69
3	The university management involves all stakeholders during adaptive learning implementation.	4.0	0.74
4	The university management has policies to build the competencies and expertise of staff for adaptive learning implementation.	4.0	0.78
5	The university management offers financial incentives to instructors for the adaptive learning course development.	3.9	0.81
6	The university management conducts research on the effectiveness of adaptive learning courses.	3.9	0.82
7	The management communicates the advantages/ added value of adaptive learning to all stakeholders at the university.	3.9	0.81

As seen from Table 7, the lecturers have rather positive feedback about the management at their institutions in implementing adaptive learning, with the average mean scores centering around 4.0 on the 5-point Likert scale. Support and training for lecturers; support services for students; participatory implementation; building and expertise of staff; financial incentives; conducting research; communicating the benefits of using technology; and support and training for lecturers all have standard deviations that are close to 0.7. This means that lecturers' opinions do not vary much, and the data are mostly centered on the mean value. However, the lowest standard deviation (0.69) belongs to the idea that university management provides ongoing support services to students during adaptive learning implementation. This means there is a consistent tendency in universities to favor adaptive learning, and they continuously facilitate students in the implementation process. This is really good news and shows the increasingly common student-centered approach. One more thing that can be seen from the table above is that the mean value is below 4, which shows that the lecturers do not have a very high appreciation for the efforts of the university management in providing financial incentives, conducting research on the effectiveness, and communicating the advantages and added value of adaptive learning to all stakeholders.

The last component relating to organization in the implementation of adaptive learning is the resources, which include hiring instructional designers and providing personnel, financial, and

time resources. As shown in the table below, the statements in the questionnaires contextualize these ideas.

Table 8

Lecturers' Perceptions towards the Organizational Resources for Adaptive Learning Implementation

No	Statement	Mean	SD
1	The university's management hires instructional designers for adaptive learning courses.	3.7	0.96
2	The university management provides personnel resources for implementing adaptive learning.	3.9	0.83

From Table 8, it can be concluded that lecturers at VNU have rather positive perceptions towards the organization's effort in hiring instructional designers and providing personnel, financial, and time resources to facilitate the implementation of adaptive learning. Among the ideas relating to organizational resources in the implementation of adaptive learning, the highest mean value (0.96) goes to the statement that the university management hires instructional designers for adaptive learning courses. This implies that lecturers have various ideas about the practice of hiring instructional designers at their universities, and maybe this practice is not common at their institutions. This is the reason why lecturers' perceptions of organizational resources for adaptive learning implementation vary.

The average mean scores are below 4.0 on the 5-point Likert scale, which shows that the lecturers do not highly appreciate the university management's efforts in providing favorable resources for implementing adaptive learning.

Discussion

This research presents the opinions of VNU Hanoi lecturers on adaptive learning and the value of combining technology and pedagogy. Definitional variety may have an impact on the discussions and discoveries around adaptive learning, perhaps improving understanding.

Technology

Standardized surveys yielded quantitative data showing a significant awareness of adaptive learning systems. Most participants (79%) who stated that adaptable learning aids are necessary for customized education confirmed the idea that technology improves and customizes teaching. According to Muoz et al. (2022), the use of specialized techniques in their research significantly increases learners' engagement and efficacy. Qualitative interviews concur. Interviewee 3 explained that adaptive learning is a harmonious blend of pedagogical innovation and educational technology tailored to each student's individual needs, indicating that it extends beyond technology. Interviewee 5 stated:

"Viewing adaptive learning solely as a technological solution overlooks its deeper significance as an educational process that empowers learners."

According to Cavanagh et al. (2020) and Taylor et al. (2021), adaptive learning is a comprehensive approach that transcends technology to provide personalized learning experiences. Both qualitative and quantitative data support adaptive learning. The most significant data analysis mean (4.6 out of 5) indicates that academics are enthusiastic about

incorporating ICT into their teaching, which indicates VNU instructors' willingness to implement innovative pedagogical methods.

Pedagogy

Many VNU professors acknowledge the power of adaptive learning to enhance and personalize learning. Interviewee 1 indicated that

"It's not just about technology; it's about leveraging pedagogical insights with technical expertise to tailor learning experiences."

Adaptive learning must be perceived as a pedagogical approach that empowers learners rather than merely a technological tool. Adaptive learning establishes a dynamic virtual classroom that accommodates students' needs, as per Barron et al. (2020) and Liu et al. (2020). Interviewees 2 and 4 advocate for seminars and training courses to remind instructors that adaptive learning necessitates ongoing professional development. This supports Johnson and Sampson's (2019) assertion that educators require continuous training to remain informed about evolving educational methodologies and technologies. Interviewee 6 indicated:

"Adaptive learning remains underutilized when instructors are unable to fully comprehend its potential."

According to Bonavita and Laloyaux's (2020) findings on teacher competency in these systems, this statement emphasizes the significance of thorough professional development for maximizing the advantages of adaptive learning systems.

Organization

The data suggests that adaptive learning necessitates a greater allocation of resources and institutional support. Hiring instructional designers for adaptive learning courses resulted in the lowest score (3.7 out of 5), which suggests a resource shortage. Interviewee 7 underscored the importance of digital literacy and the time and effort required for lecturers to implement adaptive learning. Mirata et al. (2020) identified organizational support and infrastructure as the primary challenges associated with the implementation of adaptive learning technology. In order to resolve these challenges, VNU should employ instructional designers, investigate the efficacy of adaptive learning courses, and compensate instructors. This strategy supports Brown and Green's (2020) emphasis on the significance of organizational infrastructure in the adoption of new educational technology. Interviewees 2 and 4 also suggested that the institution should offer seminars and training courses to assist instructors in the adoption of adaptive learning, contending that a structured support system is indispensable. Universities should allocate additional resources to technical and pedagogical adaptive learning courses, as the implementation of adaptive learning necessitates a comprehensive approach and supportive infrastructure, as per Maaliw III (2020) and El-Sabagh (2021).

This investigation focuses on the theoretical and practical aspects of adaptive learning. Understanding the perspectives of Vietnamese undergraduate instructors, including majors, enhances research findings. This article consolidates and clarifies prior research on adaptable learning. This comprehensive comprehension is essential for the advancement of adaptive learning in higher education and future research.

Conclusion

This study shows that lecturers had different ideas on how adaptive learning is defined, and they had positive opinions on the acceptance of implementing it. This study also reveals the overall positive perceptions of lecturers towards various factors involved in implementing adaptive learning, which are categorized into three aspects: technology, pedagogy, and organization. Among these three categories, organizations have received the least positive feedback, implying the need for better investment from VNU affiliates to ensure the effective implementation of adaptive learning. Though concerns about the growing workload exist, lecturers understand the positive impact of adaptive learning on student involvement and their professional development. The findings of this research highlight the need for organizers to allocate more resources and support for implementing adaptive learning systems, addressing organizational challenges to improve efficiency and reduce associated workloads. For stakeholders, the study underscores the importance of investing in infrastructure and training, providing insights into the strategic allocation of resources to establish a robust framework for adaptive learning at Vietnam National University, Hanoi. Additionally, lecturers are encouraged to engage with adaptive learning tools and participate in professional development opportunities to adopt innovative teaching methods that cater to diverse learning needs and enhance student engagement.

Nevertheless, there are substantial constraints, such as the study's emphasis on only VNU and potential biases in personally provided data from lecturers' perspectives. A larger sample size could be used in future research to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation of adaptive learning in a wide range of educational contexts. Also, given the small sample size (68 out of over 1,700 lecturers at VNU), caution must be taken, and the findings might not be generalized to all lecturers at VNU.

The research concludes with a perceptive examination of the perspectives on adaptive learning at Vietnam National University, Hanoi. However, additional research is required to address the identified deficiencies and enhance comprehension in this field.

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EFL Learners' Perceptions of Conversational Videos Regarding Classroom Engagement at a Language Center in Can Tho City

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ABSTRACT

With the increasing integration of technology into language education, conversational videos have gained popularity for their ability to provide learners with rich content and context while facilitating language acquisition. However, there is still more to learn about how these videos affect student participation in the classroom, especially for Vietnamese students taking general English courses. This study addresses this gap by investigating students' perceptions of conversational videos' influence on classroom engagement at a foreign language center in Can Tho City, Vietnam. Using a mixed-method design, questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from 30 intermediate Vietnamese learners in General English classes. The questionnaires were employed to explore the EFL learners' opinions on the effectiveness of conversational videos through behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. In addition, the data collected from the interviews were analyzed to provide detailed explanations in this study. The findings indicate that most learners appreciated the usefulness of conversational videos in enhancing three types of engagement in the classroom learning process. This research seeks to shed light on the effectiveness of integrating conversational videos into language instruction and its implications for enhancing learner engagement, thereby informing pedagogical practices in similar contexts.

Keywords:

Conversational videos, classroom engagement, perceptions, language instruction

Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology is impacting the majority of academic disciplines, English language teaching (ELT) being no exception. It is imperative that ELT teachers recognize how technology can enhance the teaching and learning process. The application of technology has progressively included technical tools that can improve students' learning outcomes and experiences in this age of rapidly evolving technological trends. According to

Pribadi (2017), educational information technology has globally created a range of innovative media that can improve learning's efficacy and efficiency. This means that these modifications show that, in the global world, using information technology in the classroom to enhance learning has become necessary and demanded. It is well known that a large number of academics, language instructors, and material designers have recently become interested in examining the efficacy of different approaches and techniques that can be used in EFL classes to support students' acquisition of language skills and enhance the teaching and learning process. The influence of realistic video materials on the learning outcomes of English language learners was highlighted by Thanajaro (2000). Using video resources promotes global communication among English language learners (Sherman, 2003). This prompts numerous scholars to investigate the reasons behind the preferences of certain teachers to use digital technology in foreign language instruction while others do not.

Literature review

Classroom Engagement

Reschly and Christenson (2012) asserted that differences in the number of components of learner engagement have impeded research in the field. A range of research studies introduced different models of student engagement comprising two, three, and four components. To be more specific, Sidelinger (2010) defined engagement as actions that take place both within and outside of the classroom. Certain researchers proposed, based on Fredricks and McColskey (2012), that engagement consists of two dimensions: behavior (such as involvement, effort, and positive conduct) and emotion (like interest, belonging, value, and positive feelings). More recently, others have proposed a three-component model of student participation. The three components themselves, which vary from study to study and are typically behavior, emotion, and cognitive in most studies, may change. The four types of engagement are behavioral, cognitive, affective, and psychological.

In conclusion, several studies (Appleton et al., 2008; Carter et al., 2012; Fredricks et al., 2004; Phan, 2014b; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Upadaya & Salmela-Aro, 2013) have revealed that there are discrepancies in the definitions and coverage of engagement. Researchers do, however, generally agree that engagement is multifaceted and consists of a variety of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements that combine to represent students' positive learning styles. As a result, the current research adopts this three-component model, and each component is considered within the study's parameters. Stated differently, taking into account the study's context, the researcher described classroom engagement as occurring after behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

Behavioral engagement

According to Fredricks et al. (2004), behavioral engagement is defined as engagement in positive conduct, including adhering to classroom norms, following rules, and avoiding disruptive behaviors such as being troublesome or skipping school. For this study, behavioral engagement also encompasses positive conduct related to learning and academic tasks within the classroom setting.

Emotional engagement

According to Fredricks et al. (2004), emotional engagement refers to students' positive and negative emotional responses toward their professors, peers, academic work, and school as a whole. This study examines affective factors such as enjoyment, support, sense of belonging, and attitudes toward peers, teachers, learning, and the school environment in general to understand emotional engagement.

Cognitive engagement

According to Fredricks et al. (2004), the cognitive engagement dimension specifically measures students' level of commitment to their education. In this study, cognitive engagement focuses on the learner's commitment to mastering and engaging in learning activities.

Conversational Videos

In the light of this study, the conversational video selection followed the features of Berk (2009). Berk (2009) emphasizes that videos are rated from "G" for general audiences, but more crucial are content ratings for graphic violence, obscene language, nudity, sexuality, and gore. Commercial movies and music videos often use extreme content to attract audiences. Suppose a video clip or an entire film is to be used as a teaching tool. In that case, criteria must be established to determine what is appropriate and acceptable in an educational context.

Berk (2009) identifies three sets of criteria to consider: (a) the students' characteristics, (b) the offensiveness of the video, and (c) the video structure. The first set pertains to socio-demographic characteristics such as age or grade level, gender, ethnicity, and language dominance. Instructors must consider these characteristics when selecting a video. The video structure should also be suitable for instructional use. The following guidelines are suggested when creating video clips: (a) length - keep it as short as possible to convey the point; edit ruthlessly to a maximum of three minutes unless the learning outcome requires a longer extract; (b) context - use authentic everyday language unless the purpose relates to language instruction; (c) actions/visual cues - ensure that actions relate directly to the purpose and eliminate anything extraneous; and (d) the number of characters - limit the number to only those necessary to make the point, as too many can be confusing or distracting.

Related Studies

Several studies have been conducted in the field of student engagement, as well as factors that affect EFL student engagement in different contexts. For example, Sengsouliya et al. (2020) researched high school students' engagement and factors predicting their engagement. The researchers used questionnaires, interviews, and observations to collect quantitative and qualitative data. In total, 71 students who studied at a high school in Laos participated in this study. The findings indicated that most of the students had a high level of engagement in all emotional, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions. Particularly, the engagement scores of behavioral and emotional dimensions outweighed the cognitive ones. In addition, teacher-related factors, including the teacher's attention and caring for students, the teacher's comments, the teacher's teaching methods, the teacher's encouragement, the teacher's interaction, and the teacher's friendliness, had the most importance to students' learning engagement. Besides, the

students in the sample also mentioned that interacting and discussing with their peers gave them fun and helped them to be more engaged in learning activities. Apart from these factors, personal motivation, school-level factors, and family factors also affected student engagement in the classroom.

Scoping into the Vietnamese context, Ngo (2021) carried out a study to find out factors that affect non-English students' engagement in their EFL courses at a university. The samples of the study consisted of four groups of students who were selected from four different classes. The participants were all freshmen students. Each group included from four to six students who volunteered to participate in the study. This qualitative study used a focus group interview as its main tool to collect data. There were four focus-group interviews conducted in total. After the qualitative data were analyzed, several factors were identified as affecting non-English students' engagement. Firstly, the findings of the study showed that school-related factors received the most agreement among the participants to affect all dimensions of their engagement in English learning. The respondents also proposed task characteristics as an essential determinant of their engagement. Additionally, the third factor was the students' self-perception of their target language ability. Besides, the students reported that they were more engaged when they became autonomous in learning activities. The findings of this study align well with the findings belonging to Sengsouliya et al. (2020), which show the high level of learners' engagement in all the dimensions mentioned in both studies.

In another context, Tran (2022) conducted a study to investigate EFL Vietnamese students' perceptions of their engagement in the face-to-face learning environment to gain an in-depth understanding of tertiary student engagement. A quantitative research approach was used, and a questionnaire was used to collect the data. The participants of the study were 428 tertiary students, including 241 English-majored students and 187 non-English major students. The findings showed that students were highly engaged in learning English. This study also highlighted that non-English major students were less engaged than English-major students in their English classes. Particularly, the student cognitive engagement degree was the highest, while the student agentic engagement degree was the lowest. The low level of agentic engagement indicated the passive learning style of Vietnamese students. They just received what teachers delivered to them without giving constructive contributions to the flow of the lessons. These findings raised the need for teachers to find out the factors that affect non-English students' engagement as well as strategies to engage non-English students in English learning.

In the responses to the effect of using video materials on English learning, a group of researchers, including Ly, Chu, Tran, and Pham (2024) from Van Lang University, conducted the study to examine students' perspectives on using YouTube for English language learning and its impact on their motivation and autonomy in education. A mixed-methods approach was employed, surveying 333 English-major students at Van Lang University using a 24-item multiple-choice questionnaire based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). This model includes three factors: Perceived Usefulness, Perceived Ease of Use, and Intention of Use. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten students to delve deeper into their individual experiences and perspectives, focusing on themes of skill development,

motivation, and autonomy. The data revealed that students generally find YouTube an effective tool to motivate them to learn English and to give them control over their learning. Apart from listening skills, students also experienced some enhancement in their speaking skills. The research recommends that English teachers adapt and adjust the use of YouTube for both in-class assignments and homework to encourage student motivation and autonomy, ultimately resulting in more effective and enjoyable language learning.

Besides, using social media in EFL classrooms is also intriguing. Currently, TikTok is one of the most popular online applications. It has recently been recognized as a helpful tool for facilitating the teaching of speaking skills. Recognizing the usefulness of this kind of social media, the study of Nguyen and Tran (2024) aimed to explore the application of TikTok in speaking classes. This study employs a mixed-method research design to explore the perceptions of second-year English major students at Van Lang University (VLU) regarding the use of TikTok for learning speaking skills. Two research instruments were used: interviews and questionnaires. The results showed that students believe TikTok positively impacts their speaking skills. Additionally, TikTok can be implemented in Speaking-4 classes as an additional tool to enhance students' speaking skills outside the classroom. The use of TikTok as a technological tool in this study gained various positive responses aligning with the results regarding the use of YouTube (Ly et al., 2024) to improve learners' language learning.

The effect of video materials on English learning was also found in the study about a test of hypothesis by Ho & Le (2022). Video materials are increasingly used in EFL classes due to their perceived effectiveness. However, using these materials presents challenges as EFL teachers need to assess the suitability of videos for their learners. This study was conducted qualitatively to capture language learners' perspectives on the use of video materials in their English classes. Six hypotheses concerning the use of video materials in the Vietnamese context were explored. Fine focus-group interviews were conducted with 25 English students at a tertiary institution in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam. The data revealed that Vietnamese students found video materials effective, with animated videos featuring appealing sounds enhancing their learning motivation. Given the availability of video materials on various online platforms, students could learn outside the classroom and increase their learner autonomy. However, integrating video materials into classroom activities requires English teachers to have the skills to select appropriate videos for their learners. Consequently, the study proposed several practical implications for educators who wish to incorporate video materials into their classrooms.

In summary, as evidenced by earlier studies, numerous researchers have focused on examining learners' engagement with multiple elements in different learning environments. Elements related to schools, teachers, students, and families have all been evaluated. Moreover, various studies have highlighted the value of using videos or social media such as YouTube or TikTok in EFL classrooms. However, limited research has been done on the combination of videos' effectiveness and learners' engagement, particularly in the Vietnamese teaching context. To address this gap and contribute to the insightful aspects of engagement in language teaching, the current study aims to investigate learners' perceptions of conversational classroom engagement, including behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

Research Questions

To achieve the study's objectives, the study aimed to respond to the following research question: What are EFL learners' attitudes towards the effectiveness of conversational videos concerning classroom engagement at a foreign language center in Can Tho City?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The participants in this study are thirty learners. They are considered intermediate learners who participated in an 8-week general English course at a foreign language center in Can Tho City. Additionally, the researcher conducted all aspects of the study and taught the entire learning process from the beginning to the end of the intervention.

Design of the Study

A mixed-method design was employed for 8 weeks in this study due to its inherent simplicity, flexibility, and utility for exploring in-depth EFL learners' opinions on the effectiveness of conversational videos through behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

For quantitative data collection, the researcher first introduced the study's aims and piloted the questionnaire, then administered the questionnaire to the learners on the final day of week 8 to survey their perceptions of engagement through conversational videos.

For qualitative data collection, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews via Zoom in week 8 to gain a deep comprehension of the effectiveness of conversational videos. Five interviewees, selected based on the questionnaire analysis, participated in approximately 10-minute interviews. Ultimately, the researcher analyzed the qualitative data.

Data collection & analysis

This study utilized two instruments: a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The researcher developed all instruments based on the framework of engagement proposed by Fredricks (2004).

Questionnaire

The researcher developed questionnaires based on the definition of engagement provided by Fredricks et al. (2004), containing 15 items to collect quantitative data. These items focused on various aspects of classroom engagement and were divided into two main sections. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" to assess reliability and validity. The standard deviation (SD) and mean scores were used to analyze the data, with interpretation based on the following levels: strongly disagree (1.00-1.80), disagree (1.81-2.60), neutral/moderate (2.61-3.40), agree (3.41-4.20), and strongly agree (4.21-5.00). The questionnaire was translated into Vietnamese to ensure clear understanding by all learners.

Section 1 of the questionnaire gathered personal information. Section 2 addressed three classroom engagement dimensions: behavioral, emotional engagement, and cognitive

engagement. It used the 15 items to measure the impact of conversational videos on EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom engagement. Specifically, the items were categorized as follows: behavioral engagement (items 1 to 5), emotional engagement (items 6 to 10), and cognitive engagement (items 11 to 15).

The questionnaire's reliability was demonstrated by the results (alpha = 0.96).

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.96	15

Semi-structured interview

The researcher designed seven questions to gather qualitative information on the learning experiences of five interviewees regarding classroom engagement through conversational videos. Each interview lasted approximately ten minutes. Initially, the researcher explained the purpose of the interviews to provide context and clarify the study's aims. All interviews were recorded for accuracy and later reviewed. Learners' responses and comments were carefully documented for qualitative data analysis.

Findings and Discussion

This section discusses the study's findings on the prominent learners' perceptions and the possible factors affecting their engagement in English learning processes through conversational videos. Table 1 details the questionnaire results about learners' perceptions of conversational videos regarding classroom engagement.

Table 1 demonstrates how most students responded to favorable outcomes. Fifteen assertions obtained a high mean score. They were all higher than 3.41 points. With 4.28 points, Statement 14 had the highest mean score. When learning English with conversational videos, the learners agreed that they could easily understand the challenging target expressions. With 4.16 and 4.14 points, respectively, statements 6 and 8 had the second and third-highest mean scores. The students concurred that they experienced a range of emotions when watching educational videos hence these claims were connected. Conversely, statement 3 had the lowest mean score (3.41 points), suggesting that students who are trying to learn English through conversational videos cannot estimate the target language without the teacher's help.

The questionnaire's result also pointed out that the other statements gained a mean score of over 3.41 points. It is demonstrated that students engaged actively in conversational videos through behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. They gained from statements 1 and 2 in the sequence of 3.54 and 3.49. Most students accepted that they could communicate well in real-life situations and pay more attention to the lesson when interacting with conversational videos. Furthermore, behavioral engagement through conversational videos was also obviously performed by statements 4 and 5, which achieved a mean score of 3.56 and 3.50. Both showed

that an interactive learning environment and some discussion activities motivated learners to participate more in the lesson.

Table 1.

The learners' perceptions of conversational videos regarding classroom engagement

	N	Mean	SD
1. I can communicate well in real-life situations through conversational videos	30	3.54	1.05
2. I pay more attention to the lesson when learning with conversational videos	30	3.49	0.87
3. I can guess the target language without the teacher's explanation when learning English with conversational videos	30	3.41	1.11
4. I reach more interactive learning environments when learning English with conversational videos	30	3.56	1.10
5. I am more motivated to participate in some discussion activities when learning English with videos	30	3.50	0.98
6. I feel happy and enthusiastic when learning English with conversational videos	30	4.14	1.00
7. I feel attracted by the sound and vivid scenes when learning English with conversational videos	30	3.53	1.00
8. Task-based activities in conversational videos are fun to me	30	4.16	1.02
9. I feel curious and stimulated when I do not understand how some target expressions are used in conversational videos	30	3.72	0.98
10. I feel much more confident in communicating with my classmates after learning English with conversational videos	30	3.73	1.01
11. I can improve grammar awareness and vocabulary expansion when learning English with conversational videos	30	3.63	0.98
12. I can have a cultural understanding and visual context when learning English with conversational videos	30	3.67	1.07
13. I can memorize the target expressions easily through vivid scenes in conversational videos	30	3.58	0.96
14. I can easily comprehend the difficult target expressions when learning English with conversational videos	30	4.28	1.25
15. In terms of language improvement, I can self-study when learning English with conversational videos	30	3.77	1.04

Then, learners engaged emotionally in conversational videos. Both statement 9 and statement 10 had approximately the same mean scores (3.72 and 3.73 points), showing that learners have a strong sense of emotion, such as confidence, curiosity, and motivation, in communicating with their classmates after learning English through conversational videos.

From the result of the questionnaire, four statements got mean scores in the range of 3.58-3.77 points. Statement 15 had a mean score of 3.77 points, showing the learners to have a good awareness of English self-learning with conversational videos to improve their language skills.

In addition, statements 11 and 12 showed a positive response from the learners that conversational videos provide various advantages, such as grammar awareness, vocabulary expansion, cultural comprehension, and visual context. Moreover, learners also responded that they could memorize the target expressions easily through vivid scenes of conversational videos.

Importantly, the questionnaire results provide some facts proving learners' engagement in the conversational video learning process.

Last but not least, Table 2 below indicates the general scores of three clusters in engagement. The mean score gained 3.36, 3.49, and 3.47 points in the order of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. It is demonstrated that most learners have the same level of engagement in learning conversational videos.

Table 2.

The learners' perceptions of conversational videos regarding three clusters of engagement

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
BEHAVIORAL	30	1.00	5.00	3.36	.0.81
EMOTIONAL	30	1.00	5.00	3.49	0.82
COGNITIVE	30	1.00	5.00	3.47	0.91

The interview results revealed several factors affecting the learners' perceptions of conversational videos regarding classroom engagement. The following selected learners' interpretations were triangulated and exacted to emphasize the important role of conversational videos through three clusters of engagement.

Most interviewees responded positively to the effectiveness of conversational videos. They were very comfortable sharing their experience in learning with videos.

Yes, I have learned English with conversational videos for over two months. It's more engaging compared to textbooks, as in the video, I can see real people talking in real-life situations, which makes it feel less like studying and more like eavesdropping on a conversation. (Interviewee 3)

Yes, I have learned English with conversational videos. It was a fun and engaging way to learn. The videos contain multiple real-life scenarios, which made the learning process practical. Seeing real people acting things out makes me feel more involved. (Interviewee 5)

Moreover, in terms of behavioral engagement, learners also claimed that they had good performances in classroom activities due to the benefits of conversational videos.

Conversational videos are usually more practical and entertaining compared to traditional learning methods. The knowledge is visualized, which helps keep my attention and makes the learning process more enjoyable. Seeing real people and hearing realistic dialogue makes it easier to stay focused. (Interviewee 1)

Yes, often I could guess the meaning of new words or phrases through context. For example, if a character in a video expressed thanks and the other replied with "You're welcome", I could understand that "You're welcome" is a polite response. (Interviewee 3)

In terms of emotional engagement, when the researcher mentioned the feelings that they got in the classroom, a range of learners had positive responses.

Overall, I find learning with conversational videos to be a great experience. It's way less boring and stressful than traditional classroom learning, as I can learn at my own pace and choose topics that interest me. (Interviewee 2)

Studying with conversational videos is enjoyable and less stressful than traditional methods. I feel more motivated and curious about the content. It's fun and engaging to see how language is used in different situations. (Interviewee 1)

Regarding cognitive engagement, learners also raised their language awareness and enhanced their language self-study after 8 weeks of learning with conversational videos.

My conversational fluency has become better. I can think and respond faster, which makes my conversations much smoother. In addition, I became more aware of cultural nuances and everyday language usage, which are often not covered in textbooks. (Interviewee 5)

Since I started using conversational videos, I've definitely improved my communication skills. I feel more comfortable having conversations in English, and I'm less likely to stumble over my words and can brainstorm my ideas better. I'm also getting better at understanding different accents. (Interviewee 4)

To sum up, both quantitative and qualitative data revealed various advantages of conversational videos' strong impact on classroom engagement.

Learning from conversational videos is a great way to improve my communication skills, as they show you how people use the language in everyday situations. I have learned how to practice the natural flow of speaking and use the appropriate words in different situations. This helps me feel more prepared to have conversations with my teachers or native speakers. (Interviewee 2)

Conversational videos simulate real-life interactions, providing language practice and context. They helped me understand the flow of natural conversations, appropriate responses, and even body language cues. This made me feel more confident and less anxious when speaking with native speakers. (Interviewee 4)

Discussion

In light of the results, the findings revealed that most learners appreciated the usefulness of conversational videos in enhancing three types of engagement in the classroom learning process. Learners' attitudes toward the effectiveness of conversational videos regarding classroom engagement were interpreted meticulously as follows:

In terms of behavioral engagement, the study's results demonstrated that learners engaged in classroom activities positively and enthusiastically. To be more specific, they were able to show constructive behaviors in classroom participation, such as communicating well in real-life situations through conversational videos, paying more attention to the lesson when learning with conversational videos, guessing the target language without the teacher's explanation when

learning English with conversational videos; reaching more interactive learning environments when learning English with conversational videos; and being motivated to participate in some discussion activities when learning English with videos.

In terms of emotional engagement, learners concurred to having a vibrant sense of feelings about classroom engagement towards the use of conversational videos. The results extracted from both quantitative and qualitative studies indicated that learners were happy and enthusiastic when learning English through conversational videos. They were also attracted by the sound and vivid scenes when learning English with conversational videos. What is more, they perceived that task-based activities in conversational videos are fun. Additionally, most learners felt curious and stimulated when they did not understand how some target expressions are used in conversational videos. Last but not least, they got much more confident in communicating with their classmates after learning English with conversational videos.

In terms of cognitive engagement, various positive outcomes were recorded from the study's results. Most learners made progress in their language acquisition. Learners claimed that the use of conversational videos improved their grammar awareness and vocabulary expansion. Moreover, they could have a cultural understanding and visual context and memorize the target expressions easily through vivid scenes in conversational videos. They could easily comprehend the difficult target expressions when learning English with conversational videos for difficult daily conversational situations. Ultimately, learning English with conversational videos motivated them to self-study.

In summary, the findings indicated that most learners accepted the efficacy of conversational videos in enhancing three types of engagement in the classroom. This research seeks to shed light on the effectiveness of integrating conversational videos into language instruction and its implications for enhancing learner engagement, thereby informing pedagogical practices in similar contexts.

In comparison to other studies, it is commonly perceived that this study and previous studies bring out various advantages for learners' learning processes. Specifically, this study explored the digital factor of conversational videos to motivate learners' engagement. The study findings demonstrated that conversational videos not only significantly impacted learners' engagement but also encouraged language improvement, similar to previous studies regarding digital factors such as YouTube (Ly et al., 2024) and TikTok (Nguyen & Tran, 2024). Furthermore, the findings of this study align well with several hypotheses explored in the study by Ho and Le (2022).

Particularly, the qualitative and quantitative results of behavioral engagement are consistent with the first hypothesis: "Video materials could be used as authentic input for English learning in the Vietnamese context," and the fourth hypothesis: "Video materials could be integrated into classroom activities to accommodate an active classroom environment in the Vietnamese context." Additionally, the quantitative and qualitative data on emotional engagement align with the second hypothesis: "Video materials could be used to enhance students' learning motivation in the Vietnamese context." Finally, cognitive engagement corresponds well with the third hypothesis: "Video materials could be integrated into classroom activities to improve

Vietnamese students' learning results," and the final hypothesis: "Video materials could increase learner autonomy in the Vietnamese context."

On the contrary, this study also has some limitations compared to other studies. Specifically, the size and length of the study are not extensive enough. Moreover, this study only examined three types of engagement, including behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement, instead of four or more types, such as agentic engagement. Furthermore, this study identified differences between the three clusters, in contrast to Tran's (2022) study, which found that the degree of student cognitive engagement was the highest while the degree of student agentic engagement was the lowest.

Conclusion

In conclusion, these fundamental results align with studies showing that most students had favorable opinions about their participation in conversational videos. The researcher would be happy to acknowledge that using videos in EFL classes gives students access to a wealth of information and helps them transition from listening to speaking. Learners were able to maintain focus, generate curiosity, and be motivated by conversational videos. Videos also encourage the growth of abilities. They made the language more accessible to language learners by placing it in a visual context. Our brains are hardwired for visual stimuli, so this massive change in how people learn—by watching videos instead of reading books—will help with language acquisition. This article has covered the use of videos in EFL classrooms in great detail thus far. The recommendations listed above should inspire you to work and open doors for the use of videos in language instruction. The researcher has been effectively observing them in my language classes for a considerable amount of time.

This present study has a limitation. The narrow range of the sample size limits how broadly the results can be applied. The roles of the learners may have varied more if there had been a larger group from various courses. This study also indicates several areas that warrant further investigation. Future studies could concentrate on the participant data from various onsite learning platforms, allowing the researcher to investigate the reasons behind how these learning platforms influence learners' responsibilities. Understanding the characteristics of conversational videos also enables instructors to better assist students by offering a variety of interactive exercises and educational resources during discussions or assignments. More study in online or hybrid platforms is required to enhance student engagement and perhaps improve and sustain learners' roles during an online learning process.

Acknowledgments

Since this study aimed to explore and describe the current issue in the real-life context, particularly concerning using digital technology in foreign language teaching, it was best suited for offering a broad insight into particular phenomena and the thorough summarization of specific events experienced by the participants. Additionally, it might offer comprehensive details regarding students' roles in language classes and the variables that influence their

involvement or engagement with the learning process. Therefore, this study may provide further insight into how students use digital technology.

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Mobile Devices and the Autonomy in English Language Learning: A Deeper Look at Van Lang University

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: *English-major students, learner autonomy, mobile devices, MALL*

List of abbreviations:
EFL: English as a Foreign Language, VLU: Van Lang University, LA: Learner Autonomy

Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) is gaining increasing interest in autonomous language learning due to the increased necessity of learner autonomy for EFL students. This study aimed to determine how students used mobile devices to support their English learning and whether they assisted learner autonomy development. The study was conducted with the participation of 33 English majors at Van Lang University (VLU). The data was collected using open-ended questions for structured interviews under the qualitative method with convenience samples. It was found that VLU students made many usages of mobile devices in learning English and proved that they possessed characteristics of autonomous learners. They were not restricted by the learning time and space; they could work independently and effectively and were socially acceptable to collaborate. As a result, it is strongly advised that MALL should be used in the context of English instruction and learning in universities in Vietnam.

Introduction

As a growing nation, Vietnam places a high value on English and the increasing use of mobile multimedia devices and applications coupled with technological advancements has created enormous prospects for English as a foreign language (EFL). In the twenty-first century, technological use in education is crucial, and qualified teachers at the tertiary level play crucial roles in helping EFL learners acquire foreign languages. Along with that, teachers in the twenty-first century are being challenged to incorporate new technologies into their lesson plans (Kurniawati, Maolida, & Anjaniputra, 2018; Suherdi, 2017). Nevertheless, the majority of lecturers at higher education institutions have to teach longer hours in large classes, which may lower the quality of their English teaching methodologies in Vietnam. In addition to that, students of foreign languages have fewer opportunities to engage with their partners outside of the classroom and have fewer opportunities to practice their English in class. Therefore, integrating technology into EFL classes can potentially boost student English proficiency and

the efficacy of the teaching and learning process (Ahmadi & Reza, 2018; Costley, 2014). Furthermore, as Van Hoang (2010) noted, it is uncommon to find a strong language learning environment for English communication at Vietnamese higher institutions. According to the researchers' observations, students enter tertiary levels as exam-driven learners. This is a result of being accustomed to receiving information spoon-fed to them; hence, very little interaction takes place. According to Nezami (2012), this passive knowledge acquisition has made students less engaged in the classroom, less driven, and more educationally isolated. Learning a foreign language in a nation where the majority of people only speak their native tongue decreases the likelihood that the language will be mastered and makes it nearly impossible to have continuous and instant access to people who can help language learners practice, acquire, and communicate in the new language (Kukulka-Hulme, 2016). Learner autonomy and technology, however, are closely related when it comes to language learning, as technology has been shown to be an effective tool for assisting language learners in achieving their academic objectives. Since learners in the 21st century are becoming familiar with the use of technology, bringing technological devices into the classroom setting will meet their needs and boost their motivation, especially when it comes to language learning (Pazilah, Hashim, & Yunus, 2019; Ramadhiyah & Lengkanawati, 2019), and offer them a great opportunity to study independently and collaboratively (Yeh & Lan, 2018). Therefore, EFL learners can enjoy their education by utilizing creative teaching techniques and in control of their language acquisition by engaging in mediated mental tasks (Benson & Voller, 2014).

Learning EFL in developing countries like Vietnam can be challenging and not fully facilitated due to limited exposure to English in daily life and educational institutions (McCarty, Obari, & Sato, 2017). Language learners can encounter different learning modes beyond the traditional classroom setting with the help of Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL). The research gap the authors identified is the lack of studies on how MALL can enhance learner autonomy in Vietnamese EFL contexts, where traditional teaching methods are still prevalent. Therefore, the study aims to fill this gap by exploring the experiences of English majors at Van Lang University using mobile devices to support their language learning and autonomy. This study was conducted on a limited scale within the Vietnamese environment. It made an effort to look into how advanced English language learners with varying degrees of autonomy utilized mobile devices to help them learn the language. We will start by providing a summary of the literature. The definition of learner autonomy, mobile devices, and MALL applications will all be briefly covered. The research project's description, including information on participants, instruments, data collection tools, and analysis, will then be given. The results presentation will come after this. A brief analysis and conclusion will round out the study.

Literature review

Learner autonomy

Technology for autonomous language learning may have long-term effects in an EFL classroom when most students are accustomed to traditional teaching methods (Kamilah, 2017). In the context of teaching English as a foreign language, the subject of learner autonomy has long

been a favorite one. Learner autonomy in language learning refers to the ability of learners to take responsibility for their learning, make decisions about what, how, when, and where they learn, and monitor their progress (Benson, 2018). Learner autonomy is important for language learning because it empowers learners to take control of their learning process and develop the skills and strategies that will enable them to continue learning beyond the classroom (Little, 2019). Hermagustiana and Anggriyani (2020) believe that autonomy is necessary for language acquisition to succeed. As they develop their areas of competence, each student applies their distinct experiences and knowledge to the currently assigned tasks in the target language (Godwin-Jones, 2019). In language learning, a number of factors can affect learner autonomy. They comprise both contextual and individual elements, such as the learning environment, the role of the teacher, and the accessibility of learning materials, as well as motivation, self-efficacy, and learning styles (Li, 2019; Tella, 2020). According to Tella (2020), and students who receive proper supervision from their teacher and are placed in a supportive learning environment are more likely to become independent.

The technology that language teachers use has an effect on the learners' autonomy to learn a language. Alghamdi and Abo-Khalifa's (2019) study investigated how EFL students in Saudi Arabia can benefit from independent vocabulary acquisition through the use of a mobile application. According to the study, the application increased students' motivation, engagement, and autonomy while learning new terminology. Liang and Li (2018) looked into the usage of online collaborative technologies to help Chinese EFL learners learn languages on their own. The study discovered that the tools encouraged students' sense of autonomy and responsibility in their learning as well as their ability to communicate and work together. This study supports the association between the use of technology and the growth of language learners' autonomy. Nevertheless, some proof of a similar relationship had to be shown to discuss the context of Vietnamese EFL learners.

Mobile devices in the classroom context

Researchers have recently been interested in mobile devices, especially tablets and smartphones (Byrne & Diem, 2014). Generally speaking, mobile devices are described as either “hand-held electronic devices that can be comfortably carried around in a pocket or bag, including MP3 players, digital recorders, e-readers, tablets, and smartphones” (Kukulska-Hulme, Norris, & Donohue, 2015, p. 39). Given how commonplace mobile devices are in today's world, students probably anticipate using them when they attend school (Stephens & Pantoja, 2016). This is due to the fact that these new technologies are an important and potentially helpful addition to formal and informal language learning because of the opportunities they may present (e.g., individualized learning, the variety of mobile apps available, easy access to the internet), as well as the fact that learners are using them more frequently. Nevertheless, it should be highlighted that the field of learner autonomy began to be impacted by technology in the mid-1990s due to the internet's increasing influence on nearly all facets of our lives, including the teaching of second and foreign languages, as well as the opportunities for online collaboration and communication (Reinders & White, 2016). Language learners who do not have direct access to the target language can take advantage of opportunities presented by modern

technology, which is perhaps one of the most significant advantages of integrating them into language learning. Furthermore, Warni et al. (2018) found that using technology to study English outside of the classroom can have an impact on motivation, metacognition, self-confidence, and social skills.

The educational landscape is changing at an accelerating rate due to mobile devices, which are digital, easily portable, internet-accessible devices like tablets and smartphones that can help with a variety of tasks (West & Vosloo, 2013). These devices enable students to access information, simplify administrative processes, and support learning in novel and creative ways (Alexander, 2014). Since more students have access to and a natural ability to utilize these kinds of devices, it seems sense that more focus has been placed on the appropriate role of these devices in educational settings—both as teaching tools for teachers and as instructional tools for students. Vietnamese students are known to be quiet and reluctant to ask direct questions in class—However, some research has shown that mobile devices impair students' capacity to pay attention in class. For example, in McCoy's (2016) study, 89% of US college students reported that using a mobile device made them less attentive, which led to them missing lessons. As a result, in this scenario, student autonomy is emphasized as a crucial quality to improve language acquisition in the classroom.

MALL in EFL context and learner autonomy

The use of mobile devices for language learning is known as MALL. According to UNESCO (2013), tablets, mobile phones, e-readers, handheld gaming consoles, digital audio players, notebooks, netbooks, and consoles are among the devices used for active electronic training and education. The MALL method of teaching English as a foreign language is seen as a potential technological tool for language instruction in the learning environment because of its accessibility and universality (Isamiddinova, 2019). Consequently, MALL allows EFL students to engage with alternative learning environments outside of the classroom, giving them greater freedom and options regarding language content, delivery methods, learning environments, and scheduling, all of which contribute to increased autonomy (Djoub, 2014; Kukulska-Hulme, 2016).

Thanks to the quick advancement of modern technology and an internet connection, MALL in education is known as an effective language learning and teaching approach in which mobile devices are applied to support and integrate language skills. According to Wankel and Blessinger's study (2013, p. 103), students bring in and utilize their mobile devices in creative ways that can boost motivation since they see them as essential parts of their lives. In accordance with a 2014 study by Phillips, Grosch, and Laosinchai, students utilize their mobile devices for a variety of beneficial learning activities, including taking pictures, presenting, translating, playing Kahoot, Quizlet, Quizziz... and utilizing Google to check their spelling. Moreover, for writing skills, students are eager to use cell phones and other portable devices to access additional material for background knowledge and idea generation (Le, 2021). Additionally, research indicates that students who use technology to help with their grammar learning (Kulçkaya, 2013; Saeedi & Biri, 2016) achieve the best levels of reading competence (Dwaik, 2015) and study vocabulary. All they have to do is open their phones and use the AWL program. They didn't need to take notes because they could quickly pick up a lot of additional

terms (Ngo & Doan, 2023). Also, MALL and technology can assist teachers in transforming the language classroom so that English instruction is more individualized, interactive, and accessible (EF EPI, 2018). Kolbuszewska (2015) also noted that a new learning environment through MALL will undoubtedly arise because of the mobility of mobile devices, which can help students carry materials around on their phones. A growing number of publishers are also able to provide a large portion of their materials online rather than in print. Furthermore, it was confirmed by Viberg and Gronlund (2012) that language learners were highly motivated and found learning with MALL to be more enjoyable. Furthermore, numerous other studies have explicitly stated that the application of MALL for outside-of-class exercises has received far greater attention. As Pereira (2015) claimed, MALL is primarily used in four ways: delivering content instantly through YouTube videos; helping students create their own favorite learning materials; helping them review previous language lessons through games like Kahoot and Booklet; and sharing and cooperating for their in-class language learning activities.

From these above perspectives from MALL and learner autonomy, we can see the traditional model of teaching, where EFL students typically expect teachers to impart L2 knowledge, so that students can memorize the meanings and pass paper tests, is giving way to a model where students actively participate in their own learning through mobile devices (Matchan, 2015). Students will be drawing connections from a variety of knowledge sources more quickly in the future than they have in the past (Van De Bogart, 2014). Encouraging students to use mobile devices independently while they work on digital devices also maximizes instructors' time to give instruction to small groups of students, which is one of the most important and scarce resources in the classroom (EF EPI, 2018).

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey was seeking to answer the following research question:

1. In what way do students at Van Lang University (VLU) use mobile devices in English language learning?
2. How does the use of mobile devices in English language learning affect learner autonomy?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The study was implemented at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Van Lang University, 45 Nguyen Khac Nhu Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. It is reported that more than 2000 students are majoring in English at present (2023). Participants cover students majoring in English in their third and final year of college education who experience some phases of their school time during the COVID-19 pandemic. The students were in different minors, including Teaching Methodology, Translation and Interpretation, Business English, and Tourism English.

Sample and Sampling Procedures

33 English majors in their third and final year of tertiary education participated in this study. Two types of samples were used for the sampling procedures. Initially, the authors used purposive non-random sampling to select groups of individuals. Afterward, participants were selected with equal and independent probability for each group. In other words, convenience random sampling was used (Creswell, 2012)

Design of the Study

This study used qualitative procedures to collect data. This is because the authors wanted to address the insights from English majors regarding learner autonomy. According to Creswell (2012), this method is perfect for exploring a situation from different perspectives. Based on the theory of LA and MALL mentioned in the Literature Review, the authors designed a group of nine open-ended questions to interview. The questions were piloted for interpretation and understanding before interviewing.

Data collection & analysis

The authors of the study requested permission from the Faculty of Foreign Languages to interview students during break times directly and via the Microsoft Teams accounts given by the university to all staff and students with the help of Microsoft Excel. Responses from direct interviews were recorded and then transcribed using a computer program called Microsoft Excel (Dörnyei, 2007). The data were then analyzed thematically when responses were coded in themes that supported the research questions. Besides, the authors of the research also interpreted the participants' stories about their experience with mobile devices in learning. For convenience of reference, 33 participants in this study were coded from S1 to S33.

Results/Findings and Discussion

Usage of Mobile Devices in English Learning among English Majors

This section discusses the length of time students spend using mobile devices and how they use them in learning in and out of school. In order to answer the research question 1, the researchers have collected data from the following interview questions:

Q1: How long do you use mobile devices in support of your language learning a day?

Q2: What do you often do with your mobile device in support of language learning?

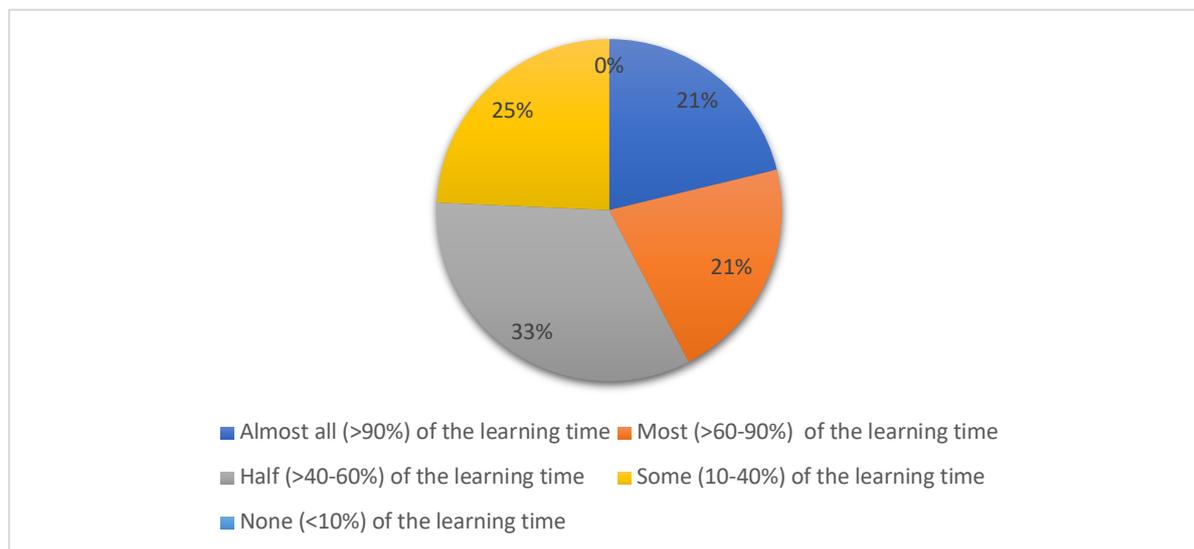
Q3: Do mobile devices enable you to connect with forums, websites, and communities to learn English outside of school? Give examples.

Q4: Do mobile devices give you more chances to interact with your teachers and learning mates? Give examples.

Length of Usage

Figure 1.

The Amount of Time Using Mobile Devices in English Learning



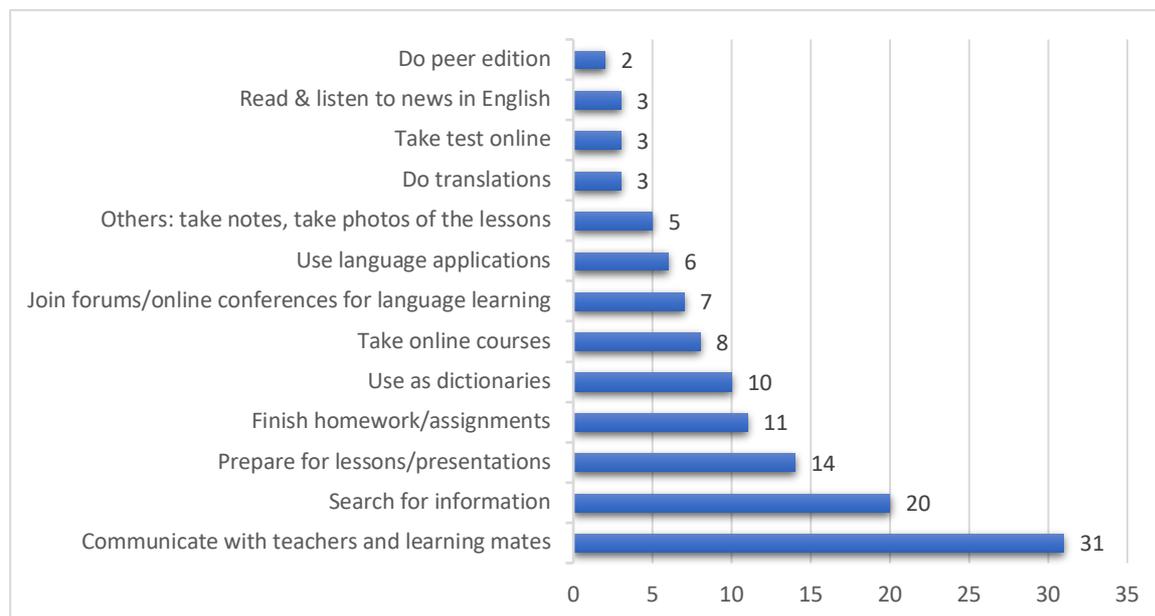
As can be seen in Figure 1, all participants confirmed the use of mobile devices in learning English when being questioned about how much time they spent learning with such a device. In particular, three-thirds of the participants revealed that they spent much of their English learning time with mobile devices. This finding is somehow equivalent to what was found by Junco and Cole-Avent (2008). The research indicated that students devoted an enormous amount of learning time to engaging with mobile devices, and it supported the idea that they are autonomous in learning, according to Little (2006) and Benson (2001).

How VLU Students use mobile devices for learning

Participants revealed various answers when asked about what they often do with mobile devices in support of language learning, as in Figure 2. The top choice given by two-thirds of the answers is about the capability to search for information on the Internet. This result is supported by Elahi, Islam, and Begum (2018), who proved that devices contribute a lot to retrieving information, especially from online libraries. Besides, other scholars highlight that applications and web browsers allow students to find research articles and relevant data in support of their research (Smith & Brown, 2020).

Figure 2.

The Use of Mobile Devices in English Learning



It was also revealed that VLU students made good use of mobile devices to support their learning of English when most participants (25/33) disclosed that they are useful for preparing for school tasks like presentations, lessons, homework, and assignments. One of the 14 questioned students, S28, said that she found it convenient and useful in preparing not only her home assignment but also her group presentation with the laptop. S15, minoring in Business English, contributed that his courses required a lot of presentations and group work which could be easily done with the help of a tablet, a laptop, or even a mobile phone. This is equivalent to a review done by Sophonhiranrak (2021) indicating that learners use mobile devices to submit homework, express opinions, and reflect on learning experiences like assignments and presentations.

Besides, a third of participants emphasized their use of mobile phones in support of extra learning activities. It is obvious from Figure 2 that six of them admitted that they relied on language learning applications such as Elsa, Duolingo, etc. Furthermore, 15 respondents indicated that they joined other learning platforms such as forums, online conferences, and web-based courses. For example, S17 confirmed that he took an online class for IELTS via Google Meets; meanwhile, S12 often accessed online forums to search for answers to a lot of questions regarding English learning. The other ten participants said they found it easier to look up words online or in-app dictionaries. The findings are aligned with Junco and Cole-Avent's (2008) study, which indicates that students use mobile devices for educational purposes, including joining online courses and discussions.

The remaining students, when questioned, revealed astonishing use of mobile devices. For instance, S3 and the other four used mobile phones to take notes and capture the class lessons. Some others confirmed that mobile phone applications could give them good translations in a short time and that they could read news in English or listen to podcast programs in this

language. This finding proves that mobile devices are flexible when they enable students to learn from various educational apps, digital and multimedia resources, and academic databases suitable to their learning objectives, as mentioned in similar research by Kay & Lauricella (2011).

Additionally, to learn more about communication purposes, the researchers raised the following question: "Do mobile devices give you more chances to interact with your teachers and learning mates? Give an example." The finding was impressive when 94% (31/33) of the participants emphasized that mobile devices did help them much in communicating with their teachers and classmates. Half of the students insisted that contacting their teachers and friends was very convenient no matter whenever and wherever it was. The other half proved that the university provided all teachers and students with Microsoft Team accounts, and this gave them the chance to communicate with teachers and friends effectively, even outside of classrooms. S14 said that thanks to the Microsoft Team application on his mobile phone, he could instantly get feedback from the teachers. Meanwhile, S31 and S4 mentioned that their group meetings became easier than ever thanks to online meetings with this application. The situation is similar to that of a university in India where WhatsApp was selected for students of a Bachelor in Education program to use with their mobile devices in support of their learning (Bansal & Joshi, 2014). Bansal & Joshi (2014) found that the social interaction with teachers and peers increased, and students learned more collaboratively. In addition, this finding is aligned with that found from a study in 2010 when Caballé, Xhafa, and Barolli showed that mobile technology offered more chances for learners to collaborate more effectively both inside and outside of the classroom.

In summary, it can be seen that VLU students' use of mobile devices in learning English proved that they possessed characteristics of autonomous learners. They were not restricted by the learning time and space (Benson, 2001) and were able to work with extracurricular activities out of class (Benson, 2011). Besides, students tended to use interactive ways and were more likely to take risks in trying a variety of mobile applications and platforms, and they focused on not only the accuracy but also the appropriateness as defined by Wenden (1998). Student's ability to communicate with both teachers and peers using mobile technology showed that they were able to work independently as well as effectively and socially acceptable in collaboration with others, according to theories given by Crabbe (1999), Hasim and Zakaria (2015) and Wenden (1998), regarding autonomous learners.

How the use of mobile devices in English language learning affect the development of LA

This section aims to find out the answer to research question 2. Therefore, it discusses the use of mobile devices in English learning among students and the contribution to promoting English learners' autonomy with the following interview questions:

Q5: Do mobile devices help you choose a suitable language learning strategy/method? Clarify your answer.

Q6: Do mobile devices contribute to your choice of learning materials? To what extent?

Q7: Do mobile devices help increase or decrease your language learning time? To what extent?

Q8: Do mobile devices contribute to the continuity of English learning when the learning environment suddenly changes? Clarify the answer.

Q9: Do mobile devices prevent and contribute to your self-study ability? To what extent?

Contribution to students' choice of language learning strategy/method

For this insight, interview question 5, "Do mobile devices help you choose a suitable language learning strategy/method? Clarify your answer," is raised. It was astonishing that all participants decided that they preferred using mobile devices to learn English because they were able to adapt various learning strategies or methods. They (90%) agreed that mobile devices allowed them to access different resources for language skills, such as movies, films, music, books, etc. S21 revealed that she often saw videos and short movies with native English speakers, which helped her improve her listening and speaking skills. Participants, including S7, S8, S9, S10, S13, S21, S25, and S31 (25%), shared a similar viewpoint, while others felt happy when improving their reading skills with e-books and online newspapers and magazines. Besides, 18/33 participants emphasized several useful learning platforms, such as YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, etc. S16 indicated that in addition to relaxing purposes, he often watched short videos from social networks like TikTok and Facebook which were interesting and attractive. He learned most of his vocabulary there. Students S2, S13, S26, and S29 introduced many applications for learning English, such as Elsa, Cake, and Duolingo. Another point is that participants S3, S4, and S7 confirmed the use of applications and websites for dictionaries and translation purposes. S3 said that it was extremely easy and free to look up words on famous reliable dictionaries via the Internet with any mobile device; meanwhile, S7 insisted on the effectiveness of Google Translate and other translation applications. S2, S5, S9, and S14 claimed to take online tests, quizzes, and courses. Especially, S5 took an online course with an Australian tutor 2 hours per session via Cambly, twice a week so that she could improve her speaking skills and seemed satisfied with this.

All I need to do is to join our online meeting twice a week, then I could talk to my tutor, and he will help me with everything from pronunciation, and intonation to ideas and how to organize a talk, said S5.

Participants have adapted to multiple new learning strategies in addition to traditional ones and have been satisfied with that.

The findings were supported by Chen and Lin (2019), who emphasized that mobile applications and online learning platforms provide a variety of language experiences and interactive activities that enhance learning acquisition and adaptation. Furthermore, Nurhaeni and Purnawarman (2018) agreed with this point of view. They found that using one type of mobile device, i.e., smartphones, has affected students' learning strategies because they are fast, convenient, and useful in learning English. It was proved that students accessed educational applications for English of their choice, interests, and needs. This is known as the metacognitive strategy. Students could also use cognitive strategies when trying to translate to and from English with a smartphone. All of the findings are equivalent to the definition of autonomous learners provided by Littlewood (1996) as individuals who are able and willing to make decisions in connection with their learning on their own, such as establishing learning objectives, selecting learning resources, and applying learning method criteria.

Contribution to students' choice of learning materials

Q6: Do mobile devices contribute to your choice of learning materials? To what extent?

In learning a language, choosing the most suitable materials is important. VLU students responded very positively to the strengths of mobile devices in selecting learning materials for the English language when 28 over 33 participants confirmed this. This is because they could have access to a diverse range of resources at their fingertips, as mentioned by 14 students. This idea was also supported by S4 when he referred to mobile devices as the most updated and modern ones, assisting him in approaching search engines like Google, Google Scholar, etc. In addition, S5 and S9 revealed that mobile devices offer flexibility and convenience in finding free materials from the internet. S18 indicated that they can explore eBooks, podcasts, and digital libraries for their learning experience anytime and anywhere. Astonishingly, S21 and S27 emphasized that social networks and media like Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube become their limitless sources of language learning when they could find videos of all kinds of teaching and sharing learning English experiences. The finding revealed that VLU students made their own decisions on selecting learning materials as autonomous ones (Littlewood, 1996). This finding could be explained more by Liu and Tong (2018), who assumed that mobile devices allowed students to select learning materials that are well-matched with their needs, interests, and goals so that they could create their own learning pathways. Delil (2017) proved the findings by emphasizing the contribution of mobile devices as educational materials because they could provide students with visual, auditory, and communicating experiences in the learning process. Looi et al. (2019) shared the same idea when indicating that mobile technology could provide limitless access to multimedia materials in support of learning.

Contribution to the increase in students' time of English learning

Q7: Do mobile devices help increase or decrease your language learning time? To what extent?

When asked whether mobile devices help increase or decrease English learning time each day, about 25% of students (8/33) gave negative feedback. According to S12, "surfing mobile phones results in a decrease in learning time because I am distracted by social networks or games." The remaining participants found that they spent more time learning with a mobile phone or laptop. This is due to the fact that many of their learning tasks nowadays can be done with the help of a mobile device. "I use all my time learning English with either my smartphone or laptop. I could not imagine how I could finish all the tasks without them" (S9). "You know what? My teacher asked me to find information about a traditional festival in another culture and prepare a short presentation for the class within a week. Then, I googled the information, searched for photos, and created my PowerPoint slides with the help of my laptop and smartphone. It seems that I use all my learning time with mobile devices" (S21). The findings are equivalent to those of Junco and Cole-Avent (2008) and Kinshuk and Chen (2005). These researchers found that students could study at any time. Similarly, Kukulska-Hulme and Shield (2008) said that mobile devices also offered informal and instinctive learning opportunities because students could access information and resources whenever they wanted. Therefore, it helped increase the quantity of learning time. As a result, it can be seen that they are autonomous (Littlewood, 1996).

Contribution to continuity of English learning when the learning environment suddenly changes

Q8: Do mobile devices contribute to the continuity of English learning when the learning environment suddenly changes? Clarify the answer.

The participants of this research, who were in their third and final years, have experienced much of their tertiary learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, in answering Q8, they emphasized the usefulness of mobile devices in their learning process. Almost all (31/33) agreed that Van Lang University tried its best to keep its learning from interruption by setting up online classrooms and e-learning sites. During the pandemic, they had to rely on computers, tablets, laptops, and smartphones to take all courses via Ms. Team classrooms with teachers and mates and to finish all tasks, tests, and exams through the Moodle system. According to S4, S18, S21, S22, S24, S26, S28, S29, S30, and S33, during the social distancing time when all schools and universities were closed, they were lucky to keep up with their learning schedule when all classes and exams were taken online using completely mobile devices. Similarly, S5 revealed that when he was discovered to be positive with COVID-19, he had to move to an isolation area, and a cell phone was the only way for her to keep up with the lessons via Ms. Team. Besides, respondents indicated that it was convenient to take online courses with the help of a mobile phone anytime and anywhere. According to S9, he improved his language skills with the help of an application. Every day, when he was on a bus to school or work, he took at least one lesson. Furthermore, S13 revealed that some of her teachers applied Flipped Classroom, in which she had to finish tasks given at the course's E-learning site before the session so that she could discuss them with teachers and friends. Of course, she could only do that with a computer or a mobile device.

The findings are allied to those of Dolgunsöz and Yıldırım (2021). The researchers discussed that EFL students preferred using smartphones, tablets, and notebooks for taking online lessons to using computers during the lockdown because of Covid-19. Furthermore, Bacolod (2022) indicated that before the pandemic crisis, mobile devices with internet access seemed to be a basic educational device for learning already, and students, though with limited experience in using it, were said to be familiar with mobile learning. Therefore, during and post-pandemic crisis, teachers and students saw mobile technology as an essential tool for learning. Similarly, Alanezi & AlAzwani (2020) revealed that students in Kuwait positively perceive the use of mobile devices for learning at the tertiary level, assuming that they are prepared to benefit from mobile learning courses. All supported the idea that VLU students were able to continue their studies far beyond the limitations of the learning environment, which is an outstanding characteristic of autonomous learners (Benson, 2011).

Students' perception regarding the contribution to English learner's autonomy

Q9: Do mobile devices prevent and contribute to your self-study ability? To what extent?

This question was raised in support of adding more confirmation on the contribution of mobile technology to English learners' autonomy. Even though there were some ideas saying that mobile devices caused distractions in learning because of a variety of entertaining activities, the result was rather positive when 23/33 participants admitted the positive effects. S1 agreed that the use of mobile devices helped promote her autonomy in learning English. This is because

she could search for information and learning materials and choose a suitable method by herself. S3 and S4 shared the same viewpoint and emphasized that the speed and quality of their learning were improved significantly. In addition, S14 revealed that a smartphone, tablet, or notebook with internet access enabled him to apply learning strategies suitable to his needs, interests, and learning goals.

It can be seen that Hazaea and Alzubi (2018) and Leis, Tohei, and Cooke (2015) shared the same points of view when revealing that participants of their research hold responsibility for selecting reading materials, choosing time to read, and making other decisions. These things implied that learner autonomy was promoted. The finding is also equivalent to teachers' perception that they applied mobile applications, including Quizlet, Grammarly, Padlet, Mentimeter, etc., to enhance English learner autonomy (Melvina, Lengkanawati & Wirza, 2020). Additionally, Wang and Gunaban (2023) supported this finding. They found that with mobile technology, students were allowed to learn with their preference at their convenience at any time and any place and to build up their independent learning habits. The research also proved that mobile-assisted language learning contributes to the development of learner autonomy.

Conclusions

The development of mobile technology has empowered students to overcome a lot of restrictions in connection with time and space in learning English. The research findings proved that thanks to mobile devices, VLU students can find and make their own decisions on learning materials and choose learning strategies and methods that suit their interests, needs, and learning goals. In addition, they also proactively contact teachers and classmates about study-related issues to determine the time and place of study flexibly without any difficulty. From all the above factors, it was proved that mobile devices play a significant role in promoting learner autonomy and creating independent learning habits among VLU students. It can be seen that VLU teachers may use mobile technology to support their teaching inside and outside English classrooms. However, this paper failed to discuss teachers' insights towards the contribution of mobile technology to the enhancement of English learners. Therefore, it is recommended that the drawbacks of mobile technology for learning be thoroughly examined from multiple perspectives.

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