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THE CONTACT AND COHESION THEORY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK BASED ON THE EASTERN CONTEXT OF COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

Communication is among the main elements and requirements of modern life for all human beings. Communication competence and communication theories help and guide individuals to conduct proper communication and assess the process of interactions among different people. So far, almost all communication theories are developed based on the Western social, cultural and communicative norms, which may not cover works on communications among people in the Eastern parts of the world. This study reviewed and assessed 100 available works on interpersonal communication and intercultural communication from different perspectives. This study also assessed the results of four different original studies on interpersonal communication and intercultural among universities from different social and cultural backgrounds. Through the review of previous works which were available in the literature that mostly belonged the Western parts of the world, and thorough the evaluation of the results from the original studies which were conducted in an Asian country, some differences were found based on the main elements and steps of communication. Through the comparison of the results from the reviewed works and from the original studies, this study suggests a new theoretical framework of direct communication among individuals from different backgrounds under the Eastern context of communication. This study suggest the contact initiation, negotiation, cognition, and cohesion as four of the main steps for conducting successful interactions among people from different backgrounds based on the Eastern communication norms and social perspectives.

Keywords: ,ommunication, ,ommunication theory, contact and cohesion theory

INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of the main achievements of human-beings that helps them to know one another, to establish personal, social, cultural, and political relationships, and to achieve their common goals. Communication enables people to share their values and achievements, and to gain new personal, social and cultural information from one another. As the modern concept of communication is one of the key achievements of the world, the modern world and the ever-growing aspects of globalization and multicultural organizations and environments are also the main outcomes of communication among different people. According to Kim and McKay-Semmler (2013), communication is the main means to exchange social and cultural information and to establish social and cultural relationships. Sinicrope et al. (2007) believe that, in the ever-growing globalized environments, the skill to interact with different people is among the basic needs of people for both their domestic and overseas lives.

by social, cognitive and procedural issues as members with different personalities negotiate and manage the task at hand (Latisha, Anis, Nazira, Surina, & Mahani, 2010; Yong & Wendy Asrina, 2010).

To have successful personal, social, and professionals, people must learn how to communicate with others and must consider communication as one of the main elements of their daily lives. As stated by Lin (2011), communication helps people to learn, to know one another, and to find their places in societies. To conduct fruitful interactions, people need to consider all social, cultural and communicative norms and respect the differences. At the same time, environmental, social and cultural connections among people help them to improve their communication competence. Chi and Suthers (2015) also argue that, existence of close relationships among people help them to learn the essential skills and improve their communication competence.

Communication refers to the ways that individuals interact and exchange their information through the involvement of at least two social systems (Baran, 2004; Barnett, 1997; Huang, 2010). Communication competence refers to some practical knowledge, motivations, and skills that enable people to conduct fruitful communication (Spitzberg, 1983). According to Dusi et al. (2014), people can improve their communication competence through daily practices of interaction with different people.

Besides communication competence, communication theories and understanding of different communicative contexts and different communicative norms are also among the main issues that help people to conduct successful interactions. Information about different theories may also help individuals to evaluate the process of their daily interactions with different people. As stated by Miller (2005), a theory is not a special communicative behaviour, but it helps people to know different communicative behaviours and establish the easy ways for their daily interactions. Communication theories are mostly focus on the basic and fundamental levels of interactions among different people (Kim, 2010; Bennett 1998; Stepanoviene 2011; Vevea, 2011).

Most of the available conceptual frameworks in communication and communication theories are developed in the Western parts of the world and based on the Western social, cultural and communicative norms. Liu (2013) argues that, communication theories mostly were developed by Western scholars and under the Western context of communication. However, there are some fundamental differences between the Western liberal and individualistic lifestyles and the Asian collectivistic and indirect communication styles. People in the West mostly practice the low context of communication which focuses on openness and directness, while people in the Eastern parts of the world practice the high context of communication which focuses on politeness and indirectness (Abu Bakar & Mustaffa, 2013; Gudykunst, 2001; Gao, 1998; Park & Kim, 2008).

Thus, because of such difference the theories which are developed based on the Western individualistic communicative norms, may not cover works on communication in the Eastern parts of the world properly. Thus, this study aimed to assess the probable differences between the main attributes of communication theories based on the Western and Eastern contexts of communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of communication theories also belong to Western scholars and focus on the Western norms and perspectives of communication. It was argued that, communication science mostly belong to Euro-American scheme and communication theories also developed by Western scholars. The main object of communication studies in the West is their own people and their own issues, if Westerners work on the issues which belong to other people, they may judged based their own norms and points of views as well (Kim, 2007; Kim, 2012; Liu, 2013). Thus, the miss interpretation and miss judgment of scholars

and researchers in one part of the world regarding the different norms and values of people in other parts of the world may cause serious misunderstandings among different people.

Different people have their own different behaviors and cultural norms (Hei et al., 2011). As different people and different societies have their own different social, cultural and communicative norms, researchers must know the differences and must respect these differences; otherwise, the notion of prejudice may affect their works and their judgments. They must know that there are different social, cultural, and communicative norms, and must know that no one is better from one another and all social and cultural norms and values are the valuable assets of human being that reflect the beauty of differences.

Besides other communication theories, the Attribution Theory of Heider (1958) focuses on both of the internal and external attributes that could affect interactions among people. Heider asks researchers to assess the relationship between internal and external abilities of individuals regarding their daily contacts. The Communication Accommodation Theory of Giles et al. (1991) emphasize on the speech adjustment, vocal patterns and minimizing of the social differences among communicators. The Psychosocial Development Theory of Chickering (1969) focuses on the development of mature integrity and mature relationships among individuals from different backgrounds. This theory includes seven vectors which are: developing competence, managing emotions, moving from autonomy towards interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity.

The Contact Theory of Allport (1954) focuses on sheer contact, competition, accommodation, and assimilation as the main stages during direct interactions among different people. This theory focuses on interactions among people from different groups and is a widely cited theory in the communication field. Tropp (2006) through analyses and evaluation of around 500 works on communication found that the contact theory of Allport (1954) is widely used and is helpful for studies in communication among different people. But, the works which were analyzed by Tropp (2006) were mostly conducted under the Western context of communication.

The contact theory of Allport (1954) introduces four steps for the process interactions among people, which are: sheer contact, competition, accommodation, and assimilation. The results from different studies among students from different cultures and countries (e.g. Sarwari, 2014; Sarwari and Wahab, 2016; Sarwari, Wahab, & Abdul Aziz; 2016; Sarwari, Ibrahim, & Abdul Aziz, 2016) show that, even though the contact theory is a helpful theory, but still cannot cover all stages and perspectives of interactions among different people based on the Eastern context of communication.

Based on the read literature and based on the results from the above mentioned original studies, some attributes and elements such as contact initiation, negotiation, cognition, cohesion, coherent heart, respect differences, self-knowledge, flexibility, shared interests, and purposefulness were identified to be helpful during interactions among different people, especially under the Eastern context of communication (Allport, 1954; Buhrmester et al., 1988; Chen & Starosta, 2000; Cairns & Cairns, 1994; Lagos et al., 2008; Luthar & Burack, 2000; McCraty & Shaffer, 2015; McCraty et al., 2000; Jacob, 2010; Bernston et al., 1991; Kim, 1991; Kim, 2007; Kim, 2012; Paulk, 2008; Matveev, 2002; Michaeli, 2013; Paulk et al., 2011; Wilson & Sabee, 2003). However, most of the above mentioned elements are missing in communication theories. Thus, inclusion of the mentioned elements in a conceptual framework may help individuals and researchers to conduct successful interactions with different and evaluate their interactions properly.

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative method was applied to collect the survey data for the four main studies which support this paper. The main instruments were the interpersonal competence questionnaire (ICQ) of Buhrmester et al. (1988) and the intercultural communication competence questionnaire of Matveev (2002). Both of the instruments are designed based on Likert Scale with five options per items. The first data set belongs to the results from four original research projects on communication among university students from different nationalities. The first study which assessed interpersonal communication competence between local and international students of a Malaysian public university had 220 participants. The participants were 100 Malaysian students and 100 international students who belonged to 12 different countries. The second study assessed the characteristics of interpersonal communication among international postgraduate students of a Malaysian public university, and the participants were 128 students from 17 different countries.

The third study assessed the role of interactions among international students on internationalization of higher education and the participants of this study were 118 postgraduate students of a Malaysian public university and the participants belonged to 16 different countries. The fourth study assessed the relationship between English language proficiency and intercultural communication competence with the participation of 220 local and international students of a Malaysian public university and the participants were from 16 different countries.

The second data set belongs to the review of 100 published works on communication among different people. To analyze the related works from the literature, the quantitative content analysis method was used. The quantitative content analysis method was used to find out the quantity and percentage of the use of terms and attributes that include the min concepts and perspectives of communication in different contexts of communication. According to Allen and Reser (1990), the content analysis method as a fruitful analytical tool has been used in different studies. The quantitative content analysis approach uses to produce data that manipulated with different methods. The works were published between the time period of 1990 and 2016. The reviewed studies mostly were conducted in the Western parts of the world. The participants of the reviewed works mostly were university students and university staff, and some studies were conducted in some international organizations and multicultural companies as well. The findings from the four original studies were analyzed through the use of the essential tests from SPSS. The reviewed data were analyzed through the computer-mediated content analyses and the results from both data sets were embedded and reported in the findings section below.

FINDINGS

The results from all four original studies are supportive of the existence of some differences with results from the same or similar studies in the Western parts of the world. Based on the results, the gender and age variables had effects on interactions among the participants of the mentioned studies while these variables did not affect the results in the similar studies in the Western parts of the world (e.g. Aidoo, 2012; Ingman, 1999; Hunter, 2003).

Based on the results, 62 % of all participants reported that their self-confidence and self-knowledge helped them to initiate contacts with different people, and through negotiation they could know one another and reach in the level of cognition. According to the findings, more than half (59.8%) of the participants reported that their flexibility and shared interests helped them to be connected with one another and have contacts and

collaborations in their personal, social and academic lives. Table 1 below illustrates the quantitative results of the four different studies for some elements that helped individuals to conduct proper communication.

Table 1. The overall Mean and SD scores for each element from each study

Element/ Study	Study 1		Study 2		Study 3		Study 4	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Initiation	23.1	4.2	17.2	2.9	22.9	4.2		
Negotiation	20.5	3.7	16.8	3.1	11.8	2.5		
Cognition	25.2	3.9	23.2	3.4	26.4	3.9	15.1	2
Cohesion			20.4	2.8			23	2.8
Competence			17.3	2.9				
Respect differences	21.2	3.7	20.4	3.2			17.3	2.1
Flexibility	22.5	4	21.9	3.1	12.8	3.1	10.9	2.6
Shared interests	20.3	3.9	18.4	2.7				
Self-knowledge					17.1	4.4	10.8	1.5
Purposefulness			21.5	2.9	17.8	3.2	12.4	2.9

Based on the results from four different studies which were conducted at a Malaysia public university, the cognition and flexibility attributes were used in all of four studies and the highest mean scores belonged to the cognition attribute, as 25.2, 23.2 and 26.4 for the first, second and third studies respectively. At the same time, the initiation, negotiation, respects for differences and purposefulness attributes were used in the three studies. The mean scores for the initiation and negotiation attributes were higher in the first study, as 23.1 and 20.5 respectively. It means that, under the Asian, especially Malaysian, context of communication, initiation, cogitation, flexibility, negotiation, respect for differences and purposefulness are the important attributes of daily interactions among different people.

The results from the reviewed works show that the vast majority (87%) of contents of the works belonged to Western issues and were collected and reported based on Western norms of communication. At the same time, the results illustrate that most of the studies (64.3%) were conducted under the theoretical supports of the attribution theory of Heider (1958), the psychosocial development theory of Chickering (1969), the communication accommodation theory of Giles et al. (1919), and the contact theory of Allport (1954). About 20 % of them did not use any exact theoretical framework, and the rest used different parts from the different theories and mostly were interdisciplinary studies. Based on the results from the content analyses, communication competence, contact initiation, negotiation, cognitive ability, coherent heart, flexibility, self-awareness were mentioned and used in different parts of the contents as elements for communication competence and requirements for conducting successful interactions. Table 2 below includes the results from the content analyses of the reviewed works.

Table 2. The descriptive results from the content analyses

Element/ Attribute	Number of works used the term	Percentage
Initiation	75	75
Negotiation	42	42
Cognitive	83	83
Cohesion	12	12
Coherent heart	4	4
Self-knowledge	52	52
Purposefulness	36	36
Respect differences	48	48
Flexibility	61	61

Based on the outcomes from the embedded results of the two data sets, some elements and conditions were identified as effective elements and conditions for conducting interactions with people from various backgrounds, especially under the Eastern context of communication. Table 3 below shows the main elements and conditions for conducting successful interactions under the Eastern context of communication which were found based on the results of the two above mentioned data sets.

Table 3. The steps and conditions for successful interactions in the Western societies

Steps	Conditions
Contact initiation	Coherent competence
	Coherent heart
Negotiation	Self-knowledge
	Purposefulness
Cognition	Respect differences
	Flexibility
Cohesion	Shared interests

The results are supportive of the formation of a new conceptual framework based on the Eastern context of communication to help individuals to conduct proper communication. Figure one below includes the steps and conditions of the Contact and Cohesion Theory:

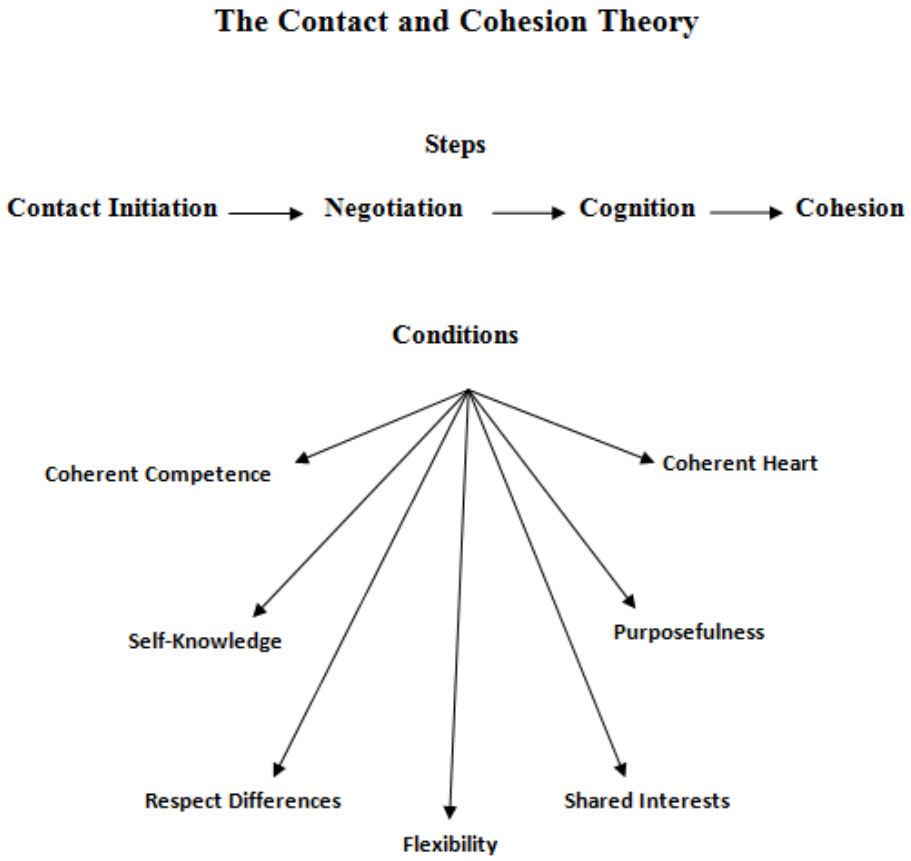

Figure 1. The steps and conditions of the Contact and cohesion Theory

DISCUSSION

Communication is among the main factors that affect daily lives of all human-beings, and communication theories affect the ways people communicate and assess their daily interactions. Proper communication enables people to learn, to share their information, to help one another, and to partake in the development process of their societies. Kim and McKay-Semmler (2013), and Lin (2011) also focus on the effectiveness of interactions among different people on sharing their different values and establishing social and cultural relationships. Social skills, communication competence and suitable theories and conceptual frameworks ease the ways for people to conduct fruitful interactions with different people. Miller (2005) believes that communication theory helps individuals to know different communicative norms and to choose the suitable ways to communicate.

So far, most of the theories and conceptual frameworks were developed by Western scholars and focus on the Western norms of social lives and communication. Based on Kim (2007) and Liu (2013), communication theories mostly focus on Western communicative and social norms, because almost all communication theories were developed by Westerners. As different societies and different cultures have their own communicative norms, thus theories which developed based on the social and cultural norms of one context of communication may not work in other areas and under different contexts of communication.

Theories which developed based on the Western norms and Western cultural values mostly focus on the individualistic and liberal lifestyles, while people in the Eastern parts of the world mostly practice different perspectives and interact based on the collectivistic norms of communication. According to Abu Bakar and Mustaffa (2013) and Gudykunst (2001), there are many differences between the Western and Eastern lifestyles

and communicative norms. Westerners prefer to be open, friendly, dramatic and direct when interacting with one another, while Easterners prefer to be polite and exchange their messages indirectly. Thus, the theoretical norms also could bring different results from one context to another one. The results from this study confirmed the main elements and attributes that help individuals to conduct interactions with different people under the Eastern parts of the world are somehow from different from main elements of the same process under the Western context of communication.

Heider (1958) focus on the relationship between the internal and external attributes that could affect interactions among people, and Chickering (1969) focus on the development of mature relationships between individuals from various backgrounds. While, in the Eastern parts of the world this theoretical condition may not work and people may be sensitive towards establishment of mature relationships with different people. Giles et al. (1991) ask individuals to minimize their social differences to conduct successful interactions, while in the Eastern parts of the world people could persist to keep their personal, social and cultural differences while interacting with one another. Allport (1954) introduces competition and assimilation as two of the main stages of his contact theory. Whereas people in Eastern parts of the world could consider the term of competition as a negative term and they may also do not want to assimilate thorough their interactions and they may prefer to interact, negotiate, know one another and establish some relationships instead of assimilation.

People in the Eastern parts of the world, especially in most of the Asian countries besides being friendly and besides conducting daily interactions with different people, prefer to preserve their own personal, social, cultural and historical values and norms as well. Thus, after initiating contacts with different people, negotiation, cognition, and cohesion steps may help individuals to have successful interactions under the Eastern and Asian context of communication. The results from the original studies which were carried out in a Malaysian academic environment illustrate that the cognition and flexibility attributes are the most important elements of successful interaction among different people under the Asian context of communication.

Moreover, based on the results from the four studies which were conducted at a Malaysian university, the initiation, negotiation, respects for differences and purposefulness are also among the main attributes of interactions among different people under the Asian context of communication. To say it in other words, to have successful interaction with people from different nationalities under the Asian context of communication, individuals must consider the cognition, flexibility, and purposefulness as important elements that could affect their interactions and they must respect differences during their interactions. The results from this study and the suggested steps and condition may help individuals and researchers to perform proper interactions, and to assess communication among different people appropriately.

CONCLUSION

This study assessed the differences of the main elements and attributes of communication theories between on the Western and the Eastern contexts of communication. According to the results, most of the available communication theories are developed by Western scholars and based on their own social, cultural and communicative norms. Based on the findings, almost all of the reviewed works were conducted under the theoretical guidance of the Western-based communication theories. This study also found some differences between the main elements and concepts that lead interactions among different people from the Western context of communication to the Eastern context of communication.

This study suggests a new theoretical framework which stands on four main steps which are the contact initiation, negotiation, cognition, and cohesion. The results from this study and the newly proposed steps may help individuals to conduct proper interactions and consider the differences between the Western and Eastern contexts of communication when interacting with different people.

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PERSONALITY TRAITS AND NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF MALAYSIAN TESL TRAINEE PRACTITIONERS

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ABSTRACT
Effective TESL trainee practitioners (TPs) not only equip themselves with the knowledge of the English language but must also have the right personality traits to suit their profession. Their personality needs to be further complemented with the proper use of nonverbal communication skills. This study investigates TPs' self-reported use of nonverbal communication skills and the dominant personality traits of TPs. In addition, this study investigates the relationship between TESL trainee practitioners' personality traits and their nonverbal communication skills. The Big Five personality traits measured in this study include openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and extraversion, while the nonverbal communication skills measured are facial expression, eye contact, posture, touch, proxemics, paralanguage, clothing, gestures, and chronemics. Data was collected through two sets of questionnaires given to 277 trainee practitioners from the TESL programmes in four teacher training institutes in Malaysia. Findings suggest that TPs are concerned about their attire during working hours, and agreeableness is their dominant personality trait. Out of the five personality traits, only three — agreeableness, openness, and neuroticism — showed significant relationships with nonverbal communication. Implications for these correlations are discussed. The salience of personality traits in relation to nonverbal communication skills of trainee teachers are further discussed as relevant characteristics in developing the skills of effective teaching. These characteristics are particularly recommended to be included in the ongoing reflective practices of teachers for awareness and self-improvement.

Keywords: nonverbal communication, personality traits, trainee practitioners, TESL programme

INTRODUCTION
Successful teaching comes about through the interplay of a myriad of factors. Among them are the ability to exhibit a good command of disciplinary knowledge, effective use of teaching approaches, possessing good personality traits, and communication skills. There is a considerable body of research which supports the view that teachers' personality traits play a significant role in learning and teaching. Cloninger (2000) defines personality traits as characteristics that distinguish one person from the other and cause a person to behave more or less consistently. In a teacher-student relationship, a teacher's personality traits influence the outcome of the interaction between the two parties (Teven, 2007). Teachers' personality traits can affect the mode of teaching and the approach that the teachers take when interacting with students in the classroom. Wubbels and Levy (1991) support the view that there appears to be a strong relationship between teachers' personality traits and learners' emotional development, which extenuates the connection made between student responses and teachers' ability to communicate both verbally and

nonverbally in an interactive situation. In one of the few studies investigating personality traits and their relation to teaching, competent teachers stood out as being more optimistic, active, imaginative, and sensitive (Rushton, Morgan, & Richard, 2007).

Personality traits have been defined in various ways. Burger (1986) defines personality as a show of consistent behaviour patterns emerging from within a person. Cloninger (2000) defines personality traits as characteristics that distinguish one person from the other and cause a person to behave more or less consistently. McCrae and Costa (1999) support this and added that a person's personality traits start to appear between the ages of 20 and 30 and will continue to be displayed in the years to come. Personality traits are deeply entrenched and gradually mould a person's thinking, behaviour, and conduct (Barrick & Mount, 2005; McCrae & Costa, 1990). It is obvious that personality traits are not temporary behaviour but are more stable and consistent characteristics (McCrae & Costa, 1999). People display their acquired personality traits that are drawn out by particular situations they face (McCrae & Costa, 1996).

Jonas (1989) asserts that effective learning and teaching depend on the interactions between a student and a teacher, which in turn are influenced by their personalities. The process of learning and teaching is governed or obstructed by the personalities that are involved in the interaction between the two groups.

A good and effective personality is needed for educators to contribute effectively in improving the education process in Malaysia (Nachiappan, Andi, Subbramaniam, & Veeran, 2012). Outstanding teachers may have a distinct personality profile (Ripski, LoCasale-Crouch, & Decker, 2011) that eases the teaching and learning process, especially with those students who have communication and emotional issues.

In this study, the focus is on teachers' personality traits and their relationship with communication skills, particularly those that are categorised as nonverbal. To capture the construct of personality traits, one notable attempt is encapsulated in The Five Factor Model for Personality Traits, often referred to as the Big Five, which has been described as the most compelling conceptualization of personality to date (Teven, 2007). Owing to its validity and reliability as determined by research that utilised it based on varied samples and various methodologies, this model is well regarded by many researchers (Hamilton, 2010). The Big Five factors are neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Extraversion is correlated with being friendly, sociable, and assertive. Individuals categorized as extraverted tend to be curious and imaginative. Being responsible and determined are sub traits of being conscientious. A person who is sympathetic and moved easily is characterised by the agreeableness trait. Finally, neuroticism is described as the showing of negative emotions such as anxiety and low self-esteem. The Big Five personality traits inventory was first introduced in 1985 by Costa and McCrae (Digman, 1996).

Teachers' communication skills are of paramount importance because of their mediating role in the transfer of knowledge as well as in other dialogic interactions. Communication can take place in any situation, anywhere, either formally or informally, through face-to-face interaction or via online teaching and learning. Irrespective of the medium used by teachers, successful communication takes centre stage in effective teaching and learning. Generally, communication skills can be divided into two categories: verbal and nonverbal. The following is a brief review on the importance of non-verbal communication.

Importance of Nonverbal Communication

Houser and Frymier (2009) noted that nonverbal communication complements verbal communication. In fact, Meherbian (1971), in his study on communication skills, stated

that 93% of communication is nonverbal. Of the 93%, thirty-eight percent accounts for tone of voice, while the remaining 55% is body language. This indicates that nonverbal communication is highly relevant in the communication process and has implications for the teaching-learning situation. In support, Grant and Hennings (1971) discovered that 82% of teachers' messages are nonverbal. Additionally, Mackay (2006), more recently, established that nonverbal cues from teachers in the classroom are as vital as verbal ones. He further added that teachers' facial expressions, eye contact, paralanguage, movements, and gestures all convey confidence and control, or a lack of them. In the discussion on non-verbal communication, Liu (2001) stated that body movement and proxemics are part and parcel of this. Burgoon and Hoobler (2002) broadly defined nonverbal communication as a person physical and behavioural attributes which spreads information. They also included clothing and chronemics to the list. It could be said that students reciprocate to teachers' communication by observing their nonverbal signals, though the response is moderated by culture, which could vary (Roach & Byrne, 2001). Students are able to trust and relate to teachers who are able to express clear nonverbal explanations. It is interesting to note that a study by Richmond, McCroskey, and Payne (1991) found that more than 10,000 teachers indicated that nonverbal communication is a much more effective way of establishing better student-teacher relationships compared to verbal communication, as nonverbal cues are subtle and easily communicated. This is further supported by Okon (2011), who emphasized that the quality of teaching can be improved when teachers learn to use nonverbal communication more. However, problems can occur when teachers are not able to comprehend and interpret the nonverbal cues from their students, and as a result, the students' needs are not understood (Ismail & Idris, 2009).

Effective teachers use nonverbal communication to complement verbal communication, leading to the students' understanding and learning of lessons (Sprinthall, 1994). Verbal communication alone may not create an impact on the teaching and learning process. Nonetheless, nonverbal communication can work effectively on its own when the receiver is able to interpret the meaning of a message by just observing the body language of the sender.

As stated earlier, the objective of this study is to develop insights into the relationship between personality traits and nonverbal communication skills. This study is important as it determines the dominant types of personality traits which seem to be the most effective for a teacher. Having teachers with the right personality traits will help the teaching profession as teachers who are friendly, dedicated, cool tempered seem also to have positive behaviour and this could directly or indirectly influence their nonverbal communication skills.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Based on the objective, the following research questions (RQ) and hypotheses were formulated.

1) How do trainee practitioners rate themselves for their own nonverbal communication skills?
2) Which is the dominant personality trait of trainee practitioners?
3) Which of the TESL trainee practitioners' personality traits show a correlation with their nonverbal communication skills?

RQ3 is further tested by five hypotheses. The hypotheses are presented below.

Hypothesis 1

Null→H_0:β_1= 0 (There is no relationship between openness and nonverbal communication).

Alternate→H_A:$\beta_1 \neq 0$ (There is a relationship between openness and nonverbal communication).

Hypothesis 2

Null→H_0:β_1=0 (There is no relationship between agreeableness and nonverbal communication).

Alternate→H_A:$\beta_1 \neq 0$ (There is a relationship between agreeableness and nonverbal communication).

Hypothesis 3

Null→H_0:β_1=0 (There is no relationship between conscientiousness and nonverbal communication).

Alternate→H_A:$\beta 1 \neq 0$ (There is a relationship between conscientiousness and nonverbal communication).

Hypothesis 4

Null→H_0:β_1=0 (There is no relationship between extraversion and nonverbal communication).

Alternate→H_A: $\beta 1 \neq 0$ (There is a relationship between extraversion and nonverbal communication).

Hypothesis 5

Null→H_0:β_1=0 (There is no relationship between neuroticism and nonverbal communication).

Alternate→H_A:$\beta 1 \neq 0$ (There is a relationship between neuroticism and nonverbal communication).

METHODOLOGY

In this study, a specific classroom culture is defined in terms of the locality, which is Malaysia, and in terms of the discipline, which is TESL. While locality and discipline are assumed to be invariable, what may contribute to variation are nonverbal communication and personality traits.

This study seeks to examine the relationship between the Trainee Practitioners' (TPs') personality traits and their nonverbal communication skills through correlation statistics. The instruments used in this study were questionnaires. The first instrument was the Communication Skills Questionnaire, which investigated the nonverbal communications skills of the respondents. The second questionnaire is the Big Five Inventory (BFI) which investigates the personality traits of the TPs.

The Communication Skills Questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section was to obtain information on the respondents' backgrounds such as age, gender, and ethnicity. The second section investigated their perceptions of their own nonverbal communication skills. The nonverbal communication skills were subdivided into nine categories: eye contact, facial expression, gestures, (haptic) touch, clothing, posture, chronemics, proxemics, and paralanguage.

The nonverbal communication categories chosen for this study are among the many existing nonverbal communication categories used by ESL teachers to communicate with different students. These nonverbal communication categories were chosen based on the recommendations of master teachers and the selections were also

based on relevant literature review. In addition, the nonverbal communication categories selected for this study are those that have been frequently used in nonverbal studies. This questionnaire was designed and used by Wan-Gould (2011) in her a PhD dissertation. However, for the purpose of this study, the communication skills questionnaire was adapted and modified from the original which was meant for event planners. The identification of the categories helped in the rewording of the questionnaire. Essential words used in the original questionnaires were modified to suit the participants of this study. For example "*I have close working relationships with my customers and team members*" was changed to "*I have close working relationships with my students and colleagues*".

The second instrument used was the Big Five Inventory (BFI), which consists of 44 self-report brief inventory items used to assess the personality traits of TPs. The items are simply and directly framed. This makes it easy for respondents to understand the items. In addition it allows quick and efficient assessment (Schmitt, Realo, Voracek, & Allik, 2008). The items began with a general statement, which is *"I am someone who…".* The use of BFI is further motivated by the fact that previous research has shown that the items have high reliability, clear structure, and also a strong convergence (Benet-Martinez & John, 1988; Soto, John, Gosling, & Potter, 2008).

For validation, both the questionnaires were given to five expert teachers. Expert teachers are teachers who are certified by the Malaysia ministry of education to be expert in their field. In order to be expert teachers, they have to sit for certain exams to gauge their knowledge and proficiency on language matters. In addition, a panel of observers will conduct random observations on their teaching skills and also their creativity in preparing their teaching materials. School administration would have to verify certain capabilities of the teacher as this is important. The other teachers from the panel would also have to give feedback to the observers on the future expert teachers' teaching ability and language proficiency. This would complete the process of selecting an expert teacher. The selection of expert teacher is stringent. Hence, the expert teachers are considered as valid point of reference.

These expert teachers gave their critical comments for the improvement of the questionnaire and also the suitability of the questionnaire for this study. In addition, the questionnaires were also pilot tested before they were used for this study. The pilot study was carried out on the same type of students who had the same characteristic as the actual group of respondents. They were of the same age, enrolled in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) programmes which provided the same courses, had similar exposure in terms of courses, and also practicum experience. These participants were also in their 3rd year of studies. Hence, some of the comments from the expert teachers and from the pilot studies were taken into consideration and the questionnaires were improved on. One of the comments accepted and implemented was to add a general statement "*I use these forms of nonverbal communication skills*…". The formatting of the questionnaires was also improved. The layout helped the respondents to see the questionnaire clearly. These were some of the improvements carried out after the suggestions and recommendations from the expert teachers and the pilot study. Both questionnaires used the Likert scale (1) strongly disagree (5) strongly agree as a measurement.

In order to determine the TPs' dominant personality traits, these steps were taken:

Step 1- TPs' self-assessment from the questionnaire was summated for each of the five different domains in SPSS.

Steps 2- The summated scores in SPSS were then transferred to Excel.

Steps 3- The summated scores from the five domains were divided according to the number of items for each trait. This provided the average score obtained by each respondent.

Step 4- The maximum average score for each trait and respondent was identified through the "MAX" command in Excel. The highest average score within the domain for each respondent was identified through the "MATCH" command.

Step 5- A frequency analysis was then carried out to determine each TP's dominant personality trait and it is shown in the form of percentage.

PARTICIPANTS

The respondents in this study were third year TESL TPs, selected from four different teacher training institutions. Two hundred and seventy-seven third year TPs were chosen because they had completed the fundamental TESL courses and had sufficient teaching practicum experience. Over the three years in the institutes, these TPs had gone out for their teaching practicum at least three times, thereby accumulating almost four months of practicum experience.

RESULTS

It is a standard practice to include a normality test. Normality test indicate the distribution of results. The maximum score for each trait is shown below. The total maximum score depends on the number of questions in each variable. The minimum (min) and maximum (max) scores obtained from the participants for each trait are indicated in Table 1. The maximum score possible is provided below the table.

A total of nine nonverbal communication skills were tested. Each category was investigated with a different number of questions, as presented above. The maximum score obtained and the possible maximum score for all the categories were identical. This simply means that at least one participant obtained the maximum score possible. In total, 15 questions were used to investigate these nine categories. As indicated in Table 1, two of the categories are represented by three questions, which is the highest number of questions, and five categories are represented by one question. Blunch (2008), in his study, used one question to determine sleep disorder.

Table 1 describes TPs' nonverbal communication characteristics. There are no extreme scores as the mean and median both indicate similar results. The standard deviation is negligible as the scores are close to zero. However, paralanguage has the highest standard deviation among the rest of the nonverbal categories, which means that the responses have the highest variation. The table above also shows that both the skewness and the kurtosis are close to zero, which indicates an almost bell shaped curve. However, among the nonverbal categories, clothing showed the highest skewness and kurtosis scores. This shows that, comparatively, the TPs were most concerned about clothing, in general. This fulfils the basic assumption of data normality for further analysis.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of TPs' Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal	Mean	Med.	Std. Dev.	Sk	Ku	Min	Max
Gesture	12.95	13	1.87	-0.75	0.15	7	15
Paralanguage	9.41	8	1.94	0.11	-0.15	4	15
Eye Contact	7.68	7	1.41	-0.19	-0.26	4	10
Facial Expre	8.16	8	1.26	-0.28	-0.02	3	10
Posture	4.06	44	0.73	-0.27	-0.58	2	5
Touch	3.90	3	0.90	-0.38	-0.70	2	5
Clothing	4.53	4	0.64	-1.55	3.82	1	5
Proxemics	4.24	4	0.78	-0.77	0.01	2	5
Chronemics	3.79	3	0.85	-0.36	-0.06	1	5

Med:Median, Sk: Skewness, Ku: Kurtosis

Nos. of items x 5 marks = Max Score

Gesture : 3 items x 5marks = 15 marks
Paralanguage : 3 items x 5marks = 15 marks
Eye Contact : 2 items x 5marks = 10 marks
Facial Expression: 2 items x 5marks = 10 marks
Posture : 1 items x 5marks = 5 marks
Touch(Haptic) : 1 items x 5marks = 5 marks
Clothing : 1 items x 5marks = 5 marks
Proxemics : 1 items x 5marks = 5 marks
Chronemics : 1 items x 5marks = 5 marks

The mean scores in Table 2, below, are in descending order from the highest mean to the lowest mean score. Five of the mean scores are above four, the highest being clothing (4.53). This implies that attire is much emphasised by the TPs in teaching institutions as an important nonverbal communication. This is a good start for their teaching career as TPs' appropriate attire indicates professionalism, responsibility, and competence (Gordon, 2010). This also indicates a positive attribute and implies dedication (Manombe, 2009). The second highest category scored by the TPs was gesture (4.32). The TPs viewed their use of gestures as appropriate. This is again important as appropriate gesture is important in showing the correct emotions and feelings in communication and in teaching. The use of their hand and other parts of their body would complement the words they use. Four categories had a score of below four, with the lowest being paralanguage (3.14). From the result for paralanguage, it can be assumed that the use of intonation and pitch were less satisfactory to the TPs themselves. This could imply that the TPs may have been hesitant when conversing in the English Language. TPs may also speak in a monotonous voice. Negi (2009) found that teachers with monotonous voices cause boredom in the classroom, and this is not a suitable communication skill for a teacher.

On the whole, the TPs were confident about their nonverbal communication abilities. Again, when an average score of three is taken as satisfactory and a score of four as good, the TPs' scores indicate that they had more 'good' evaluations than 'satisfactory' evaluations, thus, showing a high estimation of their own nonverbal abilities. Generally, the reported standard deviations did not vary a great deal, ranging from 0.62 to 0.9. As such, they were relatively stable. This answers the first research question which looks at TPs self assessment on their own nonverbal communication skills.

Table 2. TPs' Self Perception (TPSP) of Nonverbal Communication Skills

Nonverbal Categories	TPSP Mean	Std. Deviation
Clothing	4.53	0.64
Gesture	4.32	0.62
Proxemics	4.24	0.78
Facial Expression	4.08	0.63
Posture	4.06	0.73
Touch	3.90	0.90
Eye Contact	3.84	0.70
Chronemics	3.79	0.85
Paralanguage	3.14	0.65

The Big Five personality traits questionnaire, which consisted of 44 items, was used to determine the participants' personality traits which included *openness, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism.* Tables 3 and 4, below, display the data obtained on the personality traits of the participants.

Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics for the personality traits analysed in the study. The maximum possible score for each trait is shown above and the calculation is indicated below the table. The minimum (min) and maximum (max) scores in the table above indicate the scores obtained by the participants for each trait. The maximum scores obtained in each trait were similar to the maximum scores possible. This indicates that there were at least one or more participants who had obtained the projected maximum score. The mean and median are similar, which indicates that there are no extreme results.

The standard deviation shows the pattern of the responses, which indicates the high and low variability in the responses. The biggest variation of responses comes from the neuroticism domain. This indicates that the respondents' responses varied from each other. The skewness result was very close to "0" which indicates minimal skewness. The kurtosis was also flat as it also shows results close to "0". This implies the basic assumption that the data is normal.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of TPs' Personality Traits

Personality Traits	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Sk	Ku	Min	Max
Agreeableness	33.74	34	4.01	-0.07	-0.1	24	44
Extraversion	26.45	26	4.53	0.25	-0.04	14	40
Conscientiousness	28.57	29	4.46	0.09	0.27	15	42
Openness	35.28	35	4.28	0.04	-0.25	24	49
Neuroticism	24.18	24	5.24	-0.07	0.04	9	40

Sk: Skewness Ku: Kurtosis

Nos. of items x 5 marks = Max Score

Agreeableness : 9 items x 5marks = 45 marks
Extraversion : 8 items x 5marks = 40 marks
Conscientiousness: 9 items x 5marks = 45 marks
Openness : 10 items x 5marks =50 marks
Neuroticism : 8 items x 5marks = 40 marks

Table 4 illustrates the number of respondents based on their dominant personality trait classifications. The number of respondents was converted into percentages. The personality traits were assessed using the Big Five Inventory (BFI), which consists of 44

personality trait items that divided into five main domains, as listed in the table below. The dominant personality traits' calculation can be seen in the methodology section.

From the dominant personality calculation done on 277 candidates, 143 (51%) of the candidates had *agreeableness* as the dominant characteristic. Individuals with this characteristic have a tendency to be compassionate and co-operative. This is a positive attribute for this trait, which is very much needed in a teacher. Next was *openness*, with 52 respondents (19%). Poropat (2009) attributed imaginativeness, broad-mindedness, and artistic sensibility to the domain of openness. Teachers are expected to have this trait. The trait *extraversion* was found to be a dominant personality trait for 37 (13%) of the respondents. Extroverts usually enjoy being with people and are often perceived as being full of energy. The teaching job requires a teacher to like and be happy to be in the company of others. In addition, they are expected to possess the energy to teach and be the centre of focus for the students. Thus, those with *extraversion* as their dominant trait have good prospects for being good teachers. Only 10 respondents were found to have *conscientiousness* as their main personality trait. The number is small as those with this trait exhibit a tendency for self-discipline, to act dutifully, and aim for high achievement. This may indicate that only a very small number of the respondents have the needed self-discipline. This is an extremely important characteristic for a teacher to possess. The absence of this characteristic may be a problem. However, Costa and McCrae (1995) found that personality trait compositions are blemished by the fact that the domains themselves are not mutually exclusive, which shows that some traits appear within two or more domains of the personality traits. A person may have all the traits in him or her but one of the traits acts as the dominant personality trait. Thirty-five or (13%) of the respondents were found to have *neuroticism* as their dominant trait, which is a negative personality trait. Watson, Clark, and Harkness (1994) pointed out that those who exhibited high neuroticism were inclined towards expressing more negative emotions, emotional instability, and stress reactions. These respondents are felt to be more susceptible to burnout and may have psychopathic problems. This answers the second research question which is to determine the dominant personality trait of the TPs.

Table 4. TESL TPs' Dominant Personality Traits

Personality Traits	Number of Students	Percentage of Students
Agreeableness	143	51
Openness	52	19
Extraversion	37	13
Neuroticism	35	13
Conscientiousness	10	4

Relationship between TPs' Personality Traits and their Nonverbal Communication Skills

The chi-square table below shows the relationship between TPs' nonverbal communication and personality traits. Five sets of hypotheses were tested in this section and each hypothesis is individually discussed, below. Table 5, below, illustrates the association between the TPs' nonverbal communication and personality traits.

TPs with *agreeableness*, *openness*, and *neuroticism* as their dominant personality traits showed a significant relationship with the use of nonverbal communication. Hence, the alternate hypotheses were accepted and the null rejected for these three personality traits. This answers the third research question which indicates the correlation between TPs' nonverbal communication and their personality traits.

A hundred and forty-three TPs with *agreeableness* as their dominant personality trait showed a significant relationship with the use of nonverbal communication. John and Srivastava (1999) labelled *agreeableness* as social adaptability, likability, friendly compliance, agreeableness, and love. From the *agreeableness* characteristic, it is apt to classify those with this trait as people with good social skills.

TPs who regarded themselves as being open are those who were imaginative, intelligent, original, insightful, curious, and sophisticated (Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann, 2003). From the Chi-square, it was found that there is a significant relationship between TPs personality traits and their nonverbal communication. Fifty-three TPs were found to have *openness* as their dominant personality trait, and these fit well for them. Teachers who are imaginative may use all means of communication, including nonverbal communication, to make their communication effective. This will enable students to focus better in class.

Neuroticism is another personality trait that is found to have a significant relationship with nonverbal communication. Teachers with this trait have a tendency to experience negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, or depression, which characterise this as a negative personality trait (Rammstedt, B., & John, O. P. 2007). While being angry, teachers may use unwanted nonverbal actions which may cause unwarranted reactions from students. Facial expressions, gestures, paralanguage, and a host of other nonverbal communication are affected by the teachers' personality.

Overall, TPs' use of nonverbal communication is shown to be correlated to the three personality traits mentioned above. Together, the two positive personality traits, *openness* and *agreeableness*, were found to be the characteristic of 70% of the respondents. By adding this figure to *neuroticism*, 83 % of the respondents fall under the category of being able to use nonverbal communication significantly. These figures are obtained from the dominant personality traits shown in Table 4. Thus, it is safe to say that nonverbal communication was used appropriately by the TPs.

Table 5. TPs' Nonverbal Communication Skills and their Relation to Personality Traits

Personality Traits	Value	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)		Value	Approx. Sig.
Agreeableness						
Pearson Chi-Square	790.46	600	0.00	Phi	1.69	0.00
Likelihood Ratio	457.88	600	1	Cramer's V	0.38	0.00
Extraversion						
Pearson Chi-Square	717.01	690	0.23	Phi	1.61	0.23
Likelihood Ratio	467.24	690	1	Cramer's V	0.34	0.23
Conscientiousness						
Pearson Chi-Square	698.85[a]	720	0.07	Phi	1.59	0.71
Likelihood Ratio	474.63	720	1	Cramer's V	0.32	0.71
Openness						
Pearson Chi-Square	929.97	690	0.00	Phi	1.83	0.00
Likelihood Ratio	461.18	690	1	Cramer's V	0.38	0.00
Neuroticism						
Pearson Chi-Square	1028.29	810	0.00	Phi	1.93	0.00
Likelihood Ratio	552.83	810	1	Cramer's V	0.37	0.00

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Overall, the results of this study indicate that the ability to use nonverbal communication skills among the participating TESL TPs is good, as a majority of them had the three dominant personality traits which are significantly correlated to the use of nonverbal skills. The result proves that *agreeableness*, *openness*, and *neuroticism* showed significant relationships to nonverbal communication. This suggests that TPs with these personality traits are able to use their nonverbal communication skills effectively. Thus, it is safe to say that only a small number of the TPs need to improve their use of nonverbal communication.

As these TPs prepare to embark on their teaching careers, it is necessary for them to equip themselves with good nonverbal communication skills. TPs with good nonverbal communication skills will be better able to hold the attention of their students and deliver lessons more effectively (Allen, 1999).

Currently, there is a lot of discussion among various stakeholders about the teaching profession at various levels. It is undeniable that communication skills and personality traits are two of the most important elements that a teacher should possess in order to be effective. A teacher with positive personality traits and good communication skills will be able to attract the attention of their students.

Therefore, teacher training programmes should not only focus on the acquisition of verbal communication skills but must also emphasize and develop nonverbal communication skills among TPs and aim for a more holistic training curriculum in the area of communication skills. In addition, the Ministry of Education (MOE) should also pay greater attention to personality traits of prospective candidates when selecting TPs. The MOE and the universities should, therefore, work together in developing and enhancing good personality traits among the current crop of TPs and future TPs.

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INTEGRATING EMOTIONAL, MOTIVATIONAL AND COGNITIVE ENGAGEMENT TO CREATE STATE OF FLOW IN LANGUAGE LEARNING TASKS

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ABSTRACT
State of flow has been conceived as the optimal mental condition on a learner's part for task engagement and learning (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The occurrence of flow experience during language learning activities depends to a large extent on those features of learning environment which are mainly derived from a dynamic view of cognitive-affective functioning. Consequently, a balanced combination of cognitive, emotional and motivational engagement with a language learning task is regarded as a favorable condition for flow sate to occur (Dornyei, 2010). In this study, different pretask activities were used to induce emotional, motivational and cognitive engagement with a vocabulary learning task. The results indicated that each type of task engagement activity was effective in enhancing short-term gains in productive and receptive command of target words. Meanwhile, integrating the three types of task engagement activities led to the enhanced performance on both short-term and long-term assessment of target words, which is interpreted as resulting from flow state in task engagement. The findings of the study imply suggestions for adding emotional and motivational components to the syllabus and pedagogy of focused tasks in a task-based program.

Keywords: flow state, task engagement, vocabulary acquisition, focused task

INTRODUCTION
Language learning tasks were originally proposed to involve learners in cognitive processing of L2 elements while the primary attention remains on meaningful communication (Skehan, 1998). Nevertheless, 'authentic communication' as a defining feature of language learning tasks allows for affective and motivational dimensions as well to play a role in the language learning process. Cognitive processing of linguistic elements, through focused tasks for example, does not occur in vacuum and void of any affective or motivational impressions (Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004). In line with this argument, evidence from cognitive psychology and neurobiology advocates a dynamic, integrative and interactive relationship between the three components of mental functioning, i.e. cognition, emotion and motivation (Dai & Sternberg, 2004). Similarly, recent postulations concerning a 'dynamic system' view of SLA motivation (Dornyei, 2010) conceive of motivational processes as being in close interaction with cognitive and emotional elements involved in language learning tasks. In this regard, 'flow state' as "a state of intensive involvement in and focused concentration on a task" (Dornyei, 2010: 254) has been proposed to be resulting from a balanced combination of cognitive, motivational and emotional processing involved in task performance (Dornyei, 2009a).
One of the outstanding theories in psychology to account for the 'task engagement' is the Flow Theory innovated by Hungarian-American psychologist, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi.

He defines flow as "the state in which people are so involved in an activity that nothing else seems to matter: the experience itself is so enjoyable that people will do it at great cost, for sheer sake of doing it" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990: 4).

It is claimed that "as a result of the intrinsically rewarding experience associated with flow, people push themselves to higher levels of performance" (Egbert, 2003: 499). This state of maximal performance is what Csikszentmihalyi calls 'Optimal Experience' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

Flow state has also been considered significantly relevant to the effectiveness of language learning activity (Egbert, 2003, 2005). Flow can have such a crucial role in SLA process that Tardy and Snyder (2004) regarded flow as an essential condition not only for language learners but also for language teachers in order for effective learning/teaching to take place. Despite the significant role the flow experience may play in language learning, the studies examining the applications of flow theory to the field of SLA are pretty rare. The earliest study in this regard was Schmidt and Savage (1992) that examined the motivational states of EFL learners in Thai context, and failed to find a considerable relationship between the levels of challenge and skill involved in an activity, on the one hand, and learners' intrinsic motivation, on the other. They attributed this counter-evidence of flow theory to the cultural differences between the Western societies from which the flow theory originated. Abbott (2000), however, came up with the corroborative evidence for the occurrence of flow in EFL writing tasks.

Another important study on the relevance of flow to EFL was Egbert (2003) that focused on the relationship between task type and flow state. Egbert depicted that tasks involving email and chat on the Internet evoked a higher level of flow compared to such tasks as 'reading out-loud' and 'listening to and discussing a reading passage'. Egbert (2003) adopted and proposed four dimensions to the flow experience in SLA task performance which includes (1) the balance between challenge and skills (2) attention focused on the task at hand (3) intrinsic interest and authenticity with the task, and (4) a sense of control over the task at hand. To test these dimensions, Kimura (2008) carried out a case study to examine the experience of two Japanese learners of English as they participated in a remedial listening course. The results provided proof for the major conditions of flow predicted by the flow theory including challenge/skill balance and attention control.

The causal conditions of flow state have been investigated by flow researchers to examine its practical implications to the learning situation. In her proposed model of the relationship between flow and language acquisition, Egbert (2003) hypothesized that a language learning task involving the following six conditions is most probable to evoke state of flow (p. 502):

1. The challenge is appropriate and the goals are clear.
2. The task is interesting.
3. Sufficient time is allotted.
4. Feedback is immediate.
5. Learners have control.
6. Learners have a chance to focus with lack of interruptions.

Although the flow theory is counted among theories of motivation, a quick review of the above-mentioned six conditions proposed as being involved in a flow experience would indicate that the flow state comprises emotional and cognitive components as well (Dornyei, 2009a). For example, the most prominent feature of flow is the hypothetical optimal balance between the challenge posed by the task in hand and the skills possessed by the learner. A task too high in difficulty will shift the learner into anxiety and a task too easy to perform will lead to boredom and loss of interest (Egbert, 2003). The concept

of skill/challenge balance is very similar to Krashen's comprehensible input when he posits that "the best input is so interesting and relevant that the acquirer may even 'forget' that the message is encoded in a foreign language" (Krashen, 1982, p. 66). From an information processing point of view the balance between skills and challenges related to a task is informed by cognitive processes. Meanwhile, when we talk about such a balance as a midway between anxiety and boredom we are in fact imparting an affective feature to it.

A second important dimension of flow in SLA task performance is the concentration over the task in hand. Once again, viewed from information processing perspective, concentration is associated with such cognitive processes as consciousness, attention, noticing and incidental learning (Kimura, 2008). Some other conditions for flow state to occur including the clear goals and feedback, sense of control and the loss of sense of time are more appropriately identified as motivationally-driven concepts. Therefore, flow appears to be a state resulting from simultaneous motivational, emotional and cognitive engagement with the task in hand. Discussing task motivation within the 'dynamic systems' framework, Dornyei (2009a) proposed that a special attention be devoted in future researches within TBLT tradition to identifying task motivation as an optimal combination of motivational, cognitive and emotional factors operating as integrated units. He suggested four 'motivational conglomerates' of interest, productive learner role, motivational flow and vision as displaying a balanced mixture of motivational, cognitive and affective components.

Attention to dynamic motivational aspects of task engagement will increase the capacity of TBLT in promoting language learning achievements resulting from the engagement with language learning tasks. However, TBLT appears to be dealing with a set of restrictions in achieving this purpose. In a comparison of the effectiveness of digital game-based learning and TBLT from the perspective of flow theory, Franciosi (2010) extracted several points of superiority for game-based tasks over TBLT. Perhaps, one of the secrets of the effectiveness ascribed to playful learning of language (Cook, 2000) is related to the potentials of playful teaching methods in procuring the context for the dynamic interaction of learners' motivational, emotional and cognitive orientations to take place.

The general argument behind the present study was that involving learners emotionally, motivationally and cognitively during the engagement with language learning tasks leads to flow experience and contributes to the enhancement of learning outcome. The three types of involvement were induced by certain engagement techniques exerted as pre-task activities before the main engagement with the reading-while-listening task. Reading and listening are congenial activities for evoking the state of flow (Egbert, 2003; Kimura, 2008). Since the balanced combination of emotional, motivational and cognitive involvement has been regarded as a promoter of flow as suggested by Dornyei (2009a), the current study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of combining emotional, motivational and cognitive engagement with a text-based vocabulary learning task in incidental acquisition of second language vocabulary. The following questions were formulated in line with the objectives of the study:

1) What is the effect of the three types of intellectual involvement (cognitive, emotional and motivational) applied as the pre-task activities to the reading-while-listening task on short-term and long-term retention and ease of activation of vocabulary?
2) What is the effect of integrating the three types of intellectual involvement (cognitive, emotional and motivational) applied as the pre-task activities to

the reading-while-listening task on short-term and long-term retention and ease of activation of vocabulary?

METHOD

Setting and Participants

The study was carried out at the Islamic Azad University in Tabriz, northwest of Iran using students undertaking B.A. in English as a Foreign Language. The participants in this study were 131 junior and senior students of English in 5 intact classes. The five intact classes were randomly labeled as control group, motivational involvement (MI), emotional involvement (EI), cognitive involvement (CI) and integrated involvement (II) groups including 24, 27, 26, 29, and 25 students, respectively. One week before the actual study, the participants in all five study groups were given a pretest on general proficiency which included questions testing their reading, listening and vocabulary skills. A one-way analysis of variance for the pretest scores indicated non-significant differences between groups. However, regarding the relatively small number of participants in each group and in order to counteract against the shortcomings of working with intact groups, it was decided to use pretest scores as the covariate to account for participants' pretreatment differences.

Material and Activities

The treatments entailed different kinds of intervention activities applied to the pretask phase of a reading-while-listening task. The following materials were utilized to conduct the main task and pre-task interventions.

Main Task

A text-based reading-while-listening focused task designed to facilitate incidental acquisition of L2 vocabulary was used as the main task for instruction. The task had already been used by Rahimpour, Ajideh, Amini and Farrokhi (2013) and Ajideh, Rahimpour, Amini and Farrokhi (2013). The text for the reading-while listening task was extracted from the international best-selling success book, *Giant Steps*: *Small Changes to Make a Big Difference,* written and read out by Anthony Robins (Robins, 1997). The learners were asked to read the text while listening to the text being read out. The author of the book has manifested in the recording a lively and emphatic tone in reading out the text. The 20 target words were signified by L1 glosses within the text. The reading text was followed by a whole-class discussion of the topic of the text, i.e., the vocabulary of success. The students were encouraged to use as many arguments and illustrations from the text as possible in discussing the topic. The free discussion phase of the task was considered as the outcome of the reading-while-listening task.

Pretask Activities

The three types of pre-task interventions aimed at eliciting emotional, motivational and cognitive involvements, in isolation from and integrated with each other, were presented to the four experimental groups. The following activities and materials were used to operationalize the four involvement types during the pre-task phase of instruction:

Emotional Engagement Activity

To elicit positive affect for the emotional involvement group, a humorous movie of about 15 minutes from the English comedy series, *My Family* was shown in the pre-task phase (Rahimpour, et. al., 2013). To ascertain the validity of the video in inducing positive

affect for the emotional involvement group, an internationally reliable short form of the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS-SF) developed by Thompson (2007) including selective 10 items measuring positive and negative affect along a five-item Lickert scale ranging 1-5 was administered to the emotional involvement group. The mean score obtained from PANAS-SF questionnaire was 3.2 (SD=1.41). Therefore, the mean positive affect score was higher than average for the learners in the EI group. This is interpreted as the utility of the pretask activity for the EI group in arousing positive affect in participants.

Motivational Engagement Activity

The motivational involvement entailed the operationalization of motivational strategies proposed by Dornyei (2001). The selected motivational strategies were applied to the instructional process through teacher talk, questioning/answering and video show, all of which were integrated into the pre-task phase of the task procedure for the MI experimental group. First, the teacher presented a 10-minute lecture on the three phases of the task that learners were supposed to go through, criteria for success in the task as well as how to improve their performance on the task. In addition, he discussed with students the importance of vocabulary in daily success (the topic of the text was vocabulary of success). Then, a 5-minute video clip made by the researcher containing some impressive pictures displaying Anthony Robins' career and family life was shown to the class. In order to ensure the validity of the pre-task intervention for the MI group, the participants in this group were administered a self-report questionnaire designed specifically to assess task motivation, i.e. the learners' immediate reaction to the task procedure following the task completion. The task motivation questionnaire used in this study was taken from Ma (2009) including 20 items to assess language learners' motivation with respect to a language learning task they had just performed. They could score different elements of a task motivation on a Likert-type scale ranging between 1 and 7. The obtained mean of scores was 4.29 (SD=1.92) which is above the midline score of the scale. This is interpreted as indicating that the participants in the motivational involvement group enjoyed a high level of task-related motivation with respect to the task they had just been engaged in. It follows that the motivational strategies applied to the pretask phase of the reading-while-listening task have been efficacious in arousing task-related motivation among the learners in MI group.

Cognitive Engagement Activity

The pre-task activity designed to induce cognitive involvement entailed the activation of schematic and linguist knowledge. The learners in the cognitive involvement group were first read out a short text presenting a biography of Anthony Robins, the author of *The Giant Steps*, and the general theme of his publications. Then a whole-class exchange of ideas went on about word power and effective communication in social relations and career success. The aim was to familiarize students with the topic of the reading-while-listening text and let them review their experiential knowledge. Amid the whole-class communication, some of the non-target words from the reading-while-listening text already specified by the researcher through pilot readings were written on the board and illustrated by him as the chances rose. The pre-task activity for the cognitive involvement group took 15 minutes.

The pre-task activity for the fourth experimental group was a combination of the three types of activities described above. The order of presenting pretask activities included the activities for cognitive involvement, motivational involvement and

emotional involvement. All in all, the pre-task phase for the integrated involvement (II) group took about 45 minutes.

The control group was engaged in a regular kind of activity for the pre-task phase. Reading a passage on a topic similar to that of the main task is a popular pre-reading activity. Therefore, the students in the control group were given a passage on 'effective communication' (closely related to the topic of the main text, vocabulary of success), and answered 5 comprehension questions that followed. The activity took about 15 minutes to complete. The pretask activity for the control group deliberately did not involve emotional, motivational or cognitive engagement with the task.

The post-tests comprised vocabulary retention test and a vocabulary ease of activation test. The retention test was a test of passive vocabulary that had 10 four-option multiple choice items in which learners had to choose a Persian equivalent of the target words provided within a sentential context in English. In order to neutralize the effect of guessing, a 5th option stating 'I'm not sure' was added to available options. The ease of activation test, on the other hand, included 10 fill-in-the-gap sentence translation items from Persian to English. The English translations of the sentences were provided except for the target words.

To choose the target words, 40 words from the reading-while-listening text which were conjectured to be less familiar to the students were selected and then put to a survey to the participating classes. The survey asked whether students considered each word as familiar or not. If their answer was *yes*, they were required to provide an equivalent or explanation in L1 in the spaces provided. 20 words from among those which were checked as unfamiliar by all participants were selected for the study.

Procedure

Both the control and experimental groups participated in a text-based task preceded by a pre-task phase and succeeded by a post-task phase. The main task was a reading-while-listening task involving reading a text while listening to it read out by the author. The target words had been highlighted using within-text L1 glosses. The post task entailed a whole-class discussion of the topic presented by the reading-while-listening text. The discussion was stimulated by a set of triggering questions that summarized the main points in the text.

The two tests for measuring short-term retention and ease of activation of target vocabulary were administered immediately after the task was completed. The tests for measuring long-term retention and ease of activation were administered two weeks later.

Data Analysis

The present study investigated the comparative effects of four types of task engagement activities applied to the pre-task phase of a listening-while-reading task, i.e., Emotional Involvement (EI), Motivational Involvement(MI), and Cognitive Involvement (CI) and integrated emotional, motivational and cognitive involvement (II) on four dependent variables, i.e. short-term retention (STR), long-term retention (LTR), short-term ease of activation (STEA) and long-term ease of activation (LTEA) of vocabulary. Before proceeding with the main MANCOVA analysis, a set of general assumptions associated with the analysis of variance, including normal distribution of samples and homogeneity of variance as well as assumptions specific to MANCOVA including multivariate normality, linearity and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices were tested, and it was ensured that the data conformed to those assumptions. Then multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) was conducted on the SPSS to spot between group differences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The descriptive statistics of measures for the four dependent variables are presented in Table1 below:

Table 1. *Means and Standard Deviations of Dependent Measures*

Pre-task Intervention	**N**	**STR** M(SD)	**STEA** M(SD)	**LTR** M(SD)	**LTEA** M(SD)
EI Group	26	3.54(2.044)	2.73(1.538)	2.00(1.386)	1.88(1.243)
MI Group	27	3.52(1.827)	2.74(1.457)	2.22(1.423)	1.96(1.192)
CI Group	29	3.66(1.987)	2.76(1.480)	2.10(1.372)	1.79(1.292)
II Group	25	4.04(2.111)	3.20(1.915)	3.32(1.930)	2.88(1.740)
Control	24	2.08(1.558)	1.62(1.173)	1.79(1.215)	1.62(1.096)
Total	131	3.39(1.998)	2.63(1.590)	2.28(1.551)	2.02(1.378)

The MANCOVA results demonstrated overall significant difference(s) between the five study groups on the combined dependent variables (incidental acquisition of L2 vocabulary) while controlling for the effect of pretest scores. Like other measures of multivariate tests, Wilks' Lambda was significant at .000.

Follow up analyses was conducted to locate the source(s) of variability regarding the four dependent measures. Tests of between-subjects effects indicated significant differences across the four groups for STR, STEA, LTR and LTEA as demonstrated in Table 2.

Table 2. *Results of Tests of Between-Subjects Effects*

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power*
Involvement	**STR**	45.797	4	11.449	10.464	.000	.251	1.000
	STEA	26.334	4	6.584	6.926	.000	.181	.993
	LTR	20.740	4	5.185	6.673	.000	.176	.991
	LTEA	13.660	4	3.415	4.293	.003	.121	.921
Error	**STR**	136.768	125	1.094				
	STEA	118.823	125	.951				
	LTR	97.128	125	.777				
	LTEA	99.434	125	.795				

These analyses indicated that there was a significant difference at least between two of the groups in terms of their STR, STEA, LTR and LTEA scores. To spot the differences

post hoc analyses were carried out. The results of LSD analyses of group differences on the means of four dependent variables, which, over all, make up the indicative for the acquisition of L2 vocabulary, are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Distribution of Significant Mean Differences*

	STR				**STEA**				**LTR**				**LTEA**			
	MI	**EI**	**CI**	**II**	**MI**	**EI**	**CI**	**II**	**MI**	**EI**	**CI**	**II**	**MI**	**EI**	**CI**	**II**
Control	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+
MI	*	-	-	-	*	-	-	-	*	-	-	+	*	-	-	+
EI	-	*	-	-	-	*	-	-	-	*	-	+	-	*	-	+
CI	-	-	*	-	-	-	*	-	-	-	*	+	-	-	*	+
II	-	-	-	*	-	-	-	*	+	+	+	*	+	+	+	*

+ Significant mean difference
- Non-significant mean difference

The overall results of data analysis indicated that the anticipated efficacy of pretask interventions to promote the effectiveness of a vocabulary acquisition focused task was only partially approved. Pretask activities involving emotional, motivational and cognitive engagement with the focused task turned out to be effective means of promoting STR and STEA of the words acquired from the engagement with the focused task. However, these three techniques lost their effectiveness concerning long-term retention and long-term ease of activation.

On the other hand, the three types of intellectual involvement had identical effects on all four dimensions of incidental vocabulary acquisition since no significant difference could be detected between the effects of EI, MI and CI on STR, STEA, LTR or LTEA performances. Moreover, integrating the three intellectual involvement types turned out to be effective in enhancing incidental vocabulary acquisition only in terms of long-term dimensions of LTR and LTEA without any significant effect on STR and STEA performances.

To sum up, using only one of the three types of pretask activities each intended to target a different dimension of intellectual engagement turned out to be effective in enhancing short-term retention and ease of activation of lexical items. However, this enhancement was subject to decay upon delayed posttest to assess long-term retention. This means that involving learners whether emotionally, motivationally or cognitively with a vocabulary learning task promoted the acquisition of target words. Nevertheless, it failed to have a significant effect on long-term retention of acquired words. On the other hand, the inefficacy of one single type of intellectual involvement in improving long-term retention of words was repaired when the engagement with the learning task entailed integrated emotional, motivational and cognitive involvements. This finding is in line with the dynamic views of intellectual functioning that consider affective, cognitive and motivational processes as interdependent and interacting with each other (Dai & Sternberg, 2004).

One explanation for the effectiveness of integrated emotional, motivational and cognitive task engagement in increasing learners' performance on the acquisition and retention of L2 words is provided by the flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Flow state is regarded as a heightened level of task engagement which occurs under certain

conditions of task performance and learning situation (Egbert, 2003). These conditions consist of an amalgam of cognitive constituents (e.g., focused attention, appraisal of challenge level of task, and sense of control over the completion of the task), motivational constituents (e.g., orientation toward task goals) and emotional constituents (e.g., enjoyment and interest).

According to the dynamic systems view of motivation and cognition (Dornyei, 2010), these aspects of mental functioning do not act independently from each other. Instead, there is a close interaction between cognitive and motivational constructs. Dornyei (2010) considered flow experience as an example of optimal task engagement that results from simultaneous cognitive and motivational involvement with the task. He asserted that flow experience is not a "passive spiritual experience" like the one evoked by meditation. Rather, it is an "active and creative" engagement with the task (p. 254).

Elsewhere, Dornyei (2009a) reiterated that TBLT research will specifically grow interested in balanced combinations of motivational, cognitive and emotional variables with regard to task behavior. He went on talking about four "motivational conglomerates" which can contribute to the realization of such a balanced combination. From among the four conglomerates, flow state has been widely related to task motivation. Dornyei's view on motivational conglomerates has opened up a new horizon in outlining a general picture of how motivational, cognitive and emotional determiners of task behavior interact with each other.

Referring to motivation-cognition relationship, Schumann (1994) argued that these two "inseparable but distinctive" parts of human mind interact with and constrain one another. Schumann suggested that cognition and motivation be studied together to develop a better understanding of their effect on second language acquisition. In the study reported here a balanced combination of motivational, cognitive and emotional learner engagement with the vocabulary acquisition task led to a heightened task performance and learning outcome. It is argued here that a mixture of three types of intellectual involvement set the conditions for the optimal use of mental resources in noticing and taking up unfamiliar lexical items guided by the focused task. This is in line with Rieder's postulations concerning incidental vocabulary acquisition (Rieder, 2002, 2003).

In conceptualizing a cognitive view of incidental vocabulary acquisition, Rieder (2002) considered the two elements of "focus" and "enrichment" as the determining factors in specifying the meaning of an unknown word (p. 67). The successful specification of contextual meaning for a new word, according to Rieder (2002), depends on "the availability of the resources" and the "necessity for focusing on this particular words" (p. 67-68). Learner conditions are speculated to be relevant to both enrichment and focus; world knowledge and linguistic knowledge of the learner will determine the quality of meaning specification (enrichment) and affective variables including motivation and interest will determine the quantity of specification (focus). Therefore, cognitive, affective and motivational learner conditions are regarded as crucial determiners of incidental vocabulary acquisition through reading.

Affective responses to the instructional tasks can profoundly influence the effectiveness of tasks in developing the components of L2, a fact that has been advocated by researchers who study emotional and motivational effects on language learning tasks from an information processing perspective (Bown& White, 2010; Garrett & Young, 2009; Imai, 2010; Manolopoulou-Sergi, 2004).

The relationship between affective response to the input and cognitive processes involved has formally been suggested by Stimulus Appraisal Theory (Schumann, 1997). According to Schumann, affective appraisal of stimuli is at the core of cognitive processes from which our behavioral responses are derived (Garret & Young,

2009).Therefore, affective variables must not be seen as fixed factors in relation to the learning situation. Rather, affect regulation must be regarded as an important element in task design and implementation.

Although the critical role of affective variables including both emotional and motivational involvement in the process of second language acquisition has been recognized by SLA researchers (Dornyei, 2002; Garrett & Young, 2009), there has been little attempt to bring these variables into instructed SLA research. The findings of the present study suggest that TBLT scheme can provide a convenient context to integrate emotional, motivational and cognitive variables into instructed SLA. Therefore, TBLT must not be seen as a monolithic scheme in language pedagogy. The theoretical postulations and practical suggestions within task-based framework are versatile enough to integrate less-attended aspects of intellectual functioning such as emotional and motivational processes into task procedure.

The findings in this study convey significant pedagogical implications to all those who are involved in SLA practice including material developers, methodologists, teachers and teacher educators. First of all, learners' emotional state during engagement with a language learning task can immensely affect the efficacy of the task in terms of learning outcomes (Garrett & Young, 2009). As Swain (2011) reiterated, emotion and cognition are interdependent and inseparable in second language learning. Therefore, material developers, methodologists and practitioners of SLA need to take the emotional component of language learning syllabi into account. The application of emotional involvement into a language learning activity is particularly practicable in computer-assisted language learning environment (CALL). Multi-media facilities available in CALL provide a favorable ground to take the advantage of imagination, art, humor and other emotionally-relevant elements for creating a facilitative atmosphere for L2 learning. This fledgling area intends to benefit from the enhancing effects of emotional involvement with the language learning tasks. For example, Ghali and Frasson (2010) made use of emotional induction strategies such as listening to musical experts, showing emotionally-charged films or images and telling stories to help foreign learners of English acquire L2 vocabulary. They found that not only positive affect but also the negative affects fear and anger facilitated vocabulary learning.

As far as CALL is concerned, the versatility imbedded in task-based programs will allow the integration of an emotional element to classroom activities, too. The emotional strategy employed in this study involved showing a humorous video as the pretask activity for a vocabulary learning task to induce positive emotion. It is suggested that the Pretask phase of text-based vocabulary learning tasks be used to induce emotional involvement in an indirect manner.

The results of the study indicated that a balanced mixture of cognitive, motivational and emotional engagement with the learning task promoted language learning achievements in terms of lexical development. Dornyei (2009a) associated this balanced mixture with Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory and included it among the 'motivational conglomerates' for ideal L2 learning atmosphere. Flow has been defined as 'a state of intensive involvement' and 'focused concentration' while performing a task (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). This critical moment for optimal learning holds relevant to both learners and teachers in SLA classes. The conditions outlined for flow state (Egbert, 2003) are largely ascertained when there is a balanced combination of cognitive, emotional and motivational involvement with the task. SLA administrators and curriculum planners need to employ a balanced mixture of cognitive, motivational and emotional constituents in a SLA program in defining course objectives, choosing

instructional material, designing syllabi and administrating the physical and intellectual milieu in the educational institute.

In a SLA program aimed at using flow state for better learning attainments, teachers occupy a critical position. Hence, language teachers must be given special training on how to create optimal learning moments in the classroom by resorting to flow state. Meanwhile, the occurrence of flow state to teachers' themselves must not be overlooked, either. As Tardy and Snyder (2004) emphasize the occurrence of the state of flow is not restricted to EFL learners because EFL teachers might frequently experience flow state during a pedagogical process. Tardy and Snyder (2004) suggested that SLA teacher trainers take the advantage of peak moments of flow for mapping the characteristics of optimal teaching procedure: "If as Csikszentmihalyi suggests, a teacher's sense of flow can inspire motivation in students, then these moments in the classroom become crucial on many levels." (p. 123)

Finally, emotionally and motivationally oriented pretasks can provide a breakthrough to the time-honored debate on relative effectiveness of extensive or intensive reading/listening in vocabulary development. Extensive reading and listening have proved to be helpful in developing vocabulary incidentally. Nevertheless, a characteristic feature of extensive reading/listening is that the text must be selected by learners themselves. This makes extensive reading/listening inappropriate and cumbersome activities to be accommodated into a language learning syllabus. The problem worsens when the texts are relatively short to engage learners with deep mental processing (Craik & Lockhart, 1972). It is suggested here that, with short comprehension texts which lack the overall context to involve learners deeply with the text, the introduction of pretasks aimed at involving learners emotionally, motivationally and cognitively with the text will help maintain the advantages of self-selected extensive reading/listening and at the same time, provide a framework for designing an instructional syllabus based on shorter comprehension texts to promote incidental acquisition of vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

From the cognitive psychological perspective, the effectiveness of a task relies on the nature of mental actions induced by the task (Moonen, et al., 2006). Although the primary purpose of the task-based language teaching was to contribute to the improvement of performance aspects of SLA such as fluency in language use (Ajideh, et. al., 2013) , the introduction of 'form-focused' tasks set the conditions for teaching formal aspects of language while the primary focus remained on getting the communicative meaning across. However, according to Laufer (2005), using form-focused tasks for developing active and passive word knowledge has not been a common practice in SLA. This can be attributed to the traditional distinctions made between the incidental/intentional and explicit/implicit aspects of vocabulary learning and teaching (Ajideh, et. al., 2013). However, the boundaries between such traditional conceptualizations as implicit/explicit learning or incidental/intentional learning have become pale as new understandings about the cognitive aspects of language learning have emerged (Hulstijn, 2002).

Until recently, theorization in the field of SLA has been predominantly led by linguists. This has brought about popular explanations of how L2 knowledge is formed, represented and used which were mainly linguistic oriented in their argument. Meanwhile, around the turn of the century, the psychological and social processes involved in SLA were more loudly recognized. Subsymbolist views of language knowledge, representation and acquisition such as connectionism and emergentism, which are mainly inspired by

neurolinguistic findings, have brought the psychological aspects of SLA including the learners' mental state and situational variables to the forefront (Dornyei, 2009b). Within this framework of thinking, emotional and motivational variables governing SLA appear to be gaining their deserved position as determining factors in cognitive processes of SLA. As reiterated by Hulstijn (2002), in understanding the true nature of SLA "cognition should be conceived as a much broader construct, encompassing not only information or knowledge, but also emotion and motivation" (p. 195).

This study attempted to investigate the effects of integrating the emotional, motivational and cognitive elements into task procedure on the efficacy of a text-based focused task in incidental acquisition of L2 vocabulary. Meaning-focused reading and listening activities have proved to be effective in learning high-frequency words. The rate of acquisition in studies focusing on vocabulary acquisition from comprehension-based tasks is largely dependent on the frequency of occurrence of target words in the comprehension text (Rott, 1999). Therefore, what remains unresolved concerning incidental acquisition of L2 words is the possibility of acquiring low-frequency L2 words through texts of shorter length. In this regard, the results of this study confirmed that some sort of input enhancement through focused tasks is necessary for the acquisition of less frequent words through text-based activities since the target words selected for this study were mostly low-frequency advance-level items. L1 translation glosses provided with the reading-while-listening text increased the chances of establishing a form-meaning relationship for the target words within a wider cognitive, emotional and motivational context. The implication is that the lack of frequent occurrence of L2 words can be compensated by resorting to focused tasks involving input enhancement techniques. By and large, the integration of cognitive, emotional and motivational processes in language teaching tasks can open up a new trend in SLA practice.

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CHICK LIT AUTHORSHIP AND THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY ZEITGEIST

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ABSTRACT
This paper attempts to establish that the zeitgeist emerges from trends of the times and imprinted onto Chick Lit, a genre of popular postfeminist fiction, through authorship from the point of Chick Lit's emergence to its rise in popular culture**.** This paper traces the origins of Chick Lit to better pinpoint the current trends or spirit of the times that serve as the backdrop or cultural landscape Chick Lit writers have utilised. It demonstrates the contemporaneous nature of writers who produce the same kind of fiction around the same time from different parts of the world. The writers are exposed to prevalent popular culture throughout their lives that may influence their writing style and content. The qualitative method of this study detects these patterns based on data of Chick Lit writers' real life experiences and documented trends from the early twenty-first century.

Keywords: Chick Lit, Bridget Jones' Diary, Chick Lit writers, zeitgeist, popular culture, contemporary fiction, postfeminist, early twenty-first century

INTRODUCTION
In an article concerning the sensation of her publication *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1996), Helen Fielding, the author most credited for pioneering 'Chick Lit', the commercially popular postfeminist genre, claims:

> A lot of books in a similar vein followed Bridget, mainly with pink covers, to the point where I was dubbed by Barbara Walters the "grandmother" of chick-lit. I assume she meant to say "godmother". But I don't think it was imitation: it was zeitgeist. (Fielding, "The Bridget Jones Effect", December 20, 2013, para. 6)

In 2012, Decca Aitkenhead interviewed Sophie Kinsella, whom she dubs "the quintessential chick-lit writer," on the novelties of Chick Lit. She wrote, "[Kinsella's] latest [novel] *I've Got Your Number* [2012]…reflects the author's same sharp eye for the zeitgeist" (p. 3). This observation refers to Kinsella's explanation of how the novel's storyline first came to her:

> I just had a vision of someone finding a phone, and then being linked to this person. It was just a very abstract idea – this thing is so powerful, it contains your whole world, and it links you to somebody in a way that 10 years ago would have been impossible. This tiny device gives an insight into every aspect of our lives, so as a novelist, my God, it's perfect. It's only this big! And yet it's got your business world and your romantic world and your emotional world. It's all there. (as cited in Aitkenhead, "Sophie Kinsella")

Here, we have two of the biggest names in Chick Lit, who, on different occasions and in separate spaces, credit the *zeitgeist* as the inspiration they wrote what they wrote. This is not altogether an odd dot to connect considering the level of verisimilitude the landscapes of their work display from the choice of setting (London) and the times in which they have set their stories to exist—the dawn of the twenty-first century.

The zeitgeist, ('zeit' is the German word for time; 'geist' is spirit) or 'spirit of the times', means different things to different people, but there is always a general consensus of what people can sense and perceive as the dominant experience in the era they inhabit. The term 'zeitgeist' was originally credited to Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1771-1831), described by David H. Richter (2007) as "the central philosopher of modern nationalism" and German idealism. He is renowned for advocating dialectical thought as a method to present his views on "mind, art and the state" (p. 369). Hegel never used the term zeitgeist himself, but he is credited for the term 'Geist' due to his theory on the 'Spirit' as justification for historical transformations over periods in time. In other words, a series of causes and effects that we experience in time is tied to this spirit, which forms our "consciousness" and perception of the world we live in (p. 371).

This dialectic which mediates each historical transformation is "a well-known feature of his [Hegel's] reasoning [which is] usually summarised by the triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis [originally Johann Fichte's terminology]." This philosophical tenet is foundational for debates and presentation of arguments to this day, but Hegel used a semblance of this triad to focus on movement of a proposition from the thesis (the abstract) to the synthesis (the concrete) via a negation process he termed mediation, whereby a new thesis is formulated and a new process begins. This same dialectical method is used to explain Hegel's ideas on art as being "the collective expression of a society rather than of an individual voice" resulting from the movement in history, and proof of a "single Spirit" (Richter, p. 371).

Being a part of this "single Spirit" and the dialectical process, society experiences history as a flow or movement from one 'big thing' to the next—evolving with the currents of the time. Kinsella saw something 'big' in our dependence on a twenty-first century technological tool of communication and uses it as a plot device in her bestseller. Fielding credited the same zeitgeist that other novelists tapped into for the way she had that caused the genre to catch on in the wake of her first novel. According to Hegel, "Each stage of world-history is a necessary moment in the Idea of the World Spirit" (Richter, p. 184). For Fielding and Kinsella, such "stage[s] of world-history" are "necessary" in the fiction they create, tapping into the "World Spirit" or simply, zeitgeist for their readers to experience.

The Emergence of Chick Lit

It is not coincidence that both writers and readers of Chick Lit are responding to the zeitgeist. Scholarly articles have credited Helen Fielding as the pioneer of this new brand of popular fiction—novels written by women about women for women, but with a spunky, quirky, fun, and frazzled metropolitan single heroine who goes through the grind of daily work and personal life while searching for herself and landing Mr Right in the process (albeit the latter is usually just regarded a bonus, as the protagonist's quest for self-discovery always supersedes the love interest). Suzanne Ferriss and Mallory Young, the editors of *Chick Lit: The New Woman's Fiction* (2006)—a text now fondly referred as 'the chick lit manifesto' by Rocio Montoro (2013)—accredited Helen Fielding and her novel *Bridget Jones's Diary* "responsible" in "spawn[ing]" the genre. The critical essays written by other scholars compiled in their text echo Ferriss and Young's stance, and journal articles, periodicals, and literary critics have since maintained the status quo

(Chambers, 2004; Craddock, 2004; Dorney, 2004; Gormley, 2009; Gorton, 2004; Harzewski, 2006; Pérez-Serrano,2009; Smyczyńska, 2004; Weinberg, 2003; Whelehan, 2000, 2002, 2005). To be fair, there are those within the Chick Lit scholarship who do not mention Fielding at all, and still others who pinpoint certain romance fiction writers, such as Jilly Cooper, to have started the trend based on the formula of the spunky female protagonist (Williams, "The Queen of Chick Lit," 2004). It seems more likely that, while caught up in the hype, many may have glossed over other writers who had around the same time written novels in a similar fashion (to that of Fielding's) that are structurally and thematically recognisable as the latest in postfeminist women's fiction.

Cathy Yardley (2013), self-professed Chick Lit author, names Marian Keyes as the "godmother" of Chick Lit. Based on her own reminiscence in her book *Will Write For Shoes: How to Write a Chick Lit Novel*, Yardley implies her own presence as one of the 'initiators' of the genre. She professes that after moving to Los Angeles, she had already started writing in 'a similar vein' before 2000, the year Harlequin produced "city book girls...the original name of [their] Chick Lit line." Around the same time "Bridget Jones burst into the scene," Yardley was relieved to have "found the perfect niche for [her] quirky, humorous, coming-of-age stories" (p. 3). On the matter of *Bridget Jones's Diary* as the first Chick Lit novel, she concedes that "the Chick Lit wave started with a British invasion, spearheaded by the name of Bridget Jones" but considers Marian Keyes "the godmother of Chick Lit [who] was creating her now famous Walsh sister series [opening] with *Watermelon* [1995]" prior to Helen Fielding (p. 6).

Elena Pérez Serrano echoes the same in a special issue of *Working Papers on the Web* (2009) and qualifies the lack of acknowledgement for Keyes as being due to the lack of initial coverage that Fielding enjoyed. Keyes' novels, however "gradually gained popularity, to the point of being translated into more than thirty different languages and appearing in the bestseller lists" (Pérez Serrano, "Chick Lit and Marian Keyes").

It is highly doubtful, or at least undocumented thus far, whether any Chick Lit author has taken or ever would outwardly take full credit for solely starting Chick Lit, despite the serious attention given to the issue by literary scholars and critics. There is always comfort among writers when writers acknowledge and support their peers, and the genre's group of writers are no different. There have been public adulations, deference, and gratitude, mostly towards Fielding, for spearheading a genre that women writers can enjoy writing and happily reap their own financial success through her example. The sisterhood also includes other female contemporary popular fiction authors, literary writers, and even Chick Lit's predecessor, romance writers, like Nancy Warren (2011) who claims to be a big Chick Lit fan. She confesses, though, that she is an even bigger fan of Jane Austen:

> Which is how I discovered chick lit in the first place. I saw Helen Fielding interviewed on a PBS program about Jane Austen. Damn, I thought. She stole my idea to update *Pride and Prejudice.* And am I ever glad she did. I don't remember the last time I laughed so hard as when I read *Bridget Jones's Diary*. A lot of other people thought it was pretty funny, too, and a lot of young female authors got their big break thanks to Bridget, Mark Darcy and Daniel Cleaver. (Warren, "Chick Lit")

Many scholars, readers, and novelists of Chick Lit, Fielding included, claim that Jane Austen was the original Chick Lit pioneer. As Warren points out, Fielding borrows the plots of *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) and *Persuasion* (1818 posthumously) and adapts them to suit a contemporary period as *Bridget Jones's Diary* and the sequel *Bridget*

Jones: Edge of Reason (1999), respectively. In fact, many Chick Lit novels are modern adaptations of Austen's six novels, like the works of the late Melissa Nathan (author of *Pride, Prejudice and Jasmin Field*, 2000). The content of Austen's novels have also become fodder for original storylines like Karen Joy Fowler's *The Jane Austen Book Club* (2004). Such writers and readers are effectively dubbed Austenites in acknowledgement of Austen's lasting literary inspiration. To claim Austen as a Chick Lit writer, however, may not be as clear-cut as her fans would like nor would it be of any real import since she belonged to a period in time that affected her own novelistic style.

Stephanie Harzewski (2006/2013) claims that the literary connection between Austen and Fielding gives rise to "the new novel of manners" represented by Chick Lit by a displacement of several traditional conventions of the original novel of manners. Whereas, in the same text, Juliette Wells's gives a thorough examination of the literary quality of Chick Lit novels in "Mothers of Chick Lit?" (2006) by presenting shared similarities between the twenty-first century novels with eighteenth century literary ones written by Jane Austen, Edith Wharton, Charlotte Brontë, and Frances Burney. The notable exception, however, is that Chick Lit lacks literariness or literary language.

> . . . though, the language of chick lit novels is unremarkable, in a literary sense. Richly descriptive or poetic passages, the very bread and butter of literary novels, both historical and contemporary, are virtually nonexistent in chick lit. (Wells, p. 65)

Furthermore, Wells gives an example comparing *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* (p. 18), with *Jane Eyre* (p. 198) and concludes that "Fielding's sentence, immediately comprehensible, passes by almost without our noticing it; Brontë's sentence invites us to savour and ponder her choice of words." (p. 65)

> In general, the narrators of chick lit devote as little time to metaphors and similes—elements common, if not overabundant, in contemporary fiction that aspires to be considered literary—as to descriptive language. Those similes and metaphors that do exist in chick lit tend toward the silly, even when a narrator is grappling for a means to describe serious emotion, and do not interact in thought-provoking ways with the book's overall themes, as they would in literary fiction. (Wells, p. 65)

Whether they be generic writers of a new novel of manners or superficial replicas of the older ones, somehow Helen Fielding, Marian Keyes, Cathy Yardley, Melissa Senate, Melissa Nathan, Melissa Banks, Jane Green, Candace Bushnell, Cecilia Ahern and Sophie Kinsella (to name a few of the late 1990s and early twenty-first century of women writers with bestsellers) all started publishing novels around the same time; they were also publishing from different locations across the Atlantic Ocean.

Meanwhile, in Melbourne, on July 4, 1996, Adele Lang had started writing a column "loosely based on her life" in an Australian magazine at the behest of her editor as diary entries following, not Fielding, but an early children's fiction entitled *What Katy Did Next* (1886) by Susan Coolidge. By the time she started to collate her columns into book form in early 1997, Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* had already "sold more than a million copies." When Lang finally had her own book *What Katya Did Next: The Katya Livingston Chronicles* published the following year, it sold a mere 5000 copies due to the shadow the other 'diary' cast over Lang's work that many consider as a mere "also-ran" of Fielding's novel, along with other copycat versions flooding the market, despite the

fact that Lang's fictional Katya, who, according to Anne Crawford, is single like Bridget, has "better legs," and is "thinner, prettier and nastier" than Bridget. However, in 2002, after Lang had moved to Britain, "revamped" her book by altering the names of Melbourne landmarks to London ones, and retitled it *Confessions of a Sociopathic Social Climber*, Lang's luck finally changed. The novel became big in the U.S. at 171,000 reprints, was reviewed on daytime television talk show *Regis and Kelly*, and became the number one bestseller for both fiction and non-fiction categories on online store, Amazon.com. Lang, who could have been Fielding, became the new Bushnell, instead, as she states "Everyone's looking for the new *Sex and the City*" (Crawford, "What Adele Did Next").

These 'initiators' of a new genre were all writing novels about spunky female protagonists that are relatable and witty, with a strong social network of family and friends, having the job they love to hate, and landing (or not) the man they are happy to simply lust and like, usually in that order. The plot resemblance (at least, in the very beginning—now, Chick Lit's formulaic plots have transformed into a cookie mould that guarantees continual marketability) and the timing of their emergence into the literary scene are uncanny and difficult to ignore as all these writers who started writing contemporaneously, write about the same thing and in the same zeitgeist to which Fielding and Kinsella referred.

The Rise of Chick Lit in Popular Culture

It appears these new women writers have captured the same zeitgeist and documented it in their fictional work. Like many writers, Chick Lit novelists write what they know, after all. When Chick Lit started, most of the heroines were in their late twenties or "thirtysomething" like Bridget, hence mirroring their creators' age range at the time of writing the novels.

Let us make the tautological assumption that if Chick Lit writers were publishing as young adults in their mid to late-twenties at their youngest around the turn of the century, this would mean that they have had to grow up surrounded by the cultural landscape of the 1970s and 1980s as adolescents or pre-teens, and the mid 1980s till the late 1990s as teenagers to young undergraduates. By the late 1990s to the early twenty-first century, most initiators of the genre would have already entered the workforce and have had personal relationships of varying degrees of success and dating mishaps. Most, if not all, those writers ended up in committed relationships, and some of these with children and even a pet or two by 2015. The oldest of the initiators (e.g. Fielding and Bushnell) would have remembered the 1970s as teenagers, and entered the adult dating scene between the late 1970s to 1990s. Those pre-adult years were spent witnessing the birth of many pop-cultural scenes, such as cable television, MTV, arcade games, personal computers, and globalisation enhanced by technological advancements that made the world smaller and more connected. These writers were most likely exposed to the hype of the 'original' *Star Wars*, Hasbro and Mattel television toy commercials, Disney animated fairy tales, the televised wedding of Prince Charles and Princess Diana, the reign of Madonna and Michael Jackson upon MTV's conception, and soap operas like *Dynasty*, *Dallas*, and *General Hospital*. As they matured, they would have experienced arguably massive evolutionary changes to their musical repertoire ranging from rock bands like Bon Jovi and Duran Duran, power ballads by Irene Cara and Bonnie Tyler, and the group anthem of USA for Africa's *We Are the World*. They would have sung along to teen sensations from Debbie Gibson to Britney Spears, mooned over boy band New Kids on the Block or Take That, danced to hip-hop with Salt-N-Pepa, and crooned to R&B love songs by Boyz II Men and TLC, and rapped along with Will Smith. 'Girl power' would

have come through constant airing of provocative girl bands like Destiny's Child and the Spice Girls. Their exposure to international political upheavals would include the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, Libyan plane hijacks, bringing down the Berlin Wall, the Gulf War, the Monica Lewinsky scandal, the 1997 global financial crisis, and 9/11 terror attacks on the World Trade Centre, as well as the repercussions that followed soon after—religious persecution, racial profiling, and economic fluctuations.

However, during these uncertain times, the entertainment industry thrived in its endeavour to provide constant amusement, if not continual distraction from the daily humdrum of the work week in the form of television situation comedies (sitcoms), like America's *Cheers*, *Married With Children*, the *Cosby Show*, and *Friends* or the UK's *Black Adder*, *Fawlty Towers*, and *'Allo 'Allo!* Chick Lit writers generally refer to their collective cultural background of TV sitcom repertoire to paint varied verisimilitude in their own fiction—mostly from TV shows they grew up watching themselves or were currently popular during the writing of their novels. For example, Fielding's Bridget and her friends moon over Jane Austen's Mr Darcy on the 'telly' played by Academy Award winner Colin Firth in the 1995 BBC serialised adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (p. 215) in the same obsessed way Fielding, "while writing her newspaper columns that eventually became the book," must have observed about viewers of "the British nation" when the show first aired (Ferriss &Young, p. 71). The impact of this specific pop-cultural reference resonated so much with the British readers who also viewed the show the way Bridget and her girlfriends did in *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1996) that it was replicated in real-life with the casting of Colin Firth to play Bridget's Mark Darcy in *Bridget Jones's Diary*'s 2001 film adaptation. Firth credits Fielding for the "smart" decision in utilising and revitalising his role as Darcy seven years later in the wake of the former obsession of the 1995 miniseries, which he fondly calls "a bit of a self-referential popular culture mischief" (Branch, "Colin Firth," 2015). The cinematic doubleness paid off and catapulted both the novel and film into the production of its even more lucrative sequel in 2004 based on Fielding's second 1999 Bridget Jones's installation. Kinsella made references to the UK's popular soap opera *EastEnders*'s (running since 1985), fictional character, 'Tiffany' (1998), played by actress-singer Martine McCutcheon, who makes an appearance with Dale Winton on BBC One's live televised National Lottery that Kinsella's *Confessions of a Shopaholic* protagonist Becky Bloomwood raptly watches with her parents (p. 51). Dale Winton, a real-life radio and television personality, has actually been presenting *In It to Win It*, one of the National Lottery game shows airing on BBC One since 2002, which is quite prophetic since Kinsella's book was first published in 2000.

Also widely popular during this era are contemporary romantic comedies (rom-coms), a subset of 'chick flick' that Ferriss and Young, in their article *Chick Flicks and Chick Culture* (2007), define as "commercial films that appeal to a female audience" after acknowledging the moniker as "derisive" and "most commonly applied by unwilling male theatregoers to their girlfriends' film choices." The romantic comedy does not encapsulate the entirety of the "woman's film," Ferriss and Young stress, since its roots can be traced back to 1930s and 1940s screwball comedy: "a special kind of woman's game nearly always favouring the heroine to win" (Harvey, 1998, p. 287) (as cited in Ferriss & Young) featuring "obstacles and impediments not with sentimentality but as sources of humour" and "witty banter between the sexes."

Like 'chick flicks', rom-coms aim to give women pleasure. Once again, Ferriss and Young credit Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* as "the starting point for the chick cultural explosion" due to "the contemporary media's heightened address to women" (Ashby, as cited in Ferriss & Young), but this time, they credit Bushnell's *Sex and the*

City's presence within the same time to be just as influential, too. Ferriss and Young state that chick flicks are manifestations of popular culture, along with other "prominent chick cultural forms" such as "chick lit and chick TV programming" "magazines, blogs, music—even car designs—can be included in the chick line-up." In a sense, Chick Lit can also be seen as a direct manifestation of chick flicks, not just as a by-product of popular culture in general. The 1980s and 1990s rom-coms with a hint of melodrama, like *When Harry Met Sally*, *Sleepless in Seattle* and *Pretty Woman*, have captured the imagination of the predominantly, if not exclusively, female audience, as well as film producers. The 1990s rom-coms, in the same spirit, have become highly commercial commodities with guaranteed star-power performances from successful pairings of Tom Hanks with Meg Ryan, and Richard Gere with Julia Roberts in *You've Got Mail* and *Runaway Bride*, respectively, or any combination with Meg Ryan, the queen of romantic comedy, for that matter. The idea that true love with obstacles notwithstanding and the quest for happiness becomes rooted in subsequent films starring new and younger celebrities as the market for contemporary romance and Chick Lit continue to grow in the twenty-first century. This is not to say that a chick flick is adapted into Chick Lit the way a Chick Lit novel is adapted onto film (not to this writer's current knowledge). However, the connection between chick flicks and Chick Lit novels is obvious that even bloggers like Melissa Amster and Melissa Patafio on their website *Chick Lit Central* have observed how chick flicks "have its basis in chick lit." Rom-coms and TV sitcoms play a foundational role in giving Chick Lit writers their base for influence and inspiration of their creations. Screenplays of these shows and movies are often written with an audience in mind that can appreciate the dynamics of relationships, and often these dynamics are group dynamics. Rom-coms and TV sitcoms show a huge obsession with investigating and exploring the meaning of friendships and romantic relationships within and beyond the group. The successes of these shows is some indication of the extent of viewers' acceptance of this norm and their familiarity with the real world.

Yardley views the appeal of *Bridget Jones's Diary* to women who could relate to and empathise with Fielding's heroine's realistic prospect as a postmodern woman of this day and age:

> With wit and a certain irrepressible spirit, the book managed to capture the attention of thirtysomething women who felt like they, too, had a shelf life—women in dead-end jobs whose greatest fears included dying alone and being discovered half-eaten by dogs. It took very real concerns and put a hilarious spin on them. (p. 6)

The writers' experiences of the world are reflected in the fictional world of their characters. In fact, this is the winning quality that Chick Lit possesses over other popular fiction and the Harlequin romance fiction—the heroines are always relatable and identifiable amidst the backdrop of time and space that is true to life (Ferriss &Young, 2006; Harzewski, 2011; Gormley, 2009; Trollope, 2008). It is significant to note that most started their careers early on as journalists. For instance, Fielding was assigned to write a column about herself and her daily routine and decided, for the purpose of anonymity, to create 'Bridget Jones'. Similarly, Bushnell had also been asked to write a column (which she based on her personal life, including dating and relationships) for *The New York Observer*, which she later compiled into her bestselling book *Sex and The City* (1997). Kinsella confesses to wanting to write something light and fun—and thus, while still employed as a financial journalist, she created a reprobate shopaholic named 'Becky

Bloomwood', a financial journalist, who parodies the spirit of shopping and consumerism that is still very much rampant, if not more so, thirteen years later (Aitkenhead). Lauren Weisberger has repeatedly mentioned in interviews since 2003 her references to real-life experiences during her brief internship at *Vogue* magazine with renowned fashion magazine editor Anna Wintour, whom she still outwardly maintains is her muse for her fictional antagonist Miranda Priestly (Tweedy, "I Wasn't Out To Get Revenge," June 20, 2016).

As in real life, many writers wish for their heroines to be loved and, even more significantly for this study, surrounded by a strong social network of family and friends who support their heroine's antics. Then, there are writers who wanted something 'real' and representative of their lives. Keyes admits in an article (Sethi, May 31, 2008) that she basically started writing Chick Lit based on a simple complaint she had of the state of the current reading material available to her:

> "I was sick of reading about women in huge shoulder pads striding to the boardroom and having sex on the table," she said. "This is not my life. I'm more concerned with finding clean knickers in the morning." These everyday concerns [including obsession with the lives of women and having them represented] have allowed her to reach a huge audience, selling 15mil copies in thirty different languages. (as cited in Sethi, "Hay Festival")

Adele Lang is quoted to have said "I lived the lifestyle Katya wanted":

> A leggy, 35-year-old with a deep voice and English accent, Lang was soon a regular at the bohemian Groucho Club and charmed her way into London's hip set. (Crawford 2006)

The extent of the influence of personal, real-life experiences has on what Chick Lit writers write about is awesomely demonstrated by Karyn Bosnak, author of *Twenty Times A Lady* (2006) (reissued in 2011 as *What's Your Number* after her Chick Lit novel was adapted into a blockbuster rom-com film of the same name in the same year), whose initial fame was for launching a website (savekaryn.com) where she begged for monetary donations in her effort to pay off her USD20,000 worth of credit card debts. The debts were accumulated from her extravagant shopping for designer-wear before losing her high-paying job as a television producer in New York (Sklar, 2012). When she reached her goal, she shut down the website, published her book *Save Karyn: One Shopaholic's Journey to Debt and Back* (2003) that she had been writing while documenting her online 'panhandling' experience, and gave back the same amount from her book proceeds to an undisclosed charity (Barovick, 2002). She has since become a full-time novelist.

Bosnak's real-life experience of accruing insurmountable credit card debts and her obsession with buying "Bergdorf's, Prada and Gucci" (apparently these stores are lined around the corner where she lived in New York) eerily mirror the very premise of Kinsella's plots for her *Shopaholic* series she has published since 2000. The continual struggle of Becky to pay her shopping bills off in the manner Bosnak had via auctioning her designer goods (the very cause of her debts) is demonstrated in the second installation of the Shopaholic series entitled *Shopaholic Abroad* published in 2001, where we also read about Becky's shopping misadventures set in New York. Bosnak's experience occurred in 2002 and ended in November of that same year (Barovick, 2002). The distinction between the adage of life imitating art or art imitating life seem to blur when it comes to Chick Lit only because of the times.

At the turn of the century, despite the 9/11 terror attacks that impacted the entire world, and the subsequent economic upheavals, the consumer culture expanded—a natural progression for economies that need to heal fast. Aggressive marketing from banks giving away credit cards indiscriminately to fresh university graduates in the beginning of the century, and this along with the repercussions of overspending among fresh university graduates were just a few things a financial writer like Kinsella would have picked up and satirised. People who have lost their jobs like Bosnak, or those who are desperate to earn a little extra, are spurred to become more creative, and like Bosnak, many people turn to the Internet. This was and still continues to be an era of online businesses, self-made entrepreneurs, and YouTube sensations.

The same spirit that permeates Chick Lit has struck the imagination of publishers and fashion designers to perpetuate the ideology of the modern woman; Chick Lit writers are equally responsible for product placements in their novels as they are with promotional sales as tie-ins to the sales of their novels, like Kinsella and Bushnell. Chick Lit writers who garner the most readership have also managed to acquire movie deals that continue to perpetuate the same lucrative brand of popularity. Now, non-Chick Lit readers can also enjoy the 'chick culture' Ferriss and Young depiction of the twenty-first century. The genius of most popular fiction is that a trend as profitable as Chick Lit allows the genre to seep into popular culture via film adaptations, television shows, and online coverage—an added advantage for Chick Lit to being born in the globalised era. Chick Lit novelists, in turn, have the potential of becoming executive producers upon the film adaptations of their work. The commercial successes of the works of Fielding (both Bridget Jones's novels have been adapted into blockbuster romantic comedies) and Bushnell (*Sex and The City*, adapted from her novel of the same title became a cult television series that lasted six seasons) have inspired even more women writers to write Chick Lit novels, thus ensuring a constant fresh supply of Chick Lit novels for loyal readers around the world. In subsequent years, Sophie Kinsella, Cecilia Ahern, Meg Cabot, Karen Joy Fowler, Jane Green, Shannon Hale, Lauren Henderson, Marian Keyes, Adele Lang, and Lauren Weisberger have secured twelve movie tie-ins between them and amassed hundreds of millions of US dollars in revenue worldwide. For example, on its own, Weisberger's *The Devil Wears Prada*'s film adaptation starring Academy Award winners Meryl Streep and Anne Hathaway (released in June 2006) "grossed $27.5 million in its opening weekend, amassing total U.S. sales of $125 million and total worldwide sales of $322 million, making it one of the top grossing films of summer 2006" (cited in "The Devil Wears Prada"). Without a doubt, the profitable gains of Chick Lit publications sustained the genre's popularity.

CONCLUSION

In Hegelian fashion, Chick Lit writers followed a course where "the collective expression of a society rather than of an individual voice" that is represented in their work is thus reflected in a cult following of readers. These readers consist of a majority of women who recognise this same spirit of the times that carried on with a fervour into this new century. As a product of the times, the Chick Lit writer taps into her experiences of the real world that includes trends and popular culture of the early twenty-first century, and still does. In November 2013, Helen Fielding published *Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy*—the latest third instalment to her *Bridget Jones* series that leapt to "the No. 1 spot in the UK charts...in its first week on sale" (Bury, October 15, 2013). The reviews were mediocre, but readers are now discovering that Fielding's real love interest is featured in the novel

as a character of the same name minus one letter changed, hence, once again, a Chick Lit writer imprints the real world onto another Chick Lit novel. The *zeitgeist* persists.

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INFLUENCE OF EXPERTISE OF MALAYSIAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' ON THEIR SUBJECT MATTER KNOWLEDGE OF LITERARY DEVICES

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Abstract
This exploratory study was conducted to examine the influence of expertise on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices among English language teachers. Data was collected from 246 English language teachers in a district in north Malaysia and it was analyzed quantitatively. The findings of the study revealed expertise influenced the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of the three groups namely novice, competent and expert English language teachers. The expert English language teachers were significantly different in their subject matter knowledge of literary devices from the competent and novice English language teachers. They were also better in their subject matter knowledge of literary devices than the non-expert English language teachers. Further, there was a significant difference in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices between the competent and novice English language teachers.

Keywords: expertise, subject matter knowledge, English Language teachers, Malaysia, literary devices

INTRODUCTION
The importance of expertise has been the subject of intense research for more than two decades and has focused on different markers like the number of years, involvement in a particular domain and being a member of a professional organization for the development of expertise. However, there is still much debate about the types of markers that contribute to the development of expertise. A relevant and noticeable gap in research is the influence of expertise of English language teachers on their subject matter knowledge of literary devices. It is necessary to provide a contextual approach to understand the problem like the English language teachers who are currently involved in teaching the literature component in Malaysian secondary schools.

The literature component has been important in English as a second language in many parts of the world where literary works of novelists, poets and playwrights in English have been included for language development. In the Malaysian context, a tested literature component has been included in the English language syllabus for secondary schools since 2000. One of the objectives of the literature component is "to show awareness of how language is used for particular purposes" (Ministry of Education, 1999: 13) to learners as depicted in different literary genres, registers and narrative studies. The inclusion of the literature component offers a valuable compliment to authentic materials that deal with genuine language usage (Ibsen, 1990; Coolie and Slater, 1987; Hill, 1986), exhibits elements of good writing (Hill, 1986; Gwin, 1990), introduces learners to the culture, history, traditions and conventions of the target language (Carter & Long, 1991) and "develop the structural awareness of language that provides the linguistic knowledge" (Widdowson, 1978: 3). English language teachers can also help learners to acquire language skills such as reading between lines, understanding ambiguous and vague

language (Delanoy, 1997). Therefore, the literature component in English has attempted to bring together the traditional paradigms of literature such as content, resource and language (Carter and Long, 1991; McRae, 1991; Carter and McRae, 1996; Leech and Short, 1981). The new attempt makes the literature component different from the previous efforts to include the use of literary texts in the ESL context.

Interest in the importance of subject matter knowledge as an essential component of teacher knowledge has been on the rise since Shulman (1986) who pointed it out as a 'missing paradigm' in the study of teaching. Although the importance of subject matter knowledge is generally accepted as crucial for teaching, empirical evidence on the relationship between the subject matter knowledge of teachers and their quality of teaching has been inconsistent (Soyeon Ahn & Jinyoung Choi, 2004). As subject matter knowledge is a broad construct, different tangible indicators that are visible and practical have been used in research to determine its impact. More than half of the indicators in research involve the educational background variables of teachers like expertise and academic qualifications.

Researchers have devoted more attention on the expertise of teachers as they are critical factors in the success of learners (Looughran, 2006; Rooney, 2007). The metacognitive analysis of data from sixty research revealed that the expertise of teachers was positively correlated to the achievement of learners (Greenwald, Hedges and Laine, 1996). Other studies by Betts, Zau and Rice (2003) had also revealed that the expertise of teachers had influenced the achievement of learners in mathematics. Further, Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain (2005) had disclosed that newly qualified teachers (less than three years) were not as good as those who had taught for more than five years. Contrary to these findings, research conducted by Martin et al. (2000) and Wegnlinsky (2000) had indicated the number of years was not a reliable indicator to determine the success of learners. Their findings did not concur with the results obtained by Darling-Hammond (2000) who mentioned that the advantages of experience did not have much impact and leveled-off after five years and suggested the "curvilinear-effect" was mainly because teachers did not continue to progress academically. Other studies on expertise by Palmer et al. (2010) had indicated that there was hardly any difference in teaching between novices and experts**.**

Studies conducted in Malaysia have focused on the approaches used by English language teachers to teach literature (Rosli Talif, 1995; Manan, 2000 and Diana Hwang and Mohd. Amin Embi, 2007). Other studies have revealed the attitudes of learners and behavior of teachers towards literature lessons (Siti Norliana, 2008; Wan Kamariah Baba, 2008; Sarala, 2012). There are also studies conducted to show the implications of incorporating the literature component (Khan, 2003; Gurnam Kaur, 2003). A review of the local research at the Educational Planning and Research Division (Ministry of Education) and local universities have revealed there is hardly any empirical research on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices and expertise among English language teachers. In the Malaysian context, there is a conspicuous lack of local research on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices based on the expertise of English language teachers, given its importance in the teaching of the Literature Component. Specifically, this study attempts to identify if differences in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices exist among the three groups in expertise namely novice, competent and expert English language teachers and attempts to fill the research gap in expertise within the Malaysian context.

Literature Review

For the last two decades, researchers have been actively involved in exploring the construct of teacher expertise (Berliner, 1986). At the same, time researchers have also indicated that subject matter knowledge is equally important for teachers to be successful in their instructional practices (Allen, 2003). Hence researchers have attempted to investigate whether any relationship exists between expertise and subject matter knowledge especially among teachers. Other researchers like Glaser and Chi (1988) have reported that experts are able to organize their knowledge and are able to access them more efficiently than the novice and competent groups.

Research to investigate the differences in the knowledge structure between the different groups of expertise was conducted at the Learning and Research Center at the University of Pittsburgh by Leinhardt and Smith (1985) and Leinhardt and Greeno (1986). Berliner (1994) stated there were differences in the subject matter knowledge, instructional practices, information and familiarity of routines and management of lessons among the different groups in expertise that revealed how they performed and used their knowledge. However, the most common indicator related to the development of expertise was experience which was defined as the number of years of experience (Palmer et al., 2010). Meanwhile, others had argued that it was not only experience but deliberate practice in a specific domain that was crucial for the development of expertise (Ericsson et al., 1993). They further added that a feature linked with the deliberate practice of experts was the desire for excellence exhibited within the domain (ibid).

According to Berliner (2000) the "development continuum model" for expertise reveals the five stages of expertise. They are the novice (first year), advanced beginner (second year), proficient (third year), competent (fourth year), and expert (after the fifth year) (ibid.). The planning of novices is less efficient, less elaborate and they tend to focus on superficial features of problems because of limited knowledge (Livingston & Borko, 1989; Boyd et al., 2008; Bobay, Gentile and Hagle, 2009). Carter et al. (1988) have indicated that novices lack experience to provide exact interpretations because their schema is less developed, unlike that of experts. Berliner (2000) states that novices in many disciplines have literal views of situations. The next level is the advanced beginner who is also in the learning process, is able to see similarities across contexts and has developed strategic classroom knowledge that informs him to be critical of rules but is inflexible in behavior (ibid.). Based on Berliner's (2002) research, the competent group consists of those who are capable of making cautious decisions of what they intend to accomplish, set their targets and select the methods to attain these targets. They take control of the situation in which they are placed and make instructional decisions based on the teaching context and students (ibid.). He informs only a small number of teachers become proficient; acquire insight, knowhow and awareness, which enable them to be intuitive, critical and analytical (ibid.).

Expert teachers are characterized by their domain-specific knowledge and Carter (1990) adds they have extensive curriculum knowledge that enables them to apply that knowledge to particular cases and situations. Bereiter (2002; 384) reiterates that the content-specific nature of their knowledge enables "experts in any field to have both a great deal of knowledge gained through experience and a readiness to take on problems." His views on experience as being essential in enhancing knowledge is also shared by Hawkins, Stancavage and Dossey (1998) and Rivkin, Hahushek and Kain (2005). The importance of experience as an important element associated with expertise was further stressed in a research conducted by Bobay, Gentile and Hagle (2009). Contrary to these positive findings, the research conducted by Kover and Schore (1998), Martin et al.

(2000), Wenglinsky (2000) found that experience was not a significant factor in the development of expertise.

In the Malaysian context, there are a few studies that have been conducted based on expertise. Aini Hassan (1996) points out that those within three years of teaching experience are considered as novice, between four and five years are termed as competent while those with six years become experts. Diana Hwang and Mond. Amin Embi (2007) have given four groups of English language teachers based on their number of years of experience namely less than five years, five to nine years, ten to fifteen years and beyond fifteen years. This study adopts the classification used by Aini Hassan (1996) as it was based on teachers with distinct classifications.

The importance of education as an important criteria influencing expertise was mentioned by Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986). They further reiterated that background knowledge provided a useful theoretical and practical base that expedited the acquisition of skills (ibid.). Their views were also supported by Stancavage and Dossey (1998) and McHuge and Lake (2010) who had mentioned that suitable background knowledge would be helpful in learning from experience. In attempting to show the difference between experience and expertise, MaHuge & Lake (2010) pointed out that these concepts were different but related. They defined experience as the time used in practice and self-reflection that permitted ideas and notions to be confirmed or rejected in real situations (ibid.). Benner (1984) and later Berliner (2002) had indicated that the number of years in performing the same job did not enable one to become an expert but only competent in it. They further reiterated that the impact of education influenced expertise that provided the theoretical knowledge, which could be tested and verified (ibid.).

Expertise in this study consisted of three groups namely *novice, competent and expert* English language teachers. Each group consisted of English language teachers who had different academic qualifications like English major, English minor, TESL and KPLI (*Kursus Perguruan Lanjutan Ijazah* or Post-Graduate Teaching Programme).

The English major language teachers had completed a degree programme that was fully literature based at undergraduate level. The English minor language teachers had majored in other subjects like geography, history, economics, but had chosen a few courses in literature as a minor option. TESL (Teaching of English as Second Language) teachers specialized in the pedagogical approach to teach the English language. However, literature courses were included in their undergraduate programme that provided sufficient literary knowledge to help them teach the literature component. The KPLI or *Kursus Perguruan Lepasan Ijazah* was a one-year Post Graduate Teaching Programme in the Teaching of English as a Second Language and involved teachers who had majored in other subjects like computer science, physical education or commerce (Khan, 2003). The main objective of the KPLI English language programme was to provide pedagogical training to teach the English language and the literature component included in it dealt with the appreciation, understanding language usage and critical evaluation of issues in literary texts (ibid.).

These English language teachers are graduates from public and private universities that have the academic freedom to develop their own literature programmes. Based on their expertise, it can be hypothesized these English language teachers may not have the same comparable levels of subject matter knowledge of literary devices, critical thinking and judgment skills (Aiken et al., 2008).

As revealed in the discussion earlier, there has been much debate on expertise and the importance of contextual factors namely experience and education that can affect expertise. This study attempts to find out the influence of subject matter knowledge of literary devices on novice, competent and expert English language teachers. Specifically

this research paper intends to investigate the differences in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices between novice and non-novice, competent and non-competent and expert and non-expert language teachers and the influence of expertise on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of English language teachers.

Methodology

The Sample

Consistent with previous studies on single variables like expertise and the nuances peculiar to subject matter knowledge (Borko and Livingston, 1989), the sample in this research was limited to a single area. The sample consisted of all secondary school English language teachers in a district randomly chosen according to the specifications mentioned by Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009). The sampling procedure was based on the expertise of English language teachers as they had been teaching the Literature Component since 2000. It was therefore imperative to find out whether those selected had the subject matter knowledge of literary devices to explain the language content in the literary texts. This language aspect as mentioned is one of the objectives of the Literature Component (Ministry of Education, 1999; 13) and is tested in two public examinations namely the *Pentaksiran Tingkatan Tiga* (Form Three Assessment, equivalent to the Ninth Grade) and *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (Form Five Assessment, equivalent to the Eleventh Grade) in secondary schools.

The statistics obtained from the District Education Office (DEO), regarding the number of English language teachers in each group is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Number of English language teachers in each category.

Groups	*n*
Novice	69
Competent	99
Expert	83
Total	251

Sampling Procedure

Prior to conducting the research, permission was obtained from the Educational, Planning and Research Division (EPRD) of the Ministry of Education and the State Education Department (SED) to conduct this research. Subsequently, a district was randomly chosen from the eleven districts in one of the states in Malaysia. After identifying the district, permission was sought from that particular District Education Department (DED) to conduct the study. The chosen district has 26 secondary schools that formed a cluster. This method of cluster sampling ensured all the English language teachers in the district were involved as their number was small. All the 251 English language teachers formed the sample and a large sample was required for inferential statistics. Similar cluster sampling was used by Ikechukwu et al. (2010) in their research. Subsequently permission was sought from the respective school principals to conduct the survey.

Research Instrument

In this study, a questionnaire was used as the main instrument based on the independent variable that provided the demographic data and the dependent variable which was used to prepare the items on subject matter knowledge of literary devices that were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (see Figure 1).

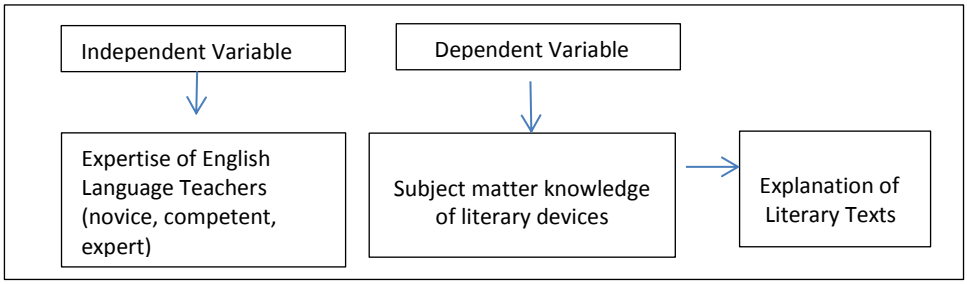

Figure 1: Variables influencing literary devices among English language teachers (adapted from McCrindle & Christensen, 1995: 168)

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A contained the demographic details of the respondents and Section B consisted of items regarding the subject matter knowledge of literary devices.

To prepare the questionnaire on literary devices, the references used were *Stylistics 'upside down': Using stylistic analysis in the teaching of language* (Short, 1996), and *Towards a Pedagogical Stylistics* (Clark and Zyngier (2003). The local research on literature referred were *Teachers' thought process in teaching literature: Good leadership and administration in teaching*, (Fauziah Ahmad, 2007), *Literature in selected rural secondary schools* (Che Tom Mahmud, 2005). The references used for subject matter knowledge were *The subject matter preparation of teachers* (Ball & McDiarmid, 1990), *Perspective teacher's knowledge of division* (Simon, 1993) and *Teacher knowledge and knowledge base of teaching* (Verloop, Jan Van Driel, & Meijer, 2001). *The Job analysis questionnaire on knowledge for English Teachers* (Wesley, 1993) and *The Curriculum specifications for the Literature Component for secondary schools* (Ministry of Education, 1999) were also used as guidelines.

Method and Analysis Procedures

This study used a quantitative method of data collection from the English language teachers. A questionnaire was used as a main instrument to collect data and was analysed using SPSS Version 21. The questionnaire was validated by two language and literature experts. Based on their recommendations corrections were done to the questionnaire and it was pilot tested in another district with twenty selected English language teachers. This would reduce bias as none would have prior knowledge of the survey. The respondents encountered no difficulty in answering Section (A) related to the demographic profile. The reliability index of the items in Section (B) was 0.781 that indicated it was reliable and had measured the items accurately (Best & Khan, 2003). The entire questionnaire took about 30 minutes to complete. Following the pilot study, the actual survey was conducted with the 251 English language teachers.

To analyze the first research question, the English language teachers were divided into three groups namely novice and non-novice, competent and non-competent and expert and non-expert English language teachers. To compare these groups, measures of variability and Independent group *t* tests were conducted. To analyze the second research question, analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) was conducted on the three groups in expertise namely novice, competent and expert English language teachers.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The targeted sample was 251 and the achieved sample size was 246 giving a return rate of 98%. Of the 246 respondents, 62 (24.7%) of the English language teachers were in urban, 113 (45.0%) in the semi-urban and 71 (28.3%) in the rural schools. Female English

language teachers constituted of 170 (67.7 %) while 76 (30.3%) were male. Ethnically there were 123 (49%) Malay, 53 (21.1%) Chinese and 69 (27.9 %) Indian English language teachers. There were 66 (26.8%) novice, 99 competent (40.3%) and 81 (32.9%) expert English language teachers. It was found that 103 (41.0%) had taken literature at SPM level, while 143 (56.9%) had not taken literature. Professionally all were trained as English language teachers. The analysis revealed 119 (47.8%) had taken courses that contained stylistics in their undergraduate studies while 125 (49.2%) did not take any literature course in stylistics. There were 217 (86.5%) English language teachers who had attended courses in the teaching of the Literature Component while 29 (11.5 %) had not attended these courses.

The analysis of the items in Section (B) based on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of the English language teachers is shown in Table 2.

Table 2 shows the analysis of the twenty items on subject matter knowledge of literary devices in the form of frequencies, percentages, mean scores, aggregate means, standard deviations and levels of interpretation. The aggregate mean scores provide the levels of interpretation that range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Out of the twenty, 1 item (13) was in the strongly agree category, fifteen items (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18) were in the agree category while four items (14, 16, 19, 20) were in the moderately agree category.

Table 2: Summary of mean scores of English language teachers' subject matter knowledge of literary devices

	Frequency and Percentage					Aggregate mean	Standard Deviation	Level of Interpretation
Variable Literary Devices	Mean score Strongly Disagree	Mean score Disagree	Mean score Moderately Agree	Mean Scores Agree	Mean Score Strongly Agree	**3.6**		
13. enable one to understand linguistic associations in literary texts to reveal the styles of language	0.0	10 4.1%	134 55.1%	98 40.3%	1 0.4%	4.49	0.78	**Strongly Agree**
1. provide linguistic analysis of literary texts	1 0.4%	1 0.4%	76 30.9%	128 52.0%	40 16.3%	3.83	0.78	**Agree**
2 analyse literary texts from language and communication levels	0.0	9 3.7%	89 36.2 %	135 54.9 %	13 5.3%	3.62	0.65	**Agree**
3. do not discriminate the texts chosen for study	0.0	14 5.7%	73 29.7%	118 48.0%	41 16.7%	3.76	0.79	**Agree**
4. have widened language use to understand contextual meanings and implications of	0.0	7 2.8%	72 29.3%	144 58.5%	23 9.3%	3.74	0.66	**Agree**

literary texts								
5. use language to analyse literary texts making it suitable for non-native learners of the English language	1 0.4%	2 8%	85 34.4%	122 49.4%	37 15.0%	3.78	0.72	**Agree**
6. provide linguistic insight into literary texts without compromising on aesthetic qualities	0.0	8 3.3%	78 32.0%	133 54.5%	25 10.2%	3.72	0.68	**Agree**
7. provide language awareness to read between lines and understand meaning of literary texts.	0.0	13 5.7%	78 31.6%	124 50.2%	31 12.6%	3.82	0.68	**Agree**
8. are insufficient as background knowledge is required to understand literary texts	0.0	6 2.4%	51 20.6%	160 64.8%	30 12.1%	3.82	0.64	**Agree**
9. provide a linguistic medium that help to relate literary texts to personal experiences .	0.0	13 5.3%	83 33.6.%	119 48.2.%	32 13.0%	3.69	0.73	**Agree**
10. help to understand linguistic features of literary texts and relate them to the literary features to show meanings	1 0.4%	7 2.8%	60 24.3%	134 54.3%	45 18.2%	3.87	.75	**Agree**
11. help in understanding different variations of language used in literary texts	0.0	11 4.5%	110 44.7%	119 48.4%	6 2.4%	3.49	0.6	**Agree**
12. prepare for other forms of activities like literary	1 0.4%	16 6.6%	126 52.5%	98 40.5%	0	3.33	0.62	**Agree**

criticism								
15. help to develop confidence to understand writer's language	0.0	2 9.4%	114 46.5%	107 43.7%	1 0.4%	3.60	0.64	**Agree**
17. provide linguistic medium that helps to relate literary texts to personal experience	3 1.2%	20 8.2%	147 60.0%	70 28.6%	5 2.0%	3.65	0.61	**Agree**
18. help to understand literary texts as a linguistic entity and are different from the traditional practical criticism	0.0	19 7.6%	136 55.7%	87 35.7%	2 0.8%	3.45	0.69	**Agree**
14. help to teach all forms of literary texts	1 0.4%	25 10.3%	116 47.7%	100 41.2%	1 0..4%	3.35	0.64	**Moderately Agree**
16. relate the linguistic features to the literary aspects besides describing them to bring out meanings	0.0	59 24.4%	118 48.8%	63 26.0%	0	3.40	0.68	**Moderately Agree**
19. increase awareness of the conventions that govern language of writers	0.0	38 15.5%	139 56.7%	67 27.3%	1 0.4%	3.30	0.63	**Moderately Agree**
20. provide a linguistic framework to understand literary language	0.0	18 7.4%	129 52.9%	93 38.1%	4 1.6%	3.25	0.63	**Moderately Agree**

The levels of interpretation of the aggregate mean scores of the items in Section B of the questionnaire are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Interpretation of Mean Score

Strongly disagree	1.00- --------1.80
Disagree	1.81----------2.60
Moderate agree	2.61---------3.40
Agree	3.41-------- -4.20
Strongly agree	4.21-------—5.00

Source:

Score category adopted from Fauziah Ahmad **(**2007: 56)

As a prerequisite for inferential statistics, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was conducted to establish the normality of the data. The Lilliefor's significance level had a small K-S statistic that was not significant and the *p* value was greater than 0.05, therefore normality was assumed. The values of the twenty items in the questionnaire were normally distributed.

This section presents the findings of the analysis based on the expertise of the English language teachers.

a. *Comparison between novice and non-novice English language teachers in their subject matter knowledge of literary device.*

Table 4 shows the results of the Independent *t*-test that was computed to compare the difference in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices between novice and non-novice English language teachers.

Table 4: Independent *t*-test between novice and non-novice English language teachers

Groups	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*Mean difference*	*t*	*df*	*p*	*d*
Novice	66 26.8	2.53	0.55	-0.96	2.33	244	.009	0.30
Non-Novice	180 73.1%	3.49	0.41					

Based on the descriptive statistics in Table 4, the Levene's test of equality of variance showed $F= 4.46$, $p> 0.05$. This indicated homogeneity of variance between the two groups had been met, therefore the equal variance assumed *t* test was reported.

The mean for the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of the novice was 2.53 (*SD* = 0.55) and for the non-novice was 3.49 (*SD* = 0.41). The *t*-test indicated a significant difference in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices between the two groups of English language teachers, t (df=244) = 2.33; $p < 0.05$. Cohen's *d* was at 0.30 that implied a small effect size that indicated a small difference between the two groups. Based on the mean, the non-novice language teachers had better subject matter knowledge of literary devices compared to the novice language teachers.

b. Comparison between competent and non-competent English language teachers in their subject matter knowledge of literary devices

Table 5: Independent *t*-test comparison between competent and non-competent English language teachers

Groups	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*Mean Difference*	*t*	*df*	*p*	***d***
Competent teachers	99 40.3%	2.87	0.54					
Non-competent teachers	147 59.3%	3.91	0.56	-1.04	2.8	243	0.002	0.42

Based on the measures of the descriptive statistics in Table 5, the Levene's test of equality indicated $F =4.53$; $p>0.05$. Hence, the homogeneity of variance between the two

groups of English language teachers was met and the equal variance assumed *t*-test was reported. The mean of the competent English language teachers was 2.87 (*SD*= 0.54) and the mean of non-competent English language teachers was 3.91(*SD*= 0.56). The *t*-test revealed a significant difference between the two groups in their subject matter knowledge of literary, *t* (*df*= 243) =2.8; *p*<0.01. Cohen's *d* showed a small effect size of 0.42 that indicated there was a small difference in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices between the two groups of English language teachers. Based on the mean, the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of the competent English language teachers was lower than the non-competent English language teachers.

c. *Comparison between expert and non-expert English language teachers in their subject matter knowledge of literary devices*

Table 6: Independent *t*-test comparison between expert and non-expert English language teachers

Groups	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*Mean difference*	*t*	*df*	*p*	*d*
Expert teachers	81 32.9%	3.58	0.49	0.52	2.76	243	0.005	0.40
Non-expert teachers	164 67.1%	3.06	0.57					

Based on the descriptive statistics as shown in Table 6, the Levene's test of equality of variance displayed *F*=4.0, *p*>0.05. The equal variance assumed *t*-test was reported as the homogeneity of variances between the two groups was met. The mean for the expert English language teachers was 3.58 (*SD*=0.49) while he mean of non-expert English language teachers was 3.06 (*SD*=0.57). There was a significant difference in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices between the groups as indicated by the *t*-test, *t* (df =243) =2.76; *p*<0.05). Cohen's *d*=0.42 showed a small effect size that indicated there was a small difference in the subject matter knowledge of literary between the two groups of English language teachers. Based on the higher mean, the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of the expert English language teachers was better than the non-expert English language teachers.

d. *The influence of expertise on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of English language teachers*

As depicted in Table 7, the influence of expertise on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices was verified by using the mean scores that exhibited a difference among the three groups. The novice English language teachers had lowest mean (*M=2.53, SD=0.55*), followed by the competent English language teachers (*M=2.87, SD=0.54*) and the expert language teachers had the highest mean (*M=3.58, SD=0.49*). The one-way ANOVA was computed to find out whether there was a significant difference in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices based on the influence of expertise.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics based on expertise

Groups	*N*	*percentage*	*Mean*	*SD*
Novice	66	26.8	2.53	0.55
Competent	99	40.3	2.87	0.54
Expert	81	32.9	3.58	0.49
Total	246	100	3.53	0.55

The Levene's Test for equality of variance indicated homogeneity of variance among the three group, F =8.5, p>0.5. Table 8 shows the results of the one-way ANOVA test. The analysis revealed there were significant differences in the subject matter knowledge of literary devices among the three groups, F (3,242)=8.5; p<0.001.

Table 8: One-way ANOVA comparison of three groups

Subject matter knowledge of literary devices	*SS*	*df*	*Mean Square*	*F*	*p*	n_p^2
Between Groups	8.47	2	4.235	8.409	.000	0.05
Within Groups	127.85	243	.523			
Total		245				

As there was a significant difference among the three groups, the follow-up Scheffe post hoc multiple comparison test was conducted to determine explicitly which groups were significant. The results of the Scheffe post hoc test analysis are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Scheffe post hoc multiple comparison test

(I) Number of years teaching English language	(J) Number of years teaching English language	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Novice	Competent	-0.34*.	.11527	.006
	Expert	-1.05*	.12028	.001
Competent	Novice	0.34*	.11527	.006
	Expert	-0.71*	.10867	.009
Expert	Novice	1.05*	.12028	.001
	Competent	0.71*	.10867	.009

As shown in Table 9, the novice English language teachers were significantly different from the competent English language teachers (*mean difference= -0.34; p=0.006*) and expert English language teachers (*mean difference=-1.05; p=0.001*). The competent English language teachers were significantly different from the novice English language teachers (*mean difference=0.34; p=0.006)* and expert English language teachers (*mean difference=-0.71; p=* .009*).* The expert English language teachers were significantly different from the novice English language teachers (*mean difference=1.05; p=.001*) and competent English language teachers (*mean difference= 0.71; p=.009*). The *partial eta squared* (n_p^2) computed was 0.05 and that indicated the effect size was small. The analysis indicated expertise had influenced the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of the novice, competent and expert English language teachers.

Discussion

This research provides a few important findings regarding the influence of expertise of English language teachers on their subject matter knowledge of literary devices. Presently there are three groups of English language teachers namely novice, competent and expert

English language teachers who are involved in teaching the Literature Component at secondary school level. The results indicate that the novice English language teachers are lower in their subject matter knowledge of literary devices than the non-novice as shown in Table 4. Based on their experience, the novice English language teachers have been teaching for less than five years compared to the non-novice English language teachers who have been involved in teaching the Literature Component for more than six years. Hence, their short duration in teaching the component may have contributed to their limited knowledge **(**Livingston & Borko, 1989; Boyd et al., 2008). The novice language teachers have shown that they are less knowledgeable in literary devices than their non-novice counterparts because of their less elaborate schema as a result of their comparatively shorter duration of experience (Carter et al., 1988). The non-novice English language teachers have displayed a higher level of subject matter knowledge of literary devices as this group contains the competent and expert English language teachers who have better subject and curricular knowledge that enables them to apply that knowledge to particular situations (Carter, 1990).

The evidence from the research has also indicated that the competent English language teachers have lower subject matter knowledge of literary devices compared to the non-competent English language teachers as revealed in Table 5. This is mainly because the non-competent group consists of novice and also expert English language teachers. The competent group of English language teachers has shown better subject matter knowledge of literary devices than the novice group as they can accomplish their set targets and make decisions on their teaching contexts (Berliner, 2002). However, their knowledge repertoire may not be comparable to the expert group of English language teachers who have higher subject matter knowledge of literary devices gained through experience (Hawkins, Stancavage and Dossey, 1998).

The study explicitly has indicated that expert English language teachers have demonstrated better subject matter knowledge of literary devices than the non-expert group. The results of the analysis have indicated that experience among expert English language is an important criteria in determining better subject matter knowledge (Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2005). As the expert group of English language teachers has more than ten years of experience, they have acquired extensive curricular knowledge that has contributed significantly to enhance their subject matter knowledge (Carter, 1990; Darling-Hammond, 2000). The importance of experience as an important element in expertise has also been emphasized by Bobay, Gentile and Hagle (2009).

The findings of the study have revealed that the experts have better subject matter knowledge of literary devices than the novice and the competent English language teachers (see Table 6). This may be attributed to the domain-specific knowledge acquired through their many years of experience (Rosenholtz, 1986; Carter, 1990 and Bereiter, 2002). Further, the experts have content knowledge "gathered through experience" which enabled them to overcome problems and challenges (ibid., 384). It is explicitly clear the expert English language teachers have demonstrated greater subject matter knowledge of literary devices gained through experience then the novice or the competent English teachers (Hawkins, Stancavage and Dossey, 1998).

Experience has been found to be an important indicator in the development of expertise that can influence the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of English language teachers. This finding, however, did not concur with Kover and Schore (1998), Martin et al. (2000) and Wenglinsky (2000) who claimed that expertise was not a significant factor in influencing subject matter knowledge.

CONCLUSION

There is presently the emergence of a new trend in studying expertise (Borko & Livingston, 1989; Carteret al. 1989; Leindhardt & Smith, 1985; Siedentop & Elder, 1989). However, more studies are needed on teacher expertise before conclusive decisions can be reached regarding the definite influence of expertise in teaching. Currently, there is little evidence known of the practice or development of knowledge among novice, competent and expert English language teachers. Nevertheless, the seminal research initiated by Berliner (1986) has generated greater interest in teacher expertise over the last two decades.

The findings of this study have indicated that the novice English language teachers as a result of their lack of experience are limited in their subject matter knowledge of literary devices compared to the competent or expert English language teachers. The difference is mainly because the competent and expert English language teachers have more experience in teaching the Literature Component that is exhibited by their greater subject matter knowledge of literary.

There are a few implications relevant to the influence of expertise and subject matter knowledge of literary devices that can be based on this study. The empirical evidence can be helpful to curriculum planners and policy makers regarding the requirements of those who are involved in the teaching of the Literature Component. Remedial measures can be introduced to narrow the differences between the novice and competent and competent and expert English language teachers by initiating courses in literary devices. These courses in the form of in-service programmes in the use of literary devices can encourage the novice and competent English language teachers and bridge the differences and improve their subject matter knowledge of literary devices to the level of expert English language teachers. The relevant authorities can plan the necessary customized courses in literary devices mainly for novice and competent English language teachers to ensure success of the Literature Component.

Local institutions of higher education like the public and private universities can choose their focus and depth of their literature courses according for their English language teachers. Their literature programme can include courses in literary devices and stylistics that can help to maximize their knowledge of literary devices to achieve the objectives of the Literature Component. With the introduction of these customized courses, prospective English language teachers can approach the Literature Component with more confidence that can ensure greater success.

With the identification of differences in subject matter knowledge of literary devices among novice, competent, expert English language teachers, this study was initiated to contribute to the developing body of subject matter knowledge of literary devices in teacher expertise. This study was based on statistical evidence on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of English language teachers in the teaching of the Literature Component in the Malaysian context. Other studies can be conducted based on the subject matter knowledge of literary devices of English language teachers using non-statistical methods like worksheets, interviews and classroom observations. These non-statistical studies can complement and provide more evidence regarding the influence of expertise of English language teachers on their subject matter knowledge of literary devices.

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A QUALITATIVE PERSPECTIVE ON ACADEMIC SPEAKING CHALLENGES AMONG INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

International graduate students in Malaysian higher education institutions are faced with challenges in fulfilling the academic literacy demands at graduate level. One of the components of academic literacy that impose challenges for the students in coping with their academic tasks is academic speaking. This purposive sampling based qualitative research investigated the challenges faced by these students in their academic speaking practices and the overcoming strategies employed to overcome the challenges. Focus group interviews were conducted with 70 students in 10 taught Master programs at a public university. Findings indicate the challenges faced in academic speaking practices are affected by first language influence on academic speaking, lack of English language proficiency, lack of self-confidence, lack of feedback from their lecturers and lastly, the influence of their socio-cultural identity. The strategies employed by the students to overcome the academic speaking challenges are also discussed. The findings are beneficial for the management of higher education institutions to provide avenues for the students to improve their academic speaking practices experience prior to embarking on graduate study and also during their graduate study.

Keywords: academic speaking practices, challenges, international graduate students, overcoming strategies

INTRODUCTION

Recently, Malaysian higher education landscape has witnessed a rapid, remarkable expansion in terms of increase in the incoming international graduate students as highlighted by Pandian, Shanthi and Mahfoodh (2016). International students entering foreign higher education (HE) institution undoubtedly add on to the cultural, educational and linguistic diversity in Malaysian HE institutions. These diversities which are an integral part of international students have been progressively built from childhood, primary, secondary and prior tertiary learning experiences (Carroll & Ryan, 2006).

Diversities that should be viewed as advantageous to student learning process are however, at times viewed mainly from a deficit frame. The view point of this frame is that the challenges faced by the international students are attributes of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. For example, the causes of challenges facing international students in HE in English-speaking countries being largely related to students' language proficiency and cultural differences (Andrade, 2008; Sawir, 2005) is a similar scenario in Malaysia as graduate programs in Malaysia are taught in English. For international students who are non-native speakers of English, becoming literate in different discourse can be particularly stressful as they do not only have to adjust to and resist new ways of practicing academic literacy in a new education institution in a different country but also adjusting to the practices of academic literacy in English language. This phenomenon is

in line with second language academic literacy research results highlight that becoming literate in different discourse traditions is a challenging, complex and lengthy process (Casanave, 2002; Leki, 2003; Spack, 2004; Zamel & Spack 2004; Zhu 2001).

Majority of the non-native English speaking international graduate students (IGS) enrolled in the taught Master programs at the HE institutions in Malaysia are expected to be involved in substantial academic related activities. These activities as explained by Kaur (2000) include attending lectures, participating in tutorials and fulfilling various academic literacies demands facilitated through classroom lectures, tutorials, seminars, individual project work, industrial or business placement, problem-solving classes, group projects, research dissertation or discussion groups. However, Kaur (2000) indicated that the IGSs' experience related to academic literacies from their previously gained formal education in their native countries is not able to accommodate the expectations of academic literacies at Master's level in Malaysia. Concurrently, the use of English as the medium of instruction (MoI) for majority of the Master programs escalated academic adjustment problems for the students (Kaur, 2000). The findings by Kaur (2000) are also aligned to international research findings. International research in English speaking universities also found non-native speakers of English face hurdles in taking part in tutorial discussions and communicating with lecturers, supervisors and fellow students (Hellstèn, 2002; Hellstèn & Prescott, 2004; Sawir, 2005, Wong, 2004).

In addition, up to recently, most investigations concerning academic literacies issues among the IGS conducted in Malaysia have heavily focused on academic writing practices. As Braine (2002) puts it, "a fundamental shortcoming of most studies of socially situated academic literacy is their focus on writing tasks alone" (p. 63) and also the relationship between writing practices and learning and the production of written assignments (Wahiza Wahi et al., 2012). Furthermore, Duff (2010) in her research also stressed that other academic discourse socialization such as oral academic discourse socialization is the most neglected in studies of academic discourse that gives undeniable prominence to writing and reading.

Therefore, the objectives of the study are firstly, to identify the challenges faced by the IGS in their academic speaking practices in the taught Master programs and secondly, to identify the overcoming strategies employed to overcome those challenges.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE ON ACADEMIC SPEAKING PRACTICES

According to Bachman and Palmer (1996), cognitive knowledge of the second language (L2), knowledge of how to overcome communication challenges, knowledge of how to organize and plan a task, topical knowledge and learners' affective reactions are important elements to ensure learners' successful communicative performance in the target language. Similarly, John (1981), Morita (2002) and Wisker (2005) showed that emphasizing on the development of good oral communication skills is indispensable for IGS to become members of the academic community. These scholars also claimed that academic oral communication needs such as doing presentations, participating in debates and discussions, mini-lecturers, group project work, engaging in problem solving and creative thinking and class discussions are significant at graduate level in multiple contexts such as in the classroom, in teaching and in giving conference presentations.

Learners' successful communicative performance in academic oral communication is influenced by their communicative language ability (CLA). Bachman (1990) indicated that CLA consist of both knowledge or competency and the capacity for highlighting the competence in suitable, contextualized communicative language use.

Bachman's (1990) further discussion of CLA describes the university classroom especially at graduate level emphasizing participation in the context of making presentations, interacting with classmates, making queries and participating in group discussions.

These interactions require the students to speak and display their academic strengths. However, at times, the students are not able to display strength in spoken form with weaknesses such as reluctance to speak, lack of confidence and worrying about their pronunciation. These weaknesses lead them to feel embarrassed and being dismissed as inferior because their classmates and lecturers are unable to understand what they are trying to say. The weakness, especially in their language proficiency camouflages their intellectual ability as reported by Leki (2001) that at times linguistic limitations were interpreted as intellectual inadequacies.

Related Studies on Academic Speaking Practices among International Graduate Students

Previous studies discussed in this section reveals a complexity of challenges faced by the IGS in their academic speaking practices. A study by Kim (2006) on academic oral communication needs of East Asian IGS in non-science and non-engineering fields at an American HE institution identified participation in whole-class discussions, practicing strong listening skills, raising questions during class and engaging in small-group discussions as the four most frequently required listening/speaking-related classroom tasks in graduate courses. The respondents of Kim's (2006) study also rated formal oral presentations and strong listening skills as the most important elements for academic success in graduate courses.

However, Kim's (2006) investigation on postgraduate perceptions of listening and speaking requirements revealed that only one-third of the subjects reported of having problems with listening and note taking. Kim (2006) noted this finding could have been due to IGS assessed through longer written assignments in which additional background reading played a larger role as well as having note-taking skills for lecture listening through previous academic experiences.

Similar to Kim (2006), in an attempt to understand the oral communication needs of East Asian IGS in an American university, Mostafa (2006) stated that it seems that students were most concerned about leading class discussions. Participating in whole-class discussions was their second most difficult academic listening/speaking task, while participating in small-group discussions was their third most difficult task followed by formal oral presentations. Students also reported experiencing less difficulty participating in small-group discussions than participating in whole-class discussions. The lack of fluency and confidence in speaking also means class presentations are a struggle to prepare and deliver and this impedes interaction with other students outside their language group. One of the earlier studies by Liu and Kuo's (1996) that surveyed 51 IGS found that spoken English proficiency and knowledge of subject matter were the most influential factors contributing to a student's speaking up in class. Burns (2000) cited that students in similar situations also experienced 'study shock' that is normally experienced by students shifting between different cultures of learning. Ferris (1998) and Kim (2006) have shown that majority of international students in university content classrooms in English-speaking countries report feelings of inadequacy and frustration while taking part in oral classroom tasks such as whole-class discussions and formal oral presentations. However, in the context of Turkish IGS in an American university, a study by Tatar (2005) found that Turkish students' content, form and frequency of participation differed across courses and situations. The students' participation in classroom was influenced by

context-dependent factors, culture and academic perceptions. However, the students in Tatar's study did not find oral participation a major contributor to their own academic learning experience. The students participated more for affective reasons. Research has also found that many instructors do not provide explicit and appropriate scaffolding, modeling or feedback to support students' performance in oral assignments (e.g., presentations, critiques, projects) (Zappa-Hollman, 2007a; 2007b). Zappa-Holman's studies indicated that most students are simply expected to be familiar with the genres required for academic essays or presentations and the criteria for evaluating them, even though these attributes and criteria may vary greatly from one context to the next. Hincks' (2010) research on academic presentations in English and first language (L1) found that in English as foreign language (EFL) context, the average speaking rate is 25% slower in their English context. This is contributed by the extra time needed for planning of speech in a second language. Kaur and Sidhu (2009) in their study found that many IGS in Malaysia faced challenges because of high academic literacies practices' expectation imposed upon them by their Master program lecturers. These challenges involved the development and honing of their independent, critical thought. The IGS also felt inhibited by their English language proficiency during some discussions in class. The prospect of having to speak and write well in English was found to be daunting as many of them come from an EFL educational systems. These challenges are actually the effect of many of them coming from cultures of learning that dealt mainly with more traditional modes of learning that involve the transmission of knowledge from the lecturer to the students. In a later study, Lalasz, Doane, Springer and Dahir (2014) indicated that international students also struggled with their academic satisfaction as they could not engage with or ask their lecturers questions in order to avoid making mistakes. This was due to lack of proficiency in English language. To sum up, although there is a relevant body of studies on academic speaking practices among international students, the review of literature shows that no previous studies were located on the challenges in academic speaking practices by international graduate students and the overcoming strategies in Malaysia and many completed studies completed have focused mostly on quantitative methodology. With reference to these inadequacies, the current study provides literature in Malaysian context as well a qualitative based research.

This study addresses the following two research questions:

1. What are the challenges faced by international graduate students in their academic speaking practices?
2. What are the overcoming strategies employed by international graduate students to overcome the challenges faced in their academic speaking practices?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research focuses on the challenges faced by the IGS in their academic speaking practices and the strategies employed to overcome the challenges in their Master programs. A basic interpretive qualitative study on *insider perspectives* (Burke & Wyatt-Smith, 1996) was carried out. The design is an exploratory study which employed in-depth focus group interviews to extract detailed and reliable perspectives on the issues being investigated.

Participants

The participants were 70 IGS enrolled in taught Master programs offered at 10 faculties on full time basis at a public research university in Malaysia. These participants were

selected through purposive sampling as purposive sampling approach is used to select all eligible respondents who are able to provide accurate and reliable data (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) on the challenges in academic speaking practices the overcoming strategies employed.

Focus Group Interviews (FGI)

The primary qualitative data gathering technique used for this study is focus group interview (FGI) with the IGS. FGI which depends on question-and-answer format (Krueger & Casey, 2000) is applied based on the assumption that people are an important source of information about themselves, their experiences, knowledge, opinion, beliefs, feelings and the issue that affect their lives and they can articulate their thoughts and feelings (Best & Kahn, 2006). This method also allowed the participants the opportunity to listen to the views of others and consider their own views accordingly. Furthermore, FGI was also able to reduce the influence and role of the researcher (Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). Kruger's (1994) "rule of thumb" that recommends a focus group should not have more than seven participants was applied. Therefore, each focus group consisted of three to six participants. This research used pseudonyms to ensure anonymity of the participants and the confidentiality of data related to each participant. A coding scheme was developed by the researcher to code the FGI participants to ensure a trustworthy study that is valid, reliable and ethical. The 70 participants who took part in the FGI were coded according to an identification number of each participant and an identification alphabet letter to identify their faculty. For example, a participant who responded in the interview session from a particular faculty is coded as *S2A*. The symbol *S* represents the participant, *2* represents the participant's number and *A* represents the faculty's code. A pilot study was conducted to determine the suitability and comprehensibility of the questions among 10 IGS based on random sampling. Questioning was done in systematic and consistent manner and the participants were given the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns pertaining to any aspects of the academic speaking challenges and overcoming strategies. Questions were framed by dimensions of time: past, present and future. Krueger's (1998) categories of questions in the context of opening, introductory, transition, key and ending guided the design of related questions. The categories of questions was applied as the researcher was able to explore the challenges faced by the participants' in their academic speaking practices and the overcoming strategies at two levels that are at undergraduate level and at present (Master's level). Krueger's (1994) focus group data collection flow chart of four stages (sequencing of questions, capturing and handling data, coding of data and member checking) guided the present study.

The FGI sessions were held at various venues at the research site university. Seventeen interview sessions were administered with a range of three to six participants in a group. Majority of the focus groups comprised of four to five participants. Each session lasted between 40 minutes to one hour. In each session, participants were provided an introduction to the study and purpose of the FGI. Participants were requested to provide their consent to participate in the study by signing a consent form prepared by the researcher.

Interviews were audio taped as audiotaping the interview increases the reliability and validity of the interview (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). The transcription was done at the end of each interview session by the researcher.

Data Analysis

The researcher used Microsoft Word compatible qualitative research data analysis software, NVivo 10 to organize and analyze complex data and emerging patterns extracted from the transcription. The core feature of the qualitative data analysis of this research was coding. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) and Braun and Clarke (2006), NVivo 10 is useful for the researcher in moving data easily from one code to another and to document the data as it was analyzed. The use of the software increased the validity of the data analyzed. The coding of the data was done using thematic analysis that is a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It organizes, describes the data set in detail and interprets various aspects of the research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Evidence from the various databases was grouped into codes and codes were grouped into broader themes. Data analysis involved five phases involving familiarizing with the data, generating intial codes, searching for themes, reviewieng themes, defining and naming themes and finally, producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Challenges in Academic Speaking

Five themes that emerged from the findings of this study are the influence of first language (L1) on academic speaking, lack of English language proficiency, lack of self-confidence, lack of feedback and lastly, influence of the participants' socio-cultural identity. These challenges are ordered from the most challenging to the least challenging.

The influence of first language on academic speaking

Most of the participants agreed that the influence of their first language on academic speaking was an obstacle to express ideas clearly. Most of the participants emphasized that this influence had an impact on their speech in the context of rampant code-switching occurrence and grammatical errors. Furthermore, as English is a foreign language for all of the respondents, their pronunciation, accent and the rate of utterances' production had an effect academic speaking practices. A few of the participants indicated that the fast rate of their speech utterances caused difficulties such as misunderstanding in comprehending content of speech among their course mates and lecturers.

In addition, another participant, S2C asserted that differences in her pronunciation compared to the local speakers caused the local speakers to interpret her message wrongly. Other participants, S1A and S1D indicated preparing for a presentation was an easier academic task compared to answering questions from the audience during the question and answer session. They faced the challenges in communicating orally due to the inability of expressing ideas impromptu and feeling inferior to the local students in the same class during academic speaking activities.

Participants such as S6C's remarks about pronunciation problem were further strengthened with the remarks from a Thai participant. A Thai participant, S4E, also stated his slang caused fear in presenting his discipline content knowledge. In addition to S8C, a Korean participant, S4D, S14G and S2J responded that speaking is the most difficult academic literacies challenge because other students and lecturers could not understand their accents and pronunciation. Another related problem highlighted by two participants from China is the pronunciation of letter "R". According to them, the Chinese face problem in pronouncing words that contain letter "R". As shown in Excerpt 1, one participant said:

Excerpt 1:

"I can say most of my lecturer couldn't understand what I'm saying, I should repeat myself two or three times for them so they can understand what I'm saying, I don't why, is problem with me or them" [S14G]

In addition, the following excerpt clearly indicated that majority of the participants faced difficulties communicating with the local students because they was unable to understand ideas expressed by the local students due to poor listening skill. The inability to listen and comprehend what others say caused difficulty for S2B to express his ideas.

Excerpt 2:

"…even English is a second language here in Malaysia, we don't have mutual understanding of the English here that we used, as internationals students and as from their side, as locals. So I'm not sure what was the problem exactly but they still can't understand what we're talking about, even we got the idea of what they are talking about but we can't catch each single word that they pronounce. There's differences in pronunciation, something like that, and use of words and expressing. So the communication is there, but not 100% successfully. [S2B]

Lack of English Language Proficiency

Another challenge faced by the participants is low proficiency in English language. This challenge led them to feel shy, fearful of making language mistakes, and feeling stressful of being assessed poorly by their course mates and lecturers. Majority of the participants stated their low English language proficiency caused the inability to articulate their arguments well in English during group discussion and other academic speaking activities. At the same time, selecting the suitable vocabulary for PowerPoint presentations was challenging as there were many special terminologies or jargon in English language available in their field that could be used in doing presentations. However, lack of understanding the meaning of the jargons deprived them the opportunity to use the jargons in their presentations.

A China national, S6B indicated that her low English language proficiency created fear in her to answer questions in classroom and interact in groups. At the same time, the participants also stated that although their discipline content knowledge in their field is good, they sometimes found it challenging to express issues orally using their discipline content knowledge in English language. The participants lacked understanding of discipline specific terminology in English language to express their thoughts.

Excerpt 3:

"because of the structure of English and vocabulary and maybe because the mother tongue language that interfere me when I try to speak English I need to think about vocabulary and translate from Thai to English." [S2D]

Lack of Self-Confidence

In the context of lack of self-confidence in performing academic speaking activities, participants of the focus group interviews admitted that prior linguistic background have been found to generally affect self-confidence during presentations. Many participants asserted that presentation related stress was because English language is not their mother tongue; therefore, the tendency for language errors to occur is high and this eroded their confidence level in presenting orally. Participants such as S2A cited nervousness and confusion in doing first presentation especially at the presentation stage compared to the preparation stage. According to S3E, his lack of self-confidence in group discussions and interaction with lecturers were due to worrying of making grammatical mistakes and the use of wrong vocabulary.

Majority of the participants (S1A,S3B, S1E, S6G and S2J) indicated that lack of self-confidence induced and increased their stress level to do a presentation. Presentations are stressful events that caused them to forget the memorized script. The participants also stated that they were more prone of being nervous when answering lecturers' questions immediately after their presentation. This was due to the influence of prior learning cultural experience that did not emphasize on doing presentations in their first-degree. Additionally, it is important to mention that challenges in doing presentations was not a matter of displaying the discipline content knowledge a person has but the confidence of expressing the ideas orally in the presentation or discussion.

Excerpt 4:

"I'm not strong and cannot speak very well teacher cannot get what I am saying." [S1E]

"I think speaking skill...I have a lot of problem in the speaking English." [S2D]

"In oral presentation I think I sometimes find it nervous and…especially when the lecturer ask me the question about my work" [S1A]

Lack of Feedback

It is important to mention that feedback from lecturers on students' academic output plays an important part in the success of graduate students' learning. The participants emphasized the significant role of feedback to ensure that they obtain constructive comments from the lecturers to improve their academic performance. In many instances, the participants revealed that the lecturers failed to provide feedback to them although it is greatly desired after the completion of their presentations. This trend among the lecturers is discouraging towards the improvement of academic speaking practices among the respondents.

Excerpt 5:

Researcher: Nothing? Okay. Lets say even if you didn't get back and also for the presentation that you do, do you get feedback from your lecturers how you are performing?

All: No.

Researcher: No feedback? Would you like to get the feedback?

All: Yes [S1J, S2J and S3J]

Influence of Socio-Cultural Identity

The analysis of the focus group interviews also revealed that a student's social cultural identity plays an important role on how one interacts with others in academic settings such as tutorial discussions. The findings reveal that the participants were interested and motivated to interact and share knowledge with other students. However, the participants experienced culture shock with the speaking culture of the Malaysian students and lecturers. This led to misunderstanding in conveyance of accurate information. One of the participants, S1D stated she usually kept silent, as she disliked participating in classroom speaking activities due to her inability to understand the local students' conversations. Furthermore, her action was influenced by the attitude of the local students who were not interested to listen to their international experiences.

Excerpt 6:

"I think … maybe sometimes in class I find it difficult to express my ideas and my thought because I feel inferior because all of them are local students, sometimes. And I feel like if I say something maybe I'm wrong something like that." [S1D]

"I don't like to participate in speaking I usually keep silent you know because they usually talk about their experiences from ..in Malaysia so they are not interested to listen about the other experiences in other countries." [S1D]

"maybe because I think they focus on some problem they try to solve it so I really want to say that sometimes I want to say something but its better maybe because they have no idea about my country what they are facing there, you know...prefer to keep silent better than to …" [S1D]

Overcoming Challenges in Academic Speaking Practices

Three themes emerged on the strategies employed by the participants to overcome the challenges in academic speaking practices. The themes are pre-presentation preparation, improving self-confidence, and improving English language proficiency.

Pre-presentation Preparation

Participants in the focus group interviews pointed out that doing pre-presentation practice before an actual presentation gave them the confidence and provided necessary exposure.

Six participants stated that frequent practicing allowed for easier recall of memorized scripts. Another participant, S8G mentioned that practicing many times such as presenting to oneself in front of the mirror helped in many ways. It allowed students to self-check the flow of their speech and gain confidence to present smoothly. Furthermore, according to S5G and S4I, researching on the topic presented gave confidence to answer questions during the question and answer session. At the same time, S4E asserted that compared to reading and writing, speaking and listening practices have more possibilities of gradual improvement during class interaction.

Another participant, S4I also asserted that going for presentation skills classes organized by Postgraduates' Academic Support Service Centre at the university and other organizations also helped to improve presentation skills. Alternatively, S2C stated that providing handouts of the PowerPoint slides to the audience helped improve his presentation to present as the audience's attention was diverted to reading the handouts and less focus was given to the presenter. This allowed the participant to gradually increase confidence level.

Other than that, participants, such as S6C asserted that the pace of speaking is also crucial in ensuring the difficulties in speaking are minimized. A slow speaking pace allowed the speaker more time to select suitable vocabulary and commit less grammar errors in the oral speech. According to S3A, suitable vocabulary and information provided in presentation content is important as a reference for the audience. This strategy slightly overcomes the problem of not understanding the speaker's accent. In addition, S2B added that communicating with friends and classmates in English and integrating the words from social context into academic contexts helped to improve speaking.

The use of PowerPoint and other multimedia assisted presentation methods also helped to decrease the challenges faced in academic speaking as it provided easy access to main points and enhance the participants' speaking ability.

Excerpt 7:

"…and the speaking for the presentation is more easy because I get help from my power point presentation so I show them a picture or sometime I write something I couldn't, maybe I forget some of my is my presentation so I write it inside my power point presentation and when I forget I just look at it and read from it so I cover all of my mistake with speaking fast don't tell anybody to question because in my presentation until it finish. And after that, if they couldn't, most of them could understand what I'm saying they asking about the professional matter not about the language and I think that's it." [S14G]

Improving Self Confidence

Participants such as S1A also added that encouragement and help from course mates in terms of providing suitable vocabulary also helped one to be more confident in speaking and improving low English language proficiency. One way of improving oral communication skills according to S10G is to bravely speak in English in front of the

audience even though one uses *broken English*. Furthermore, continuously speaking using *"broken English"* helped to improve English language proficiency as it boosts confidence to speak. Another participant, S12G asserted that shyness is a common problem but could be overcome by doing more reading to improve one's discipline content knowledge and followed by speaking.

Improving English Language Proficiency

Improving English language proficiency also provided the opportunity to present well. According to participants such as S2E, continuous improvement of one's English language, watching English movies, listening to English songs and speaking more frequently in English with friends and classmates helped to improve speaking. Other participants such as S7B and S11G asserted to improve academic speaking, a student has to listen to conference speakers on various YouTube websites. Participants such as S13G highlighted that attending conferences and listening to live presentations such as viva presentations helped to alleviate the stress of presentation.

Excerpt 8:

"I try to speak more with the students or classmates
we would speak English even the senior in PHD
who come from Thailand we try to make a rule when
we see each other we have to speak English not
speak Thai because of we need to have
improvement in speaking English." [S32D]

Another long term strategy to overcome the barriers in speaking is setting strict rules to communicate in English with other international students in English.

Excerpt 9:

"have to talk with my friend usually also
I'm living with two friends from Iraq its
the native Arabic language but sometimes
you agree now we have to speak English about
half.. hour just speak English. … will be weekly
I think it's a good way for improve." [S9G]

DISCUSSION

The findings provide a complex yet fascinating picture of challenges faced by international graduate students in their academic speaking practices and the overcoming strategies employed to overcome the challenges. The results of this study reveal that the challenges faced by IGS in academic speaking practices were their obstacles in participating in oral communication that included communicating ideas fluently and confidently, speaking accurately, speaking clearly and participating actively in academic discussions.

According to Ringbom (1987) and Odlin (1989, 77-80), a justification for this challenge is the language distance between their L1 and L2 or L3. The language distance has an effect on the amount of transfer that can take place between languages. Ringbom further provided example that the Arabic speakers take a longer time to acquire English vocabulary because transfer from third languages seems to depend very much on relative

language distance. Therefore, this situation makes it difficult for them to learn English language.

Later research by Pourfarhad, Farah and Leila (2012) indicated that the language distance between L1 and L2 or L3 impact directly presents barrier in applying the suitable speaking skills in academic context. Furthermore, earlier, Liddicoat (2009) stated that culturally contested nature of communication imposes a problem of inter-translatability for actual instances of communication across languages and cultures and necessitates a level of particularity for each actual instances of communication.

Regarding language proficiency, the qualitative findings has shown that language proficiency is the key to effective academic speaking practices. The participants' academic socialization in the graduate's community of practice has helped to improve their English language proficiency as their participation in the academic discourse community developed and improved their ability to express or present discipline specific knowledge that they possess or have acquired in their graduate study.

However, long term measures are still needed to ensure the challenges in academic speaking practices are minimized among international graduate students. One way is by ensuring that English language entry requirement are imposed on all incoming international graduate students (Manjet, 2015). Lack of enforcement in terms of English language entry requirement will attribute towards intake of international graduate students who will not be able to perform academically especially in linguistically demanding graduate programs. Many participants have reported low English language proficiency as the main difficulty in coping with the academic speaking practices at graduate level. Therefore, the tertiary level institutions need to strictly adhere to the English language requirement policy or design a new language policy for graduate entry based on contemporary development in the international education market. At the same time, new incoming international graduate students should be made to fulfil a pre-requisite of attending academic speaking courses before embarking on graduate study or during graduate study to improve their academic speaking practices. This strategy should be integrated into the entry requirement policy of graduate programs.

Taking into account the issue of language requirement for entry into graduate programs, the university should also not only depend on the standardized English language assessments such as TOEFL or IELTS across the board for all the Master programs. For example, according to Hawkes (2014), the limitations of the common practice of using English-language proficiency examinations (such as IELTS) as benchmarks for eligibility must be recognized. A previous study such as Alco's (2008), has found IELTS and TOEFL not to be consistently reliable indicators of language ability in the academic setting. The university should also look into the possibility of designing and implementing a more effective in-house standardized English language placement assessment to evaluate students' oral academic English language proficiency. The result of this kind of assessments will be a good indicator of international graduate students' oral academic speaking preparedness to enroll into the programs of their choice at the university.

Furthermore, the content lecturers should be trained on the linguistic aspects of academic speaking practices necessary for their discipline. The multi-specialty of content lecturers in terms of their expertise in the content knowledge of their discipline and English language can be a strategic solution to create integrative language and content instruction courses that focus on specific discourses within the discipline to bring about an optimum exposure of the academic speaking experience for the students.

For future research, this study recommends addressing the international graduate students' prior academic speaking competency via questionnaire survey before enrolling

in graduate courses. By addressing the issues concerning the prior practices in academic speaking, the international graduate students' current academic speaking practices can be improved so that they will not face challenges that hinder their academic potential at graduate level. As stated by Hawkes (2014, p. 19), "universities are obliged to learn much more about international students' backgrounds and needs so as to more effectively adapt and develop the provisions they offer."

Additionally, the international graduate students' host institution can develop effective academic speaking pedagogical instructions to ensure the students smooth enculturation in the graduate programmes. As for the limitations of this study, the findings warrant careful interpretation as this study focused on a group of international graduate students in Master programs only at a specific HE institution. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings beyond this group of international students is limited. Future studies should consider looking at international graduate students at doctorate level or other HE institutions.

CONCLUSION

This study has revealed the rich diverse presence of international graduate students at various higher education institutions in Malaysia. The views presented by these students within a broader context of their past and present cultural, linguistic and educational experiences provide an avenue for a more expansive understanding of academic speaking practices that recognizes value in linguistic and cultural diversity of the the students in target English language discourse communities. In addition, literature indicated consensus on the mismatch between the international graduate students' academic speaking background with the present institutionally accepted codes and conventions of their current host institutions. International graduate students from diverse academic speaking background and as self-agent of improvement have revealed how they faced the various challenges in academic speaking practices and empowered strategies that are relevant to overcome the challenges. By addressing the diversities the students bring with them, the ground has been laid for more studies to be carried out. The international graduate students academic concerns need to be evaluated to provide academic satisfaction and finally, academic success in their graduate study.

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COMBATING H1N1: METAPHORS OF WAR IN A MALAYSIAN NEWSPAPER

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ABSTRACT
In April 2009, reports of a new strain of a deadly flu virus emerged in Mexico. The scarcity of information available on this new threat can be observed clearly in the language used in the news reports. This study investigates the use of conceptual metaphors of the Influenza A (H1N1) pandemic in the newspaper and how these metaphors helped to construct the notion of a pandemic in the media. Metaphors of illness and disease are a prominent tool in the discourse of disease in the news. The conceptual metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) was utilized as a framework in this study to investigate the coverage of the pandemic in the newspaper. The data was extracted from a corpus of news reports from The New Straits Times Malaysia from April 2009 to August 31, 2009 when the disease was at its peak. The results of the study yielded various metaphorical linguistic expression of war and construction of the pandemic in the news. Metaphors of war were found to be prominent, and it had a rhetorical function in helping to structure and control the situation. By highlighting certain aspects of war, the concept of disease was given a form and structure and thus, made it more tangible and controllable.

Keywords: H1N1, Conceptual Metaphors, Conceptual Metaphor Theory

INTRODUCTION
Influenza A(H1N1) is one of the most recent pandemic to generate interest in the media. It is an acute respiratory disease caused by a new strain of virus. Evidence of this virus first came to light when an unidentified yet deadly flu strain emerged in Mexico on April 2009 (NST,2009). Authorities in Mexico stated that the virus had already circulated among humans before doctors recognized an outbreak (NST,2009). In the past, travelling was not as extensive and sophisticated as today, and diseases were easily contained in specific geographic areas. However, over the years, with the advent of new technologies in transportation, the more mobile society has allowed the virus greater opportunity to spread rapidly around the world from its initial contact point in the Americas. The World Health Organization (WHO) functioned as the nerve center of the operation by helping to monitor the progress of the virus, and provided support to countries that required help in identifying an outbreak. The outbreak was declared a pandemic which means a disease that is prevalent worldwide, by the WHO in June (NST, 2009).

Newspapers are one of the various channels through which the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) spreads the news of a disease outbreak. The pervasiveness of metaphors in the media especially in journalistic discourse and the news is not uncommon. In fact, the media plays a pivotal role in creating and conventionalizing metaphors in their readers' mind.

The usage of metaphors by journalists is essential to be studied as conceptual metaphors are persuasive devices utilized by journalists to get people to move and react

through concepts that may seem straightforward but in actuality it has more contextual meaning than people may realize. As far as the news on the pandemic is concerned, it would be interesting to find out how journalists employ different conceptual metaphors to represent the disease in the newspaper reports.

Conceptual Metaphors Theory

Metaphors are more than just a tool that is only seen literature. One of the first to break through the mould was Lakoff and Johnson in 1980 with their book, *Metaphors We Live By*. In it, they argued that metaphors are not just a "property of words" nor used just for creative purposes nor is it just a comparison between two things. It is not even an intentional use of words or a figure of speech. Metaphors, they argue is a cognitive phenomenon that is present in our everyday speech and writing and a reflection of our human thought processes. The term used by Lakoff and Johnson in describing this phenomenon is conceptual metaphor. According to them conceptual metaphors are a reflection of how people think, understand and talk about the world around us and it has a rhetorical function in influencing our worldview of events (Charteris-Black, 2004). Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue that abstract concepts and phenomena that have no perceptual and sensorial basis are metaphorically structured in human cognition and provide these concepts with tangible, physical and distinct attributes. These attributes may not just be concrete and physical by nature, they are also experiential.

Conceptual metaphors are systematically structured. There are two domains in a conceptual metaphor: target domain and source domain. The target domain is the abstract concept, which has no tangible expressions while the source domain is the concrete domain. The concrete domains have a structure which is more tangible and relatable to the people and these concrete aspects are mapped onto the target domain giving it a structure.

The conceptualization of ARGUMENTS AS A WAR and LOVE AS A JOURNEY is based on the observed qualities of the target domain i.e. ARGUMENT and LOVE. Arguments are aggressive by nature and therefore conceptualizing argument as a war seems more plausible than argument as a timid phenomenon. The concept of ARGUMENT as a WAR is linguistically realized in the metaphorical linguistic expressions that have been italicised in the examples below.

ARGUMENT IS A WAR

"Your claims are *indefensible*"

"He *attacked every weak* point in my argument".

(Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 4)

These metaphorical expressions bring forth the conceptual metaphors ARGUMENT IS A WAR. Similarly, the concept of love is conceptualized as a journey and is linguistically realized in metaphorical linguistic expressions that have been italicised.

LOVE IS A JOURNEY

Look how *far* we've come

We're at a *crossroads*

(Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p. 44)

Therefore, the aspects of the source domain are mapped onto the target domain. An illustration of this can be seen in figure 1.

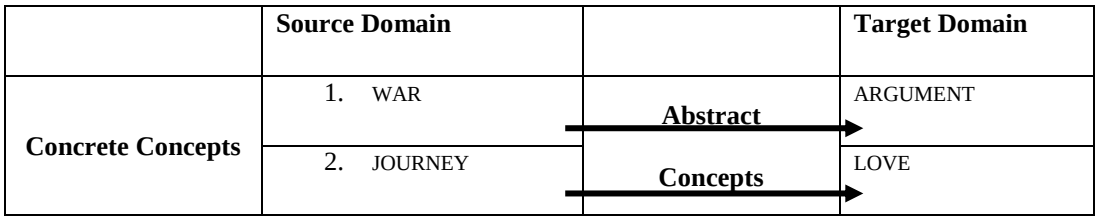

Figure 1: Relationship between the target domain and the source domain

In figure 1, the target domain of ARGUMENT and LOVE are structured by the source domains of WAR and JOURNEY.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON METAPHORS

Metaphors of Illness

The concept of an illness, specifically disease is easy to be explicated scientifically and is entrenched in scientific discourse and to the people who are privy to it such as healthcare professionals, scientists, researchers, etc. (Koteyko, Brown, & Crawford, 2008).

However, to the audience and readers who are not as familiar to scientific discourse, or are not as experienced and conscious of the danger of a disease, metaphors are utilized to help elucidate the nature of a disease and the dangers of it to the public in a simple and uncomplicated manner.

One of the earliest to highlight the metaphors in illness was Susan Sontag. In her book, Illness as a Metaphor (1978), Sontag compares the language used on the issue of tuberculosis (TB), and cancer. Sontag notes that while both illnesses may be fatal, there were distinct differences in the way both diseases were conceptualised. While TB garnered a more idealistic and romanticised view due to the fact that it only affects the lungs and a popular view that TB did not affect a person's image, cancer acquired a more disapproving view because it was a disease that could affect any part of the body. As a result, war metaphors seemed to be more prevalent on the issue of cancer.

Sontag takes her views further when she calls for the eradication of war metaphors from the discourse of illness. She viewed the language of warfare in context of illness and disease negatively because it illustrates and depicts a very pessimistic, harmful and shameful viewpoint of the disease on the sufferers and non-sufferers alike.

While Sontag disapproved of war metaphors, these metaphors have become more mainstream and prevalent in the discourse of disease in the news. As described by Sontag, metaphors of war are infused in the discourse of illness. However, while Sontag calls for the eradication of war metaphors, later research has shown how effective and informative war metaphors are in helping to conceptualize disease and highlighting certain aspects or elements of war onto a disease. Baehr (2006) states that war metaphors are utilized as a way of stressing the seriousness of a pandemic in the media, and mobilizing the people against a threat. Metaphors of war also tap into the imagery of war, and is used by the media, to sensationalize the pandemic. Its purpose is to invoke feelings

of patriotism against this unseen threat (Baehr, 2006). He goes on to state that conceptual metaphors of war on the issue of illness, is a reflection of societies way of dealing with disease and especially a pandemic (Baehr, 2006).

Therefore, research into metaphors of war on diseases takes a more flexible and softer approach suggesting that metaphors such as metaphors of war are used to rally the people and urge the relevant authorities to take action against an unseen threat. In other words, metaphors of war are only used when a disease is "personal or perceived as a threat to a nation' (Wallis & Nerlich, 2005). Mapping between the domains is motivated from a variety of factors. Deignan (2005) researched metaphorical expression in common metaphors such as ARGUMENT IS WAR, HAPPINESS IS LIGHT, SADNESS IS DARK AND EMOTIONS ARE TEMPERATURES. She found that while the conceptual metaphors remain the same, the underlying meaning for these metaphoric expressions differ according to the context from which it hails from.

Metaphors of war have been shown to have a rhetorical function especially from a political standpoint as it helps in quick policy making (Stibbe, 2002). This language of warfare was used to rally people and urge the relevant authorities to take action against an unseen threat (Wallis &Nerlich, 2005; Koteyko et al, 2008).

Another study conducted in China by Chiang and Duann (2007) on the news reports of the SARS epidemic found that the reports on the disease have become more of a war-time struggle with strong political connotations than otherwise present in medical discourse. The research found that reports of the epidemic showcased the political ideologies of the Chinese government and were less concentrated on medical discourse. The disease is also shown as a war against a common enemy of the people. Military connotation is often seen in the newspaper to showcase the struggle against the disease (Chiang et al., 2007).

The conceptual metaphor theory by Lakoff and Johnson(1980) is utilized as a framework to investigate the coverage of the Influenza A(H1N1) pandemic in Malaysia during the "first wave" of the outbreak. The purpose of this research is to determine the metaphorical linguistic expressions and the conceptual metaphors of war. Furthermore, this research examined how the source domain of war constructed the concept of a disease in the media.

METHODOLOGY

Data

The study analysed newspaper articles from the New Straits Times (NST) on the Influenza A(H1N1) pandemic. The data of the study encompasses newspaper articles for a period of five months from April 26 2009, the first time the outbreak of the disease first appeared in the NST, to August 31 2009 a month after the first death was reported.

The NST was first established in 1845 as the Straits Times, a weekly journal, before it was reinstated as the New Straits Times after Independence of Malaya. The NST initially started as a broadsheet paper before it changed its format to a more compact tabloid version ending a more than 100 year tradition in Broadsheet. It was one of the last English Language papers to do so in Malaysia. The New Straits Times is the oldest and most prominent English language daily in Malaysia. Currently, the NST is owned by the New Straits Times Press, which also owns two other leading Malay language newspapers, 'Berita Harian' and 'Harian Metro'.

Apart from news published by NST journalists in the daily, the newspaper also publishes articles from BERNAMA, Malaysia's national news provider. Bernama is a

statutory body established by the Act of Parliament in 1967 and is one the leading national news providers for up to date and real time news dissemination.

Data Collection

The main focus of this study are the news reports in the New Straits Times on the Influenza A(H1N1) pandemic in Malaysia. Therefore, the main criterion for the data is news related to
Influenza A(H1N1). This includes words such as swine flu, flu, pandemic, illness, disease, Influenza, Influenza A, H1N1, Influenza A (H1N1) and symptoms that relate to the illness. A manual search was conducted whereby the newspaper was skimmed extensively to locate the reports based on this criterion. Another criterion was the journalists. Articles written by local journalists and Bernama were prioritised as the focus of the study was to study the conceptualisation of the disease locally. Therefore, the search was narrowed to focus on news of the disease reported by local journalists. Furthermore, only running texts were selected. Tables and figures in the articles were eliminated. The final criterion is the avoidance of foreign articles such as news report by Reuters or any form of foreign media. Once the criteria for the news reports were established, the articles were located from the online news archive.

Method

This research utilized a corpus based approach where quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis were combined to provide a balance in the identification of metaphorical linguistic expressions (Kennedy, 1998). An analysis was conducted by the researcher manually, to establish if the Metaphorical Linguistic Expressions identified were metaphorical or literal using steps identified by Pragglejaz (2007) and linguistics expressions identified in past studies (Chiang & Duann, 2007, Wallis & Nerlich,2005, Stibbe, 2002, Nerlich et al, 2002). This first of the analysis is the identification of linguistic expressions that are metaphorical. The identification was conducted using the procedure outlined by Pragglejaz (2007) and through a close reading of the text to identify metaphorical expressions.

> The procedure outlined by Pragglejaz consists of four steps. One of the criterion to ascertain if a word is metaphorical or literal by Pragglejaz (2007) is the comparison with the basic meaning and the contextual meaning of a word. The basic meaning of each word is done by comparing it to the Macmillan dictionary to establish if a word is metaphorical or literal. Below is a brief description on the metaphor identification procedure by Pragglejaz (2007):

1. Read the whole text or transcript to understand what it is about.
2. Decide about the boundaries of words.
3. Establish the contextual meaning of the examined word.
4. Determine the basic meaning of the word (most concrete, human-oriented and specific).
5. Decide whether the basic meaning of the word is sufficiently distinct from the contextual meaning.
6. Decide whether the contextual meaning of the word can be related to the more basic meaning by some form of similarity.

(Steen, 2007)

Quantitative analysis of the text was then performed on the identified metaphorical expressions, using Antconc (Version 3.2.4w; Anthony, 2011) to generate a frequency list of the Metaphorical Linguistic Expressions (MLE) for the source domain of WAR in the

news reports. Once the frequency of occurrences was generated for each MLE, the next step was to place the MLE's into the various conceptual metaphor DISEASE IS A WAR.

This involves identifying the aspect off the source domain that is mapped onto the target domain for each identified MLE. This part of the research is done based on the context of the articles. This is based on Kovecses (2002) model on the structuring of the mapping. The background knowledge plays a crucial part in the mapping. This includes the socio-cultural aspect that is at the forefront in a journalist's mind.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1.1 illustrates the list of 5 most frequently used metaphorical linguistic expressions that are related to the source domain of WAR. The MLE *protect* had the highest number of occurrences followed by *hit, frontliner* and *battle.*

Table 1.1: List of Metaphorical Linguistic Expressions for the conceptual metaphor DISEASE IS WAR.

DISEASE IS A WAR	
Metaphorical Linguistic Expression	Occurrences
Protect	29
Hit	11
Frontliner	10
Battle	10
Fight	8
Attack	6

The following is a discussion on how the metaphorical linguistic expressions of the conceptual metaphor DISEASE IS A WAR helps to evoke certain understanding of the H1N1 pandemic in terms of war in the analysed newspaper reports.

Mappings between the Domains

The war domain has many aspects however, in this study there were six aspects that have been mapped from the domain of war onto the target domain.

The Attacking Force in a War

The Influenza A (H1N1) pandemic is a novel virus and mapping this abstract concept of disease with the more concrete element war provides the reader, a powerful enemy to fight against; the attacking force in this war which in this case is the Influenza A (H1N1) virus. Conceptualizing it as a force, that is attacking countries and communities, shows the scale of danger of the virus. Here, there is a virus that has "*hit*" various countries and Malaysians and it is *"attacking*" people countries.

1. Switzerland and the Netherlands become the latest countries *hit* by the outbreak

(Code Red, 2009)

2. Those with symptoms and who had been to countries *hit* by influenza A should proceed to the designated hospitals.

(Cruez, 2009)

3. Datuk Liow Tiong Lai said yesterday that the virus was a proven *killer* with hundreds of deaths reported in badly-affected countries, including United States and Mexico, where the virus first *struck.*

(Dont Take H1N1 Lightly', 2009)

4. There have been no deaths in Malaysia from the disease which has *struck* 158 countries.

(Bernama, 2009)

The Strategies for Action in a War

As with any war, strategies and plans are needed and this includes evasive and defensive action and communication to the mass populous within the country. This plans and strategies are the initiation of the National Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan (NIPPP) by the Ministry of Health Malaysia.

The response plan serves as a guideline to help fight against a viral threat. Activating this plan sets of the war imagery even more and gives the whole war against this pandemic both a structure and a kind of control towards the whole situation. The health ministry is seen to be at the forefront in this war against the disease as health ministry officials are "*deployed*" and "*stationed*" at H1N1 hot zones as officials strive to "*protect*" its citizens.

1. Dr Ismail said the ministry and state health departments would take proactive measures to *protect* the public and all necessary information was being circulated by its Crisis Preparedness and Response Centre.

(Virus Spreads to two more countries, 2009)

2. Health officers *deploye*d on board aircraft to scan body temperatures of passengers coming in from the United States, Melbourne (Australia) and Manila (the Philippines);

(Ng, 2009)

The Casualties of War

War always has casualties. As the pandemic progressed with the number of cases and the casualties of war starting to increase, some countries were conceptualized as having "surrendered their war against the virus" and public places in Malaysia were seen to have no "medical forcefield against the virus".

Defensive Force in a War

To fight against this unseen enemy a defensive force is created and mapped on the target domain of disease. These defensive force which consists of immigration officers, doctors and nurses, government staff, health ministry officials and the police, are the *frontliners* in the war against the Influenza virus. These frontliners are defending the country by holding the "frontline" against this attacking force.

1. This included vaccinating *frontliners* under the National Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Plan.

(Gomez, 2009)

The Defensive Actions in a War

Officials in Malaysia increased their defensive actions against the disease as a "frontline" was established and more people were 'confined' in hospitals and at home to help "protect" the rest of the citizens from being attacked by this invasive force that continues to advance in the country and in the rest of world. The NST continued to map the war imagery onto the disease as government officials, "join forces" with the WHO (seen as the nerve centre of the operation in mobilizing the distribution of information on the progress of the disease and steps to control the disease) and various other countries, to "battle", "combat", and "fight" the disease and help "protect" its citizens from this new enemy that threatens the world.

1. An eminent virologist has warned against the incorrect use of Tamiflu and Relenza, the drugs of choice in the *fight* against the Influenza A (H1N1) virus, as this could reduce their effectiveness.

(Bernama, 2009)

2. Malaysia's stringent measures in *combating* the H1N1 flu have created fear among foreign visitors.

(Abas, 2009)

3. Private clinics will also be engaged in the *battle* against the virus.

(Ram, 2009)

The Weapons against the Enemy

The next part of the element of war is the weapon to fight this unseen threat. The virus is small and microscopic. Its main weapon is its ability to mutate, and easily infect people. It is airborne, and difficult to avert from. The weapons that are used to thwart the enemy are thermal scanners and the vaccines to kill the enemy forces. The conceptualization of the vaccines as a weapon is enhanced as the store of vaccine is referred to as our "armoury" and a few companies in Malaysia "armed their guards with thermal scanner."

1. "Once we can't use Tamiflu or Relenza, what are we going to use? We will have nothing much in our *armoury* against severe influenza."

(Bernama, 2009)

2. Among the companies are Digi Telecommunications in Shah Alam and Bosch Malaysia, which have *armed* their guards with thermal scanners.

(Chin, 2009)

Conceptualizing the Influenza (A) H1N1 pandemic as a war in the NST has its own rhetorical function. While war brings about a negative imagery, conceptualization of disease as a war has a positive effect on the reader. The elements of war that are mapped onto the concept disease, gives the situation a structure, and a form of control even as the disease further progressed within the country. The language war has always been synonymous with discipline and the source domain of war is the most conventional metaphor mapping when dealing with the control and handling of a novel pandemic to help alleviate panic in readers.

CONCLUSION

As pointed out by Lakoff and Johnson (1980) "how we think metaphorically matters," (p.243). Metaphors play a crucial role in a person's cognitive mechanism. Therefore, the way we view a concept influences how we react to it. The various metaphorical linguistic expressions, for the one target domain of disease, constructed or built an overall concept of the pandemic by highlighting certain aspects of the target concept (Kovecses, 2002). These include the rhetorical function of the conceptual metaphors. Based on the analysis, six aspects of war that were mapped on to the target domain of DISEASE are observed in the data: the attacking force in a war, the defensive force in a war, the strategies for action in a war, the weapons against the enemy, the casualties of war and the defensive actions in a war. Based on the mappings, a summary can be made on what aspects of war were mapped on to the target domain of illness.

The war domain evokes an imagery of soldiers, enemy fighters, casualties, actions to attack and defend and finally weapons to fight and defend ourselves from a common enemy. Therefore, conceptualising DISEASE AS A WAR and evoking this imagery in the readers' mind provided this abstract concept of disease a structure, control and discipline to a situation that is out of control.

Conceptualizing the DISEASE AS WAR has its own rhetorical function. The concept of war is the most conventional mapping for disease. It provides a discipline the situation and helps to alleviate panic among people. It brings to mind all the elements of war that has a positive and negative function in the mind of the readers.

Metaphors of war highlight the difficulties faced by the authorities in dealing and containing the outbreak of the disease in Malaysia. War metaphor provides the situation a tangible opponent (Hartmann-Mahmud, 2010). It captures the reader's attention, in an simple and histrionic way, evoking patriotic feelings along the way, as the authorities do all they can to stop this disease from entering the country in order to contain the disease to protect the country (Baehr, 2006).

From a socio-cultural spectrum, in the beginning, when news of the disease first broke, the disease was viewed as an invasion from foreign forces. People who had been to affected countries were viewed suspiciously in the war efforts to contain the disease. This sudden appearance of a disease that is mutated and novel from North America brings forth this feeling of invasion from foreign forces as the focus in the beginning of the outbreak had been on the origin of outbreak.

Although conceptualizing the pandemic as a war can be seen as dramatizing the news, the media is able to map across elements of war which entails discipline, structure and control into this abstract concept of a pandemic, thereby alerting the public on this unseen foe and organizing the situation in a controlled and reassuring manner in order to avoid panic (Baehr, 2006). It has a rhetorical function in persuading the public on the seriousness of the disease and seeking the public's co-operation in fighting the disease.

To some extent, conceptual metaphors provide a better and more descriptive way to express certain situations. However, it is best to remember that these conventional metaphors represent a way of thinking and consequently this may influence how readers' reaction to the text. The results of this study hints at a few directions for further research. First, the study can be conducted again using more samples of news texts regarding disease. It would be significant to find more metaphorical linguistic expressions and conceptual metaphors that would emerge. Future research on conceptual metaphors in the news of the Influenza (A) H1N1 should consider comparing the data with other newspapers. This would give more generalization to metaphorical linguistic expressions and the conceptual metaphors manifested from it.

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CORPORATE ART COLLECTION PRACTISE IN MALAYSIA: BUSINESS MANAGERS AND THEIR RATIONALES BEYOND THE CSR IDEA

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ABSTRACT

The Malaysian concept of collecting Corporate Art remains underdeveloped, with only a few businesses supporting such engagement. Considerable research has been conducted to understand the management rationale for either engagement in collecting or avoiding art, although no such study is available relating to Malaysia. This research investigated the relationship between managers' demographic backgrounds and the practise of collecting Corporate Art in Malaysia. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and community engagement are the drivers behind organisational art acquisition. Art can also enhance other stakeholders' benefits. This study used the Stakeholder Theory as theoretical framework, and the analyses used mainly t-Test and ANOVA. Major findings were that demographics influence the rationale behind Corporate Art Collection practice, and a positive correlation was found between the CSR rationale and other rationales such as Decoration or Cultural Experience. A model for the highest potential for art engagement in Malaysia was then derived: Managers who are Muslim, specializing in HRM, working in the Finance sector and are over 37 years old. The findings can create an awareness of Corporate Art Collection practise beyond the mainstream business of viewing it as an investment or solely as a CSR tool. The paper brings valuable knowledge to Malaysian managers and communication professionals with respect to the impact of brand and image extension strategies through artistic and cultural products.

Keywords: Corporate Art Collection; Stakeholder Theory; Demographic Impact; Corporate Social Responsibility

INTRODUCTION

Despite Malaysia's growth in commercial art galleries as well as public interest in art auctions, the sector remains underdeveloped compared with that in other countries, e.g. Japan. Art in Malaysia is unappreciated by the masses (Choo, 2014; Wong, 2015). Although more commercial art galleries are opening, crowds seldom flock to exhibitions, and only a few corporate art collections are well known, e.g. PETRONAS, Bank Negara and AmBank Group. The first two entities have their own museum, whereas the AmBank Group collection is held at Bank Headquarters and branches (AmBank Group, 2012).

Research has highlighted that corporate art investment provides four major benefits: i.e. philanthropy and community development; workplace and employee engagement; investment in Corporate Art Collection (CAC) for wealth accumulation, and art for branding (Reitlinger, 1961-1970).

Art collections, which can be considered as life enhancing due to their cultural enrichment, are often derived from private, royal or corporate engagement. Collecting art also helps to prevent heritage loss. The question becomes: "Could increased local support significantly help to avoid Malaysia's heritage loss?" High performing Malaysian corporations are likely to be aware of the global trend for international corporations to demonstrate their world class status by possessing a CAC (AXA Art on the web, 2014).
During preliminary interviews with Bank Negara and PETRONAS (Appendix I), the top management stressed that profit and investment aspects were by no means pivotal and that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the driving force (Abd. Rahim, 2014; Rosli, 2015).[1] However, media coverage relating to collectible art indicates that, for Malaysian corporations, it is only conducted on a small scale. Art is seen rather by business as being more of an investment opportunity, and not being viewed as a multiplier for other corporate goals by the local business press (Choo, 2014; Wong, 2015).
Furthermore, over a significant period of time, the National Bank of Malaysia has collected a significant number of artefacts produced by both national and international artists, most of which originated from South East Asia (Abd. Rahim, 2014).
No formal study or evidence of any academic focus on Malaysian art has been found with regard to its corporate collectability. Therefore, this study can contribute towards a higher awareness among Malaysian decision and policy makers of art as worthwile collectables. The importance of this research is augmented by companies that possess high value CACs frequently enjoying a positive public perception, (which is amplified in the literature reviews below). Companies with strong social responsibility performance, e.g. sponsoring cultural activities, can, with suitable communication, achieve also increased awareness of their brands, products and services and show rationales beyond CSR (Abd. Rahim, 2014; Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003; Rosli, 2015).

Research Questions
To address the issues raised above, this study considers the following RQs:
(RQ1) What are the rationales of business managers towards a CAC?
(RQ2) What influence has the business managers' demographic background (religion, gender, specialisation, age, and industry type) on the rationales regarding a CAC?
(RQ3) Is there a significant dominance of the philanthropic rationale as a mediator variable (CSR) compared with the influence of other rationales?
(RQ4) What additional opportunities do business managers envisage for a CAC in relation to the firm's stakeholders (according to the Stakeholder Theory)?

Definition of the key term 'Corporate Art Collection' (CAC)
Based on the introduction statement for the world's largest corporate art collection, which reads: *"With its art program Deutsche Bank is making a sustainable contribution to the development of society…."*[2], the author defines CAC as

- art acquisition financed by a corporation
- using any form of corporate art engagement for activities such as PR, HRM, Marketing, Corporate Governance or Investment to grow the corporate business
and

[1] Interviews with gallery staff from Bank Negara and PETRONAS were conducted for this research towards understanding the corporate goal concerning CAC practise.

[2] http://art.db.com/en/deutsche_bank_collection_art_at_the_bank.html (retrieved January 13, 2017).

- supporting artists with either scholarships or the commission of art objects for the corporate collection.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Corporate Art Collecting

A broad approach to the topic is provided by Martorella (1996). The author published a book on CAC, which was divided into Europe and Asia/Pacific regions and included chapters by individual authors. Corporate art practice in specific countries is described, e.g. Germany, Italy, and Holland plus Japan and Australia, and in which countries CAC practice was popular during the early 1990s.

Hitters (1996) analysed corporate philanthropy in the Netherlands. Corporate giving variation depended upon organisation size, business sector, and educational stratification. Hitters used telephone interviews with additional face-to-face interviews, and stated that only approximately 10% of organisations surveyed linked their art engagement with CSR. Brand and image improvement plus reaching potential customers were most often mentioned as the motivation behind art collecting and sponsorship. For Hitters, public relations and marketing strategies were key to understanding the role of business in art. The rationales of Public Relations and Marketing appear in later studies, which significantly show that interest in art is not solely based upon corporate philanthropy as so many corporations pretend it used to be. Scheff and Kotler (1996) outlined similar ideas beyond CSR to promote art as a corporate marketing tool. In summary, the findings of Hitters are in sharp contrast to the views of several major Malaysian corporations where CSR- related ideas of nation building and community engagement are stressed. Based on Hitters' findings whereby the CSR rationale is only one possible reason why companies purchase or sponsor art, parts of the hypotheses (H1 and H2) are derived.

Corporate Art Collecting in Malaysia

Little information is known concerning current Malaysian corporation activities and achievements relating to CACs. No study has been identified which addresses this topic, and the current academic gap remains to be filled.

The journalistic columns of Choo (2014) and Tien (2014) promote art as an investment for private investors in Malaysia, stressing that it is an easy way to increase personal wealth. Articles were published in both a local business weekly and a celebrity magazine which highlighted the overall trend for art as an alternative investment. There is a practical gap, however, as art investment is extremely speculative with no guarantee of high returns. Furthermore, the articles concerned a limited investment perspective, with opportunities for other than high returns not being considered. Individual and corporate investors should be educated and informed about all varieties of opportunities, which impacts the society based upon the Stakeholder Theory. Wong (2014) highlighted another rationale for Malaysian art investors by encouraging the purchase of local art for enjoyment rather than merely to achieve profit. Based on the philanthropic opportunities, Wong could have linked the idea of buying art from local artists with heritage protection.

It is worthwhile to mention that the first Malaysian art auction was held in 2010, (Henry Butcher Malaysia Sdn Bhd, 2015). Subsequently, the 2013 Malaysian Yellow Pages Directory listed more than 30 art galleries and dealers in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. Understanding business managers' rationales towards CAC is therefore a significant contributing factor in further developing the sector. Based on this limited research and practical gap, our H3 is derived.

Stakeholder Theory

The philosopher Freeman (1984) was the first academic to conceptualize the Stakeholder Theory. He defined stakeholders as:

> *A stakeholder in an organization is (by definition) any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives.* (1984: 46)

The theory suggests that an organisation's success and survivability depends upon its capability to satisfy both its economic and non-economic objectives. This can be achieved by meeting the needs of various stakeholders - (Pirsch, Gupta, & Grau, 2007), the major ones being shareholders, employees, consumers, suppliers, government entities and other public organizations. Freeman also later emphasised that the Stakeholder Theory is not based on the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility, although it is often misinterpreted as such (Freeman, Harrison, Wicks, Parmar, & De Colle, 2010). This is the reason why corporate statements can be misleading, as they often overstress the focus on only a narrow group of stakeholders who are linked to social performance.

Based on previous literature, the hypotheses and theoretical framework are:
H1a and H1b: The managers' demographic background (religion, gender, specialisation, age, and industry type) impacts upon the CSR rational and all other rationales for CAC practise. **(RQ1)**
H2: The level of agreement of managers for the CSR rationale as a mediator variable has a positive relationship with other rationales and subsequently can help to improve the stakeholder relationship. **(RQ2 and RQ3)**
H3: Managers have currently limited understanding of art engagement for the organisation's benefit in regard to Stakeholder Theory and bear the potential for further development. **(RQ4)**

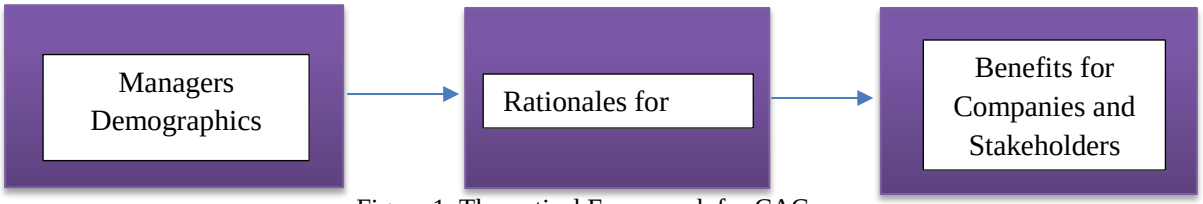

Figure 1, Theoretical Framework for CAC

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling procedure in which cases are selected haphazardly on the basis that they are easy to collect, which ensures that the selection of respondents is straightforward. For this study convenience sampling was selected as a reasonable technique. The target respondents were existing local and international business managers in Malaysia below the age of 45. Furthermore, they needed an understanding of fundamental economic concepts and how for-profit organizations are structured. The minimum educational requirement was that they possessed or were currently undertaking a business studies program above BA degree level. Geographically, the Kuala Lumpur and Klang Valley area was chosen as representing the most industrialised part of Malaysia. With the non-probability sampling technique randomly selected cases were collected from a Business School in Selangor. Obtaining information from these respondents was inexpensive, fast, convenient, efficient, and, most important, they were readily available.

Operationalization

To understand the demographic impact on the rationales linked to CAC practise (education level, nationality, religion, gender, type of program, MBA specialization, age, sector focus, plus Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange listing) this study utilised statistical t-Test, ANOVA, and correlation tests (for Part I and II), **(H1)**.

To test whether CSR has a moderating effect on the relationship between managers' backgrounds and other rationales, the CSR rationale was set as a moderator variable **(H2)**. Demographics (e.g., Gender, Religion etc.) remain independent variables and other rationales are the depending variables. In a third (qualitative) analysis, it was considered if respondents clearly understood the CAC philosophy and if they could provide further suggestions for utilizing art engagement in the organisational context, i.e. how to serve other stakeholders **(H3).**

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire contained three sections designed to capture demographics and data for exploring the attitudes of business managers towards CAC practise in Malaysia (Part I and II). In Part III, options were provided for respondents to consider organisational benefits. Options 1 to 5 concerned rationales for CAC practise, and option 6 required a qualitative answer concerning additional stakeholder benefits (e.g. in terms of a private-public partnership or other creative ideas). Statements in seven categories for different rationales were measured using the 5-point Likert scales, with "1" representing "Strongly Disagree", "2" – "Disagree", "3" – "Not Sure", "4" – "Agree", and "5" – "Strongly Agree" (Appendix II). Each category consisted of seven statements to ensure consistency. Appleyard and Salzmann (2012) used the CAC categories in previous research on corporate art engagement.

Data Collection

A pilot study with 20 questionnaires was undertaken. Subsequently, Cronbach's Alpha was generated using SPSS to establish statement consistency. The factor exceeded 0.75, which was satisfactory. Afterwards, a total of 146 questionnaires were completed, and 127 samples were used for the analyses, with 19 being discarded and four being not returned; (for the seven statements overall Cronbach's Alpha see Table 4 and in detail Appendix II).

Demographic data (education level, nationality, religion, gender, specialization, and type of industry) were measured on a nominal scale (Part I). For the variable age, ranges in years were used to avoid intimidation. The research used the interval scale to measure the main concepts (Part II). These included seven categories which were themselves rationales; Rationale 1 (R1): Personal Clout – Starting a CAC (item 11 to 17); Rationale 2 (R2): Collection Management – How to grow and maintain a CAC (item 18 to 24); Rationale 3 (R3): Decoration or Cultural Experience (item 25 to 31); Rationale 4 (R4): Brand Identity (item 32 to 38); Rationale 5 (R5): CSR (item 39 to 45); Rationale 6 (R6): Corporation's Self-Limitation (item 46 to 52); and Rationale 7 (R7): Investment versus Heritage (item 53 to 59). For every rationale, seven statements were formulated to generate a valid result.

A 5-point Likert scale was used to capture the seven rationales for starting a CAC, (DV); **(RQ1 and RQ2)**. In order to answer **RQ3**, the CSR rationale was subsequently re-considered as a mediator variable (MV), whereas the remaining six rationales remained as DVs. In order to answer **RQ4**, a frequency analysis of the respondents' answers was undertaken.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive analysis was used to confirm the respondents' demographic dimension in being a reasonable distribution of managers. Some respondents did not disclose their demographic background data.

Education Level (Q1)

Of 127 respondents, 126 had a BA degree and were currently MBA students, and one was a MSC student. Participants' age was measured in categorical data (nominal).

TABLE 1
Demographic Profile

Country	**Frequency**	**Percent**[3]
Malaysia	114	89.8
Bangladesh	2	1.6
Brunei	1	.8
China	2	1.6
Indonesia	1	.8
Nepal	1	.8
Pakistan	2	1.6
Philippines	1	.8
Missing	3	2.4
Total	127	100.0
Religion		
Islam	62	48.8
Buddhism	41	32.3
Hinduism	13	10.2
Christianity	9	7.1
Other	2	1.6
Total	127	100.0
Gender		
Male	56	44.1
Female	71	55.9
Total	127	100.0
Age		
20-25	32	25.2
26-30	47	37.0
31-36	28	22.0
37-41	15	11.81
Over 42	4	3.15
Missing data	1	.8
Total	127	100.0

Specialization and Type of Industry

Managers pursuing a MBA degree have to specialise in one particular field at the case study's Business School. Table 2 shows the distribution. The type of industry that respondents were engaged in was an important demographic factor (Table 3). According to literature, significant differences should be expected (McGuire, Sundgren, & Schneeweis, 1988). Under the category "Neither", it was understood that the respondent was unemployed at that time, and was possibly a full-time student. Notably, almost 50% of respondents were, at the time, unattached to any industry. This reflects data collected from full-time MBA students during day classes and from, part-time night class MBA students, who were more likely to be employed. Furthermore, all elective courses were mixed with both such student groups.

[3] Rounded numbers.

Table 2. Participants' Profile by Specialization and Type of Industry[4]

Specialization	Frequency	Percent	Total Current Enrolment[5]	Percent
GM	14	11.0	72	13.9
Finance	44	34.6	152	29.3
HRM	18	14.2	68	13.1
Marketing	11	8.7	72	13.9
Corporate Governance	25	19.7	76	14.7
International Business	15	11.0	78	15.1
Total	127	100.0	518	100.0
Type of Industry				
Finance	16	12.6		
Hotel	2	1.6		
Trading/Service	20	15.7		
Industrial	8	6.3		
Construction	2	1.6		
Consumer	4	3.1		
Technology	14	11.0		
Plantation	2	1.6		
Other	59	46.5		
Total	127	100.0		

Knowledge of "Corporate Art Collection"

Part II of the questionnaire started with a question regarding the respondents' familiarity with the term "corporate art collection", followed by a question regarding the current CAC situation in the respondents' organisation. Notwithstanding clarification provided in the introduction, only 20 respondents answered "Yes" and 106 answered "No", and one was invalid. Over 80% did not understand CAC, which is remarkable, and supports the researcher's review of literature on the current overall status of the arts in Malaysia. It remains a niche "industry" and is often regarded as a millionaire's hobby (Wong, 2015). The respondents also seemed to be unaware of CAC efforts made by PETRONAS, Bank Negara, and AmBank Group.

Current Working Environment and CAC

From the respondents' reply to whether their firm has a CAC, eight answered "Yes", 66 answered "No", 52 answered "Don't know", and one provided no comment. It is relevant that eight of the respondents' companies possessed a CAC, and there could also be "No" responses amongst respondents who were not in work.

Rationales (R1 to R7) for CAC Practise and Reliability Test

The rationales were categorized in seven groups. Cronbach's Alpha was generated for all rationales. With factors over .75, the statements had a high consistency within each rationale.

Table 3. *Cronbach's Alpha for Q11 to Q59*

Rationale	Cronbach's Alpha
R1 (Personal Clout)	.822
R2 (Collection Management)	.769
R3 (Decoration or Cultural Experience)	.873
R4 (Brand Identity)	.842

[4] As no respondent worked in the Properties sector, it was omitted from further analyses.

[5] The numbers enrolled in the third trimester of academic year 2014/2015 were obtained from the business school.

R5 (Corporate Social Responsibility)	.827
R6 (Corporation's Self-Limitation)	.810
R7 (Investment versus Heritage)	.850

Average Mean of All Rationales

Comparing the average means, it became clear that R3 (Decoration or Cultural Experience) received the highest rating (4.0135; for detailed means see Appendix II).

Table 4. *Average Mean of All Rationales*

Rationale	Mean	Std. Deviation
R1 (Personal Clout)	3.7435	.63106
R2 (Collection Management)	3.7872	.51325
R3 (Decoration or Cultural Experience)	4.0135	.55894
R4 (Brand Identity)	3.7634	.55058
R5 (Corporate Social Responsibility)	3.7672	.53515
R6 (Corporation's Self-Limitation)	3.7289	.62720
R7 (Investment versus Heritage)	3.4621	.68491

Test Methods

The hypotheses were tested with t-Test, ANOVA, Post Hoc Tukey Test, Pearson Correlation (PCC) and qualitative analyses.

Table 5. *IVs and DVs with Test Method*

H	IVs versus DVs	Test
H1	Demographics and all rationales, CSR rationale alone	t-Test, ANOVA, Post Hoc Tukey Test, Pearson Correlation
H2	CSR rationale versus other rationales	Pearson Correlation
H3	Opportunities with CAC and Stakeholder Needs	Qualitative

To Test H1(a): Demographics and CSR

Based on H1, demographics and the CSR rationale were tested first, followed by demographics, and all rationales were investigated.

Gender

Gender had no significant influence on CSR rationale, with both tests producing similar mean results of 3.7423 vs. 3.7867 (P>0.05).

Table 6. *Response CSR, Mean by Gender, t-Test (significant at 5% level, P< 0.05)*

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig.
Male	56	3.7423	.44798		
Female	71	3.7867	.58448		
Total	127				
t score				-.470	.640

Religion

Islam had the highest mean (3.9032) for CSR rationale. Christianity and Other had with 3.6349 vs. 2.7857 the lowest. According to multiple comparisons, Islam and "Other" had a significant difference in CAC rationales (.021). However, there are no information available if the "Other" are very religious or atheist individuals.

Table 7. *Response CSR, Mean by Religion*

Religion	N	CSR Mean	Std. Deviation
Islam	62	3.9032	.48447
Buddhism	41	3.6411	.53177
Hinduism	13	3.7582	.40985
Christianity	9	3.6349	.38539
Other	2	2.7857	1.51523
Total	127	3.7672	.52714

Table 8. *Multiple Comparisons, CSR Average by Religion (* significant at the 0.05 level), Post Hoc Tukey Test*

Religions	Mean Difference	Sig.
Between groups	----	.006
Post Hoc Tukey Test		
Islam - Buddhism	.26211	.081
Islam - Hinduism	.14498	.880
Islam - Christianity	.26831	.572
Islam - Other	1.11751	.021*

Specialization

The highest CSR mean was in the HRM group (3.9206), whereas the lowest was in Finance (3.6883). Multiple comparisons exhibited no statistically significant differences in the mean scores.

Table 9. *Response CSR, Mean by Specialization*

Specialization	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
GM	14	3.7551	.41197
Finance	44	3.6883	.55521
HRM	18	3.9206	.44648
Marketing	11	3.7662	.90174
Other	40	3.7893	.45790
Total	127	3.7672	.53515

Table 10. *Multiple Comparisons, CSR Average by Specialization (* significant at the 0.05 level)*

Specialization	Mean Difference	Sig.
Between groups	----	.635

Age

The older the participants the lower the mean for CSR as the driving factor for a CAC (e.g., respondents over 42 have a mean of 3.7857 vs. the age cohort 20-25 with a mean of 3.8393). It shows that the more experienced managers have more rationales in mind (mean difference of .26786). There are no statistically significant differences according to multiple comparisons. However, there is a tendency that age 37 to 42 has different opinions about CSR rationale.

Table 11. *Response CSR, Mean by Age*

Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
20-25	32	3.8393	.60455
26-30	47	3.8116	.55521
31-36	28	3.7194	.47883
37-41	15	3.5714	.44395
Over 42	4	3.7857	.41667
Missing	1	----	----
Total	127	3.7687	.53672

Table 12**.** *Multiple Comparisons, CSR Average by Age (* significant at the 0.05 level)*

Age	Mean Difference	Sig.
Between groups	----	.529

Type of Industry

Finance (3.9375) has the highest and Hotel (2.4286) the lowest average mean regarding the level of agreement to CSR as major driving force for a CAC. The means differ significantly according to multiple comparisons between Hotel and the following industries: Finance .004), Trading/Service (.025), Technology (.012), and "Other" (.006); (P<0.05).

Table 13. Response CSR, Mean by Industry

Industry	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Finance	16	3.9375	.59240
Hotel	2	2.4286	.80812
Trading/Service	20	3.7000	.52826
Industrial	8	3.5893	.41430
Construction	2	3.5714	.80812
Consumer	4	3.5000	1.43095
Technology	14	3.8163	.32397
Plantation	2	3.7143	.20203
Other	59	3.8281	.40212
Total	127	3.7672	.52714

Table 14. *Multiple Comparisons, CSR Average by Industry (* significant at the 0.05 level), Post Hoc Tukey Test*

Industry	Mean Difference	Sig
Between groups	----	.017
Post Hoc Tukey Test		
Hotel - Finance	-1.50893	.004*
Hotel – Trading/Service	-1.27143	.025*
Hotel - Industrial	-1.16071	.096
Hotel - Construction	-1.14286	.371
Hotel - Consumer	-1.07143	.266
Hotel - Technology	-1.38776	.012*
Hotel - Plantation	-1.28571	.220
Hotel - Other	-1.39952	.006*

Correlations between CSR and other Rationale Statements (Q11-Q59)

Several CSR statements (Q39-Q45, Appendix II) also have a statistically significant Pearson Correlation Coefficient with other statements and other rationale statements average (Q11-Q38, Q46-Q59). The CSR 2 statement *"Cultural enrichment of employees can be achieved through art decoration of the firm's office walls."* has a mild positive correlation with the average of Personal Clout" (r=.199). CSR 1 statement *"Art engagement can fit into a firm's 'Corporate Culture Diplomacy.'"* also shows a mild positive correlation with Decoration or Cultural Experience (r=.222). CSR 3 statement *"To purchase art is a good way how a firm can provide workers or clients with a decorative and uplifting environment."* also shows a mild positive correlation with the average of the Corporation's Self-Limitation (r=.220).

Table 15. *Pearson Correlation of CSR and Statements, Sig. (2-tailed), (* significant at the 0.05 level)*

Statements	Pearson Correlation	Sig.

CSR2 (Q40) – Personal Clout (Average)	.199	.025*
CSR1 (Q39) – Decoration or Cultural Experience (Average)	.222	.012*
CSR3 (Q41) – Company's Self Limitation (Average)	.220	.013*

To Test H1(b): Demographics and all rationales for CAC

There were also tests conducted to establish if all seven rationales for CAC are influenced by managers' demographic background.

Religion

A significant mean difference was found between Islam (3.8620) and Buddhism (3.6242) groups (.029).

Table 16. *Response, Average Rationale on CAC by Religion*

Religion	N	CAC Mean	Std. Deviation
Islam	62	3.8620	.39359
Buddhism	41	3.6242	.40752
Hinduism	13	3.8161	.38719
Christianity	9	3.5642	.33564
Other	2	3.4082	.72154
Total	127	3.7523	.41154

Table 17. *Multiple Comparisons, Average Rationale of CAC by Religion (* significant at the 0.05 level), Post Hoc Tukey Test*

Religion	Mean Difference	Sig
Between groups	----	.015
Post Hoc Tukey Test		
Islam – Buddhism	.23778	.029*
Islam – Hinduism	.04591	.996
Islam – Christianity	.29772	.228
Islam – Other	.45381	.508

Specialization

The average rationale for CAC by specialization showed no statistically significant differences between groups. As with the CSR rationale average, HRM had the highest score (3.8636); (table 9 and 10).

Table 18. *Response, Average Rationale on CAC by Specialization*

Specialization	N	CAC Mean	Std. Deviation
GM	14	3.7680	.37032
Finance	44	3.7040	.37181
HRM	18	3.8636	.42014
Marketing	11	3.6772	.64979
Other	40	3.7704	.39176
Total	127	3.7523	.41154

Table 19. *Multiple Comparisons, CAC Average by Specialization (* significant at the 0.05 level)*

Specialization	Mean Difference	Sig.
Between groups	----	.671

Age

The average rationale for CAC by age showed no statistically significant differences between groups. As with the single CSR rationale average, group 20 to 25 years had the highest score (3.8508); (table 12 and 13).

Table 20. *Response, Average Rationale on CAC by Age*

Age	N	CAC Mean	Std. Deviation
20-25	32	3.8508	.41813
26-30	47	3.7616	.44084
31-36	28	3.7153	.37479
37-41	15	3.5878	.34282
Over 42	4	3.7704	.50222
Total	127	3.7535	.41293

Table 21. *Multiple Comparisons, CAC Average by Age (* significant at the 0.05 level)*

Age	Mean Difference	Sig.
Between groups	----	.351

Type of Industry

The average rationale for CAC by type of industry revealed statistically significant findings. The Hotel group had the lowest score (2.7653) and differed significantly from Finance (-.008) and Trading/Service (.039). These groups showed also significant differences with the CSR rationale (table 13 and 14).

Table 22. *Response, Average Rationale On CAC By Industry*

Type of Industry	N	CAC Mean	Std. Deviation
Finance	16	3.8914	.50943
Hotel	2	2.7653	1.05344
Trading/Service	20	3.7286	.38615
Industrial	8	3.6607	.26451
Construction	2	3.6327	.49065
Technology	14	3.7143	.22009
Plantation	2	3.6429	.10102
Other	59	3.7892	.38870
Missing	4	----	----
Total	127	3.7523	.41154

Table 23. *Comparisons, Average Rationale on CAC by Industry (* significant at the 0.05 level), Post Hoc Tukey Test*

	Type of Industry	Mean Difference	Sig
	Between groups	----	.057
	Post Hoc Tukey Test		
To Test H2:	Hotel - Finance	-1.12606	.008*
	Hotel - Trading/Service	-.96327	.039*
	Hotel - Industrial	-.89541	.116
	Hotel - Construction	-.86735	.431
	Hotel - Consumer	-.92857	.165
	Hotel - Technology	-.94898	.053
	Hotel – Plantation	-.87755	.415
	Hotel - Other	-1.02387	.015

Correlation between variables

A Pearson Correlation test was performed to establish the influence of CSR upon other rationales. The results revealed many correlations at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 24. *Pearson Correlation with CSR Average, Sig. (2-tailed), (* significant at the 0.01 level)*

Rationale	Mean	Std. Deviation	Pearson Correlation	Sig.
R1 (Personal Clout)	3.7435	.63106	.501	.000
R2 (Collection Management)	3.7872	.51123	.474	.000
R3 (Decoration or Cultural) Experience	4.0135	.55894	.556	.000
R4 (Brand Identity)	3.7634	.54667	.660	.000
R5 (CSR)	3.7672	.52714	1	----
R6 (Company's Self Limitation)	3.7289	.62810	.459	.000
R7 (Investment versus Heritage)	3.4621	.68299	.390	.000
Other rationales average	3.7498	.41295	----	----

CSR as mediator variable had the highest correlation with Brand Identity (r= .660) and Decoration or Cultural Experience rationales (r= .556). The lowest correlation was with Investment versus Heritage rationale (r= .390), which demonstrated that respondents willing to consider CSR were not inclined to consider investment. Indeed, sponsoring cultural or sport events is often seen as extended marketing, e.g. MILO's First Malaysia Breakfast Day 2013. Such sponsor activities are designed to provide a good brand image (with attributes like being healthy, sustainable and reliable). In return, customers and consumers might get a better impression of the product or service. This is then a kind of CSR backup. Also, the Decoration or Cultural Experience rational, which scored highest among all seven CAC rationales (table 4), is linked to CSR, if the management decides to improve the working conditions of staff (a stakeholder of the company!) by making the offices more friendly looking, i.e. putting art on the walls.

To Test H3: Opportunities with CAC and Stakeholder Needs (Q60)

Stakeholder Opportunities / Stakeholder Needs (Q60)

Table 25. *Stakeholder Needs (Options for Art Engagement)*

Option	Frequency	Percent
Buying art from local artists	67	52.2
Lending art objects to exhibitions.	46	36.2
Providing scholarships for local artists	55	43.3
Having a corporate art museum	36	28.3
Making the working environment more beautiful	72	56.7
Other	3	2.4

From the findings, it was concluded that demographic background had an important influence on the rationales for CAC practise. Art professionals (e.g., gallery owners) seeking collaboration with corporations for the purpose of creating a CAC should bear that in mind. Also, it is most likely that the more experienced managers will kick off the idea of such kind of art engagement. All hypotheses were partially confirmed. CSR, however, was not the most important rationale, which is in sharp contrast to the pivotal goal as outlined to the author during a preliminary interview with PETRONAS and as claimed in the Mission Statements of Malaysian corporations with art collections, e.g. AmBank and Bank Negara.[6] Although it had correlation with other rationales and a

[6] For details please read the Mission Statements for the respective art engagement at the official homepage or in the annual reports.

mediator effect, the respondents selected Decoration or Cultural Experience (R3) as the most agreeable rationale (Table 4, Mean 4.0135).

Table 26. *Summary of Hypotheses' Findings*

H	Hypothesis	Result
H1	The managers' demographic background (i.e., religion, gender, specialisation, age, and industry type) has impact on the rationales for CAC practise.	Partially Supported
H2	The level of agreement for the CSR rationale as mediator variable has a positive relationship with other rationales.	Partially Supported
H3	Managers' current understanding of CAC is limited and bears the potential for further development according stakeholder needs.	Supported

DISCUSSION

The findings provide responses to RQ1 to RQ4. A CAC can be of benefit to different stakeholders with interest in the company (e.g., employees, shareholders, society, and government). The empirical evidence indicates that respondents rated Decoration or Cultural Experience as the most important rational for a CAC (i.e., their main focus was on employees and the paintings or sculptures that decorated offices); (RQ1 and RQ2). However, well designed and equipped offices or function rooms can also signify the success of the business entity and, hence, convince potential customers or trade partners or suppliers to collaborate and extend business-to-business (B2B). Since so many of the respondents indicated that they do not fully understand the idea of a CAC (RQ4), business schools and communication departments should also consider the discussion about the opportunities with CAC by inviting guest speakers from the not-for-profit sector (e.g., museums) to their regular industrial talks. As pointed out above, the concept of corporate art collecting as a strategy to serve several stakeholders (not solely the CSR string) is still new to Malaysian managers and a significant range of collaboration models between for-profit and not-for profit organizations is feasible. Sometimes having an own collection is too complicated and costly. Therefore, other forms of art engagement (e.g., brand extension and co-branding), can produce a similar positive impact and a win-win situation. For example, a local museum can collaborate with a print company to allow the museum's name together with selected art works from the collection to be used as decorative elements for presentation calendars. The museum can benefit from the free advertisement and the print company will save the expense of paying costly copyright fees. Recent research and SWOT analyses regarding such co-branding strategies with respect to the arts should, of course, be considered (Gajda, 2004). Attention should also be paid to the finding that the idea of CSR serves as a mediator variable for other opportunities with art engagement (RQ3).

The test results go much further than the overall CAC statements of existing collections envisage. Demography has partial influence on the perception of such art engagement (RQ1 and RQ2). Religion (Islam) and Type of Industry (Finance) significantly influence in a positive manner managers' rationales. Gender, specialization in MBA, and age have no significance, although in some cases, a trend can be observed. Only the significant results are discussed below in detail.

CSR Rationale and Religion

CSR is an important factor for an organisation engaging in art (according to the Mission Statements from Malaysian corporate art collections). It was established that Muslim respondents possessed a significantly higher acceptance of the CSR rationale compared with "Other" (table 7). A similar result regarding corporate social performance was

observed by Ramasamy (2007). Malaysia has a strong collectivistic culture in a multi-ethnic environment. This finding underscores that CSR awareness in relation to CACs may be overvalued by these respondents. This means that a full understanding of CAC practise and usefulness is not evident. It is at this junction that further information, and to some extent training and development for organisation decision makers, can demonstrate how all stakeholders can benefit.

CSR Rationale and Industry

The study also discovered the significant influence of the respondents' type of industry. The Hotel sector scored significantly lower than Finance, Trading/Service, Technology, and "Other" (table 14). The Finance sector traditionally has a high perception and understanding of supporting CAC (Hoeken & Ruikes, 2005). By combining the finding in table 9 and 13 the highest potential for an art engagement bear those respondents who are specialising in HRM and are working in the finance sector. The low score in the hotel sector is supported with evidences from the stock market. Hotels, with the exception of Shangri La, have been performing less well on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange provided poor results during 2014.[7] The hospitality industry is operating in a highly competitive sector. Although it is acknowledged that some luxury hotels exhibit artworks in guest areas, e.g. lobbies and guest rooms. In some cases, hotels also rent in artworks for decoration (Choo, 2014). Notwithstanding difficult economic conditions, hotels often have huge lobbies and banquet halls combined with a high visitor numbers that make them ideal venues for displaying art. The low level of CSR agreement by hotel staff, plus the significant difference with other sectors, can be understood from a perspective of a highly competitive and labour intensive industry with a high turnover ratio plus large properties with high maintenance costs.

CSR Rationale and Statement Correlation

Some correlations illustrate the moderating effect of the CSR rationale. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient shows a tendency between certain CSR statements and other rationales' average (Brand Identity - R4; Decoration or Cultural Experience - R3; Personal Clout Average - R1); (table 24). This indicates that the respondents agree that the initial idea for a CAC has to come from top management. Furthermore, top management is also responsible for ensuring that employees feel safe and engaged in the workplace. This can be linked to the Stakeholder Theory, in which the focus of an organization's progress lays not only in the shareholders' or owners' wealth, but also in employee wellbeing. Hoeken and Ruikes (2005) provided evidence that art can support employee engagement. Decoration or Cultural Experience (R3) has the highest mean (4.0135). This finding is different from that which corporations present within their Mission Statements relating to CAC, where philanthropy is overstressed. A CAC is not purely for patronage or CSR, as it also serves other goals, (as some respondents observed).

All Rationales and Religion

As the majority of respondents were Muslim, the next significant finding is also supportive of discussion of Malaysian CAC practise (table 16). Malaysian cultural values are based on collectivism and less in competition. Previous research established that Malays, Chinese-Malaysians, and Indian-Malaysians have different values (Rashid &

[7] The three other listed hospitality firms are: Grand Central Enterprises BHD, Landmarks BHD, Pan Malaysia Holdings BHD (www.bursamalaysia.com).

Ibrahim, 2003). Islam also has a significantly higher score for the average rationale towards CAC compared with Buddhism. A variation in opinions, beliefs, and values in multi-ethnic Malaysia can be identified even in a field like CAC.

All Rationales and Industry

The significance of type of industry for the CSR rationale has been discussed above, which showed that the Hotel sector is underperforming. Respondents from Finance and Trading/Service sectors fully appreciate CAC, which again illustrates the linkage between CSR and other rationales. Whereas for CSR and the type of industry, four significant differences occurred, only two such significances were shown for all rationales. Therefore, some rationales have a moderate effect and average out, or, explained in relation to CSR, other stakeholders are also considered by respondents to be important, which is supported by the reviewed literature (Hitters, 1996; Appleyard & Salzmann, 2012).

Stakeholder Needs and Opportunities with Art Engagement

From the researcher's viewpoint, all these options were true in the stakeholder benefit context. Therefore, the more options a respondent agreed to, the better the understanding of CAC practise. However, respondents could also add their own ideas (option 6). Respondents who provided additional suggestions were considered at least partially knowledgeable in terms of CAC practise. The two concepts were that CAC may also benefit the employer, and that it could promote artists with distinctive support.

In respect to **RQ4** and **H3** and the current understanding of CAC practise for further opportunities with art engagement, the majority failed to identify the six or more suggested options to which they could have added their own ideas. Respondents could generate more suggestions, when they had a good understanding of the potential benefits of art engagement. However, we obtained the mean at 2.20.

In considering the respondents' positively judged rationales, (with many means at the "Agree" level, Appendix II), the expected normal frequency should have been higher compared with the findings. No respondent suggested a partnership between a public museum and a corporation as another option. Such collaborations are proven corporate strategies for branding or community engagement by avoiding the hidden costs of a corporate museum (d'Astous, Colbert, & Fournier, 2007).

Model for managers with high potential for art engagement

Based on our analyses, we can now show a model for the highest potential for art engagement in Malaysia: Managers who are Muslim, specializing in HRM, working in the Finance sector and are over 37 years old. This also indicates a balanced background can serve best different stakeholders' needs.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Society also needs confidence in art engagement. Fukuyama (1995) stressed the importance of "symbolic capital" in lowering transaction costs and the overall costs of doing business. Translated into CAC practise, it is concluded that Malaysian CAC efficiency and usefulness depends on stakeholders' willingness to consume art. The current level of art appreciation in Malaysia is low, which will lead even the best educated and philanthropic manager to be concerned about CAC, accompanied by the risk that stakeholders will be unappreciative of such effort. Therefore, to embed CAC practise in a broader Malaysian context, there is a need to consider the overall economic and social conditions. Two challenges associated with art engagement are the lack of

interest in history in younger generations (Y and Z) and the pressure in tertiary education for Humanities. If the global trend of "marketable graduates" related to the knowledge economy who study only "face value" subjects (e.g., science, economics, business), rather than globalized and educated individuals according to Humboldt's educational ideal is at risk and, hence, the concept of a CAC might not serve any broader stakeholder needs in the future (Resende & Vieira, 2009). Nevertheless, Malaysia's aspiration to become a fully developed nation by 2020 should include the potential for increased "symbolic capital", e.g. corporate museums or overall art engagement.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The research exposed several limitations, such as the sample being taken from only one business school and 75% of respondents being below 36 years of age. Future investigation could focus on the stakeholder site, e.g. museums and galleries.[8]

Another research ideal concerns how an organisation should measure CAC success. Since art is not considered to be one of life's necessities, the majority of consumers and customers, as an important stakeholder group, could experience difficulty in appreciating such engagement. The majority of stakeholders do not read annual reports. AmBank Group published the launch of its coffee table art book within CSR activities in its 2014 annual report, emphasising the social aspect. On the other hand, PETRONAS invariably eager to publicise its many CSR related engagements, provides no information on its KLCC art gallery in its report (PETRONAS, 2014; AmBank Group, 2015). Leaving out information on art engagement can also be interpreted as a more pragmatic approach, whereby the benefits for multiple stakeholders make it irrelevant to be published in the CSR-report chapter.

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Appendix I

Interview: 20 January 2015 (3-4 pm) with Mr. Rosli B. Abdul Rahim, Galeri PETRONAS, Group Strategic Communication Division at PETROLIAM NASIONAL BERHAD (PETRONAS) L-60 Tower 1 PETRONAS Twin Towers, Kuala Lumpur City Centre, 50088 Kuala Lumpur. MALAYSIA

1. How long have you been working as Head of Communication for PETRONAS?
2. What kind of art does PETRONAS collect?
3. Who is involved in the decision process to purchase an art object?
4. What are the rationales for PETRONAS to collect art?
5. What is different with a corporate art museum versus a public art gallery?
6. How do you measure the success of the art engagement?
7. What wishes do you have for the future of the corporate collection?
8. Have you noticed any significant change over the past few years either in the popularity of corporate collecting or changes in the practice itself?

Appendix II

Statements, Corporate Art Collection with Cronbach's Alpha and Mean (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Not Sure, 4. Agree, 5. Strongly Agree)

Rational 1, *Personal clout – Starting a Corporate Art Collection*

1. Corporate art engagement depends on the attitudes of the top management or owners? *(.803; 3.8583)*
2. The owner should have a passion for art. *(.781; 3.7874)*
3. If the top-management has no interest in art, then the firm will not start art engagement. *(.800; 3.6457)*
4. Art acquisition needs the involvement of senior staff to ensure good and wise decisions. *(.819; 3.7323)*
5. Art acquisition is new for Malaysian firms and it needs experienced senior staff involvement. *(.810; 3.7874)*
6. The firm owner should have a passion for art. *(.796; 3.7165)*
7. The top managers should have a passion for art. *(.778; 3.6772)*

Rationale 2, *Collection Management – How to grow and maintain a collection*

1. The firm should solicit help from professionals or experienced amateurs (at least at the beginning). *(.733; 3.8651)*
2. Outside consultants are good to help the firm to gauge what they want from their art holdings. *(.727; 3.7222)*
3. Cooperation with other art galleries can help to promote and maintain the firm's collection. *(754; 3.9365)*
4. Hiring an art adviser at some stage in the evolution of the firm's collection is important. *(.739; 3.7540)*
5. If the collection of art objects is very big (like PETRONAS corporate collection) hiring of an in-house curator is a good strategy. *(.749; 3.8651*)
6. Having an in-house curator can be more economical for the company than relying on external expertise. *(.745; 3.7143)*
7. A big art collection is a good way to represent the firm and hence should be overseen by a professional in-house or external curator. *(.735; 3.6508)*

Rationale 3 ***Decoration or Cultural Experience***

1. An art collection is a good opportunity to enhance office environments. *(.867; 4.0079)*
2. With decorated walls in offices, the working environment will be enhanced. *(.848; 4.0236)*
3. A good workplace design is important to engage employees. Art as decoration is one way to achieve it. *(.844; 4.0866)*
4. Artworks can increase inspiration and creative innovation of the employees. *(.845; 4.0630)*
5. Forward-thinking company directors and CEOs should use the office environment to encourage their staff. *(.851; 4.1811)*
6. Artworks in a firm can foster communication and education among staff. *(.865; 3.8504)*
7. Art can help to foster a social work environment. *(.862; 3.8819)*

Rationale 4 ***Brand Identity***

1. Patronage of the arts is a highly sophisticated communication tool. *(.833; 3.6880)*
2. Art engagement is a good way to proclaim the business enhancing values of the endeavour. *(.822; 3.6800)*
3. Artworks should give a good message of the firm's identity. *(.806; 3.9440)*
4. Art is a strong platform to be used as a point of differentiation amongst competitors. *(.831; 3.6400)*
5. Corporate art collections can be used as a branding exercise. *(.824; 3.8160)*
6. Big corporations like SAMSUNG and PETRONAS can get a good reputation with their corporate art collections in Seoul and Kuala Lumpur. *(.819; 3.6960)*
7. Art engagement can be a strategy for branding and corporate identity. *(.805; 3.8720)*

Rationale 5 ***Corporate Social Responsibility – CSR***

1. Art engagement can fit into a firm's "Corporate Culture Diplomacy". *(.827; 3.6929)*
2. Cultural enrichment of employees can be achieved through art decoration of the firm's office walls. *(.816; 3.8268)*
3. To purchase art is a good way how a firm can provide workers or clients with a decorative and uplifting environment. *(.803; 3.7165)*
4. A firm's art engagement can help local artists to establish their career through commissions and purchasing the artist's works. *(.793; 3.9370)*
5. Corporate patronage towards artists and the creative community is part of the company's ethos and its responsibility to its employees. *(.803; 3.7244)*
6. CSR manifest itself in arts sponsorship, e.g. sponsorship of museums, exhibitions and art events. *(.799; 3.7402)*
7. Sponsorship or patronage of the visual arts enables the company to fulfil some of its CSR remit. *(.784; 3.7323)*

Rationale 6 ***Corporation's Self-Limitation***

1. Artworks should not show explicit nudity. *(.768; 3.7063)*
2. Artworks should nothing potentially prejudicial display. *(.760; 3.7619)*
3. Artworks should not show gratuitous violence. *(.766; 3.9286)*
4. Human representation should be avoided in any kind of art work. *(.814; 3.2460)*
5. Abstract art is value-free and hence appropriate for a firm's art display. *(.788; 3.6508)*
6. Corporate art is destined for a space more public than private. Hence, special attention to content and values of the local customs (Malaysia) is necessary. *(.782; 3.8492)*
7. Art in a firm's building or a firm's museum should be fit in terms of topic and style. It must not offend any group of employees, clients and visitors. *(.808; 4.0000)*

Rationale 7 ***Investment versus Heritage***

1. Building an art collection should be on the principle to make money and profit by later sales. *(.821; 3.2302)*
2. Preserving our heritage should be only the second or subsequent goal. *(.851; 3.1508)*
3. If I have the power to start a corporate art collection I would see it as an investment for future value appreciation. *(.831; 3.6587)*
4. A corporation should also think in their strategy for art acquisition to sell the collection later, e.g. after 10 years. *(.838; 3.6032)*
5. Artworks from young unknown artists are a good opportunity for market speculation and future gain in value. This is most important for an art deal. *(.826; 3.6111)*
6. Art acquisition is an operation expense and hence should be clearly seen under profit outlook. *(.819; 3.5317)*
7. The investment aspect should be more important than others for art acquisition. *(.820; 3.42*

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EVASION AND CONFRONTATION OF PERSONAL SECRETS IN TONI MORRISON'S *PARADISE*

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ABSTRACT
The trilogy of Toni Morrison is set against the backdrop of slavery and Re-construction of African-Americans. The historical scenario provides Morrison with a context to explore the emotional and psychological trauma particularly inflicted upon women of the society, thus reminding the contemporary reader the significance of past and its influence upon the present. In *Paradise*, physical and mental evasion of Mavis from domestic violence helps her to confront the situation confidently and bravely. The severe treatment of the woman by her family-members results in emotional break-down leading towards confusion and nervousness. I investigate various ways in which evasion is registered, through the character of Mavis, which becomes a strategy to survive amid atypical circumstances. Essentially the paper argues my stance that in certain cases, events have to be evaded by the survivor, only then they can be decoded into non-traumatic experience making the survival probable amid nonconforming conditions.

Keywords: anxiety, confront, evasion, family, mother, trauma,

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
Trauma studies in field of Literary Criticism gained prominence in late twentieth-century. Its connotation transformed from an injury of a body to the disease of mind. Casper thinks that, "to be traumatized meant that one was psychically wounded and vulnerable, unwhole; therapeutic practices were aimed at 'restoring' normalcy or stasis" (2016, 3). Exhaustive studies by Cathy Caruth, Ruth Leys, Dominick LaCapra, and Shoshana Felman have brought trauma into the field of humanities and social sciences. Earthquakes, famines, wars, accidents result in trauma as they bring destruction on a large scale but seeing a loved-one falling sick and die, sexual assault, and murder of a close relation are equally traumatic. These harrowing incidents do not bring large scale destruction and affect only an individual but they are also extremely damaging as they affect the personality of a person which in the long run has severe consequences on the society.

Though multidimensional aspects of trauma are studied by the critics but the critical endeavors of Freud cannot be ignored by the contemporary theorists. The interest in trauma studies began with the study of soldiers returning from war-fronts whose mental health severely deteriorated due the impact of prolonged stress they faced in trenches or in concentration camps. The memory of traumatic events is also studied in detail to explain the deep psychic pain of the survivors/victims. The memory of violent events is so overwhelming that the victim is left with dissociative problems or personality disorders. The trauma theory has advanced by deriving the concepts and studies both of Freudian psychoanalysis and psychiatric notions of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Trauma theory identifies those events which cannot be fully absorbed resulting in unspeakable traumatic experiences. These events remain in life of the victim in form of

vague memories, repressed thoughts, hallucinations and flashbacks. The victim can never completely recover from these emotional shocks of the past and remains trapped in illusive reality. Felman says that trauma survivors do not live with the "memories of the past, but with an event that could not and did not proceed through to its completion, has no ending, attained no closure, and therefore, as far as its survivors are concerned, continues into the present and is current in every respect" (1992, 69).

In *Race, Trauma, and Home in the Novels of Toni Morrison*, Schreiber writes about the element of trauma present in novels of Morrison that "trauma, whether initiated by physical abuse, dehumanization, discrimination, exclusion, or abandonment, becomes embedded in both psychic and bodily circuits" (Schreiber, 2010, 2). Morrison is one of the most representative writers of trauma fiction,

> Morrison represents the speechless terror of trauma in recurring scenes of dissociated violence—vivid and highly visual scenes in which her characters experience violence from a detached perspective. And she also conveys the haunting and driven quality of traumatic and humiliated memory as she depicts the 'rememories'—that is, spontaneous recurrences of the past—that plague her characters. (Bouson, 2000, 3)

LITERATURE REVIEW

Paradise (1996) is a massive work of Toni Morrison which is looked at and analyzed from multiple perspectives but hardly any critic has studied the character of Mavis from the perspective of Trauma which is the result of domestic violence. Sweeney talks about all the four woman characters, Mavis, Gigi, Seneca and Pallas, who have come to the Convent to run away from their pasts. The critic appreciates Morrison for realistically portraying the paradise created by women. It is not "a completely harmonious haven" (46) but here "Mavis and Gigi engage in vicious and sometimes violent turf battles" (46). Though it is an "imperfect space of refuge" (46) yet it serves as a space where the effects of social violence and inequalities are reduced. Here the Convent women come to terms with the haunting aspects of their past. (46) Paradise is a religious concept which is discussed from the perspectives of Puritan, Catholic and Pagan beliefs by Fraile-Marcos. By remaining in the Convent "the women evolve toward the acceptance and integration of their own opposites, they are rewarded by achieving that state of plentitude, happiness, and serenity which is associated with paradise" (2003, 30). So while portraying their state of blessedness in the coda of the novel, Morrison rejects religious, racial and nationalistic superiority. She suggests that paradise is neither fixed nor closed entity but it is a condition which demands incessant hard work from the people. Similarly Aguiar thinks that *Paradise* is about life after death. The 8-rock families have created Eden according to their own specifications, the paradigms are very strictly observed. Seventeen miles away women have created their own paradise. Both collapsed because of their fixity.

While Gillespie highlights the ability of words to hurt or to destroy human spirit which equals the detrimental consequences of physical abuse as we see in case of Mavis. Mavis is physically assaulted by her husband though "she recovers from these experiences, the damage done to her spirit takes much longer to heal than the physical wounds that occasionally require medical intervention" (2007, 140). This has resulted in making her passive as she has become so weak that she is afraid even to take minor decisions independently. Frank has instilled within her mind that she is the dumbest bitch on the planet and this idea has penetrated so deep into her psyche that she has started believing it to be true. Carrying the guilt of being responsible of the death of two infants, she runs far away to the Convent where she forgives herself for the tragic incident.

Though Philip Page does psychological analysis by analyzing anger and frustration of the characters of *Paradise* but has not talked about *evasion* and *confrontation*, strategies employed by Mavis to survive. He, however, highlights the healing process which involves loud dreaming to unburden themselves of "their traumatic pasts, but as each one talks, the others enter into her story, in full empathy with her …. Each loses herself in full identification with each other, in acts of total interpretation …" (2001, 642). With this group therapy and mutual interpretation they cross the boundaries of life and death, dream and reality. While undergoing through this process, they heal themselves achieving harmony of the self and the communal harmony as well.

The review examines the extent of work already done on Morrison's *Paradise* with reference to the character of Mavis. Previous published studies have not dealt with the emotional trauma being experienced by Mavis in detail. Only sporadic remarks are available which leaves a room to study her life and traumatic experiences exhaustively. Thus the literature review helps the reader to recognize the gap which the present research is going to fill up. I intend to add a new methodological dimension of analyzing how the strategies of evasion and confrontation enable Mavis to survive amid harsh circumstances.

BACKGROUND

Morrison is recognized as one of the most distinguished African-American novelist. She has broadened the perspective of American literature by telling those stories which were never told, stories about African-American girls and women on questions of race, gender, and social pressures they faced. She writes about people with sensibilities of the culture in which she grew up and she justifies herself in doing so. With an exclusive blend of musical composition, magic realism, and historical facts, she has developed a *Morrisonian* style. Trauma serves as an explicit theme and recurring motif in most of her novels. The theme of trauma depicts individual's personal and social conflicts related to gender, oppression, love, class and race. In my reading, I will predominantly look at Morrison's portrayal of trauma as experienced by Mavis in *Paradise* how Mavis evades the secrets of her life and how evasion helps her in confrontation of truths.

DISCUSSION

Mavis, when comes to the Convent, meets Connie working in the kitchen. The comforting and non-confronting attitude of Connie helps her in finalizing the decision about taking refuge here with caring Connie and her ninety year old mother, Lone. The old woman, when meets Mavis, asks about her children; to this, she remains silent because she does not have any answer neither she thinks herself answerable to anybody except to her mother who unfortunately fails to understand her trauma. Probably no one will be able to understand her personal secrets which she has been evading even from herself that is why she has passed so much time amid her family. She has never dared to confront the truth that she is surviving among those relations who are traumatizing her, making her life all the more painful. As a wife, she is trying to accomplish all her obligations and as a mother all her duties but both the husband and children are not giving her due love and respect.

Mavis experiences anxiety in her home. She remains so anxious due to her husband's behavior that out of nervousness she loses her twins in a locked car, parked in parking, in front of grocery store. She is the mother of five children, the eldest being eleven year old. She takes care of all of them and at the same time has to give special attention to her husband also; about whom she thinks that he must be tired for he comes

home after a day's work. Though on the day, when she lost her babies, she cooked food for the rest of the family who like to eat Spam, but the husband wants to have fresh meat. So in order to satisfy his taste buds she has to run to buy meat from the store to present something decent in front of him. These days it is so hot that she cannot take the risk of buying meat beforehand because it soon goes stale. Afraid of her husband, she hurriedly drove the car, along with her two infants, to do the essential grocery; not thinking that the heat might kill the babies. She did not dare to leave them at home in care of her husband because he is having a headache.

When the journalist is interrogating her, making her feel as if she has lost her babies out of her own carelessness and the photographer is asking her to sit on the sofa right in the middle of her other children so that he can take picture from the best position; the husband is sitting on the edge of bath-tub taking Seagram without a glass. He is not there to support the wife but she has to struggle herself alone in this most traumatic time of her life, when she has lost her two children on the same day. Through the attitude of the husband, Morrison is criticizing "the idea that true manhood involves mastery over subjugated others leads the men of Ruby to seek total mastery over the only people they are in a position to dominate: the women in their community" (Read, 2005, 535). The reaction of the husband is aggravating her tension and revealing the truth about their relationship as a husband and wife which is so pretentious that the husband is not there to console the wife when she is passing through the most traumatic phase of her life. Instead he is busy in drinking wine and relaxing in bath-tub.

Her trauma is aggravated as her eleven year old daughter Sally "clenched the flesh at Mavis' waist" (22). She wants to have a complete control of her mother. Finding her in a feeble and vulnerable position, she sides the stronger party, Frank. While the journalist is interviewing her, Sally is pinching her hard and the mother does not have the courage to say anything to her daughter to show reaction that she is feeling pain. As the journalist and the photographer leave, Sally stops squeezing her mother's waist. She leans forward and swings her foot occasionally hitting Mavis' shin. She is not controlling her mother but also degrading and hurting her. She jumps from the sofa while screaming that there is a beetle and stomps on her mother's foot. Mavis wants to go to washroom to see the damage Sally has done to her back but she cannot because the husband is enjoying himself in the bath-tub. Mavis is not reacting to what Sally is doing but these actions of her husband and daughter are letting her conclude that her close relations are torturing her and they do not care for her at all.

The husband has not allowed the wife even to touch the new car but the wife who has been suppressed for the last twelve years has stolen the duplicate keys. Though she has not planned to escape because the way in which puts on her soiled clothes and kids' slippers without taking her personal belongings or anything of necessity reveals that the stress has been piling up within her, but it is not a preplanned action on her part. Extremely tired because of stress of burying her two children, she goes to bed to sleep, but Frank wakes her up by asking her if she is alright to which she customary replies, "I'm okay" (25). She wakes up suddenly "with a start of terror" (25) but immediately realizes that this terror is a "familiar fright" (25). After drinking wine, eating perfectly-cooked food and relaxing himself in the bath-tub now he wants "to have sex" (25), ignoring the fatigued and broken mental state of the wife. Mavis wishes to sleep and relax herself. She thinks that probably he might also like to sleep but when he ruthlessly pulls her nightgown up, she thinks that she has always misjudged him. Ironically Ruby is such "a haven where a sleepless woman can walk safely at midnight" (Tsai, 2008, 180) but cannot sleep at her home on her own will.

The behavior of the daughter and the treatment of her husband increase her unease. She cannot sleep on that night for a single second. She remains so tense and alert because she is afraid that he might not strangle her to death so she decides to run away from the house and their company so far that they could not even trace her. She is not only afraid of the husband but of eleven year old daughter too, whom she imagines to be sitting like a bull dog in front of the door with her upper lip raised showing her big teeth to horrify her (26). She might pounce upon or grab her legs so she has to escape out of the house very carefully and very quickly. She is afraid that all four of them might lay a trap for her in the coming days, so she should run away from here before that time comes when they lay traps around her. Mavis is chilled at the thought that a sound might not come out of the door which might awake anyone of them. Coming down the stairs she hurriedly crosses the kitchen-dining area. The fear of the family, being continuously at the back of her mind, makes her decide not to go to the kitchen where as the woman of the house it is her routine to go. She decides to run away directly from the front door. She is in so much hurry that she forgets to take her purse which is in the living room on the television-cabinet which after the breakage of television-set has become a catchall. The spare keys are already hidden in her purse's lining. Mavis is anxious not because it is dark outside and she has nowhere to go, no plans in mind and all alone to cover up the journey but she is afraid of people who are in her house. She feels danger from them which is making her feel "feverish—sweaty, and cold" (27) all at the same time. She feels that she will handle the unknown anxieties and fears that lay ahead of her but not those which are found in her home. Still for a mother and a wife it is not easy to leave a house. She describes that her feelings are so powerful and extreme that she has to literally pull herself away from the boundary of the house.

Mavis cannot avoid her husband and children by living in the same place hence she decides to go far away from them only then she can confront her personal secrets. The first hiding-place that comes to her mind is that of her acquaintance, Peg; but Frank has never allowed her to develop an acquaintance into friendship so she cannot think of knocking her door at five-thirty of the morning. The car stopped at her mother's house, about where she is afraid that Frank must have already rung to ask about the whereabouts of his wife. When Mavis knocks at the door, the mother is not at home so she sits in the back-porch to wait for her. Her physical appearance is telling her weird state of mind. Her feet are swollen and she is "looking like a bat out of hell" (30). Though this statement is used by her mother for the daughter but ironically this is true because Mavis' house for her is not a paradise on earth where one feels comfort of body and peace of mind but it is more or less like a hell where her daughter is like a snarling dog and her husband is trying to *fix* (26) her according to his own wishes and requirements. She is not being treated as the queen of the house but as a servant of the family members who has to take care and cook food separately for each one of them to avoid their anger and disgusting remarks.

When the daughter discusses her anxiety with the mother that her family members are after her life, the mother is not ready to believe it. Mavis insists that the children do whatever their father wants them to do and they all want to kill her. It is very shocking analysis of Mavis for Birdie. Birdie slaps the table in anger because she does not want her to leave her home. Her eyes widened in surprise and she holds her head in her hands since she could not think of what to do with her daughter. Mavis explains to Birdie that with the help of a razor, her daughter Sally, threatens her. On finding her nervous, Sally laughs and enjoys the broken state of her mother. Birdie is not trying to understand the painful experiences of Mavis, so reconciliation with the current situation is not possible because "[r]econciliation requires that victims of the atrocities are heard as this will purge them of negative emotions that are destructive" (Singh, 2013, 170). Finally Birdie and Mavis

promise each other that that they will not discuss this matter again. Mavis again thinks that evasion will help her to survive. The anxiety of Mavis increases when her mother, betrays her. After a week, Birdie secretly calls Frank to come here to take his wife as soon as possible as her wife is residing in her house. This action of the mother increases Mavis' anxiety so she thinks to run away from here also. This time she picks up a few necessities like aspirin and stole "a pair of rhinestone clips from Birdie's jewelry box" with "two gallons of lawn mower gasoline into the Cadillac's tank." (32).

Mavis decides to take refuge in the Convent which "serves as the locus for this imaginative possibility, as a space of refuge for those fleeing from their communities' tacitly sanctioned forms of intolerance, exploitation, and willful blindness to victimization" (Sweeney, 2004, 46) with Connie and her mother, it is not that she has completely forgotten her children. The memories of her babies cannot be erased and are obviously visible as in one of the bedrooms she has put "infant booties and shoes ribboned to a cord hanging from a crib" (7) and "a teething ring, cracked and stiff, dangles among the tiny shoes" (7). These women have been accused of "revolting sex, deceit and the sly torture of children" (8) but nine men who attacked the Convent find no evidence of any such thing instead they have realized that these women are passing "[u]nique and isolated" (8) lives because in this space there is "no one to bother or insult them" (8). This is the only reason behind Mavis leaving her family because her close relations are making her life extremely difficult by repeatedly insulting her. As Mavis is driving, trying to run away from all her relatives, she is horrified by the thought that the husband might not reach her because though she has changed the color of Cadillac but the number plate is the same and the car is registered in Frank's name, but still she plans to scream and "pretend [she] do[es]n't know him, fight him, call the police" (36). The fear of the husband is so much on her nerves that she is scared even at the thought that what will become of her if she has to encounter her husband and pass the rest of her life with him. "[T]ears wet her chin, crept down her neck anyway" (36), while she is continuously driving the car for several hours with a continuous fear of the husband. This knocks her out and she falls asleep but when she wakes up, she starts cursing herself by saying that she is such a confused person that she did not think of opening the windows of the car so that babies can breathe. She considers herself responsible for the death of her children, evading the reality that who is responsible for making her a nervous wreck. It is from the beginning of their marriage Frank has been calling her "the dumbest bitch on the planet" (37). When a person has been listening to such sort of comments by the husband for the last twelve years it so happens that the mind stops working. The husband misses no chance to call her the "dumbest bitch" even at the smallest mistake and tries to prove that he is right to pass this judgment. The "awful thoughts" (37) are troubling her though she has left him far behind. She accidentally meets Connie as she has come to ask her about the telephone booth. The accommodating and comforting way of Connie lets her think to stay here. Though living amid such a peaceful environment, she still misses Merle and Pearl and thinks of "tattooed sailors and children in emerald water" (49).

The same Mavis who has lost courage to say anything to her eleven year old daughter, who used to harass her through used razor of her father, can now fight with the bold and daring Gigi. This change in her personality has come because she has confronted her personal secrets in a comfortable environment of the Convent. She thinks of her relationship with Frank. There was a time when she used to like spending time with her husband in bed but now it has become a "required torture and longer but not much different from being slapped out of her chair" (171). This is also one of the reasons that she is finding her life so soothing and relaxed in the Convent because here she is "free of all that" (171).

She has not overcome her anxiety and still sees nightmares with "a lion cub that gnawed her throat" (171). The animal has recently transformed into a human form and lies on the top of her or attacks from the back side. Connie thinks that it is an evil spirit so she should boldly fight with it but Mavis feels that she "couldn't or wouldn't" (171). She still hears Merle and Pearl fluttering about in every room of the Convent. She is mother of these children whom she has lost out of her nervousness and lack of confidence. This broken woman has got a chance to collect herself in a relaxed and peaceful environment of the Convent where no one asks questions, no one bothers the other person. Here the "traumatized individuals are encouraged to participate collectively in healing themselves through confronting and narrating their pasts" (Romero, 2005, 417). Each one takes care of the other person or leaves her alone, whichever way she likes to.

They evade planning for future as it causes tension so they have no plans for the future. These girls, like young innocent teenagers, have foolish baby girl wishes, "Mavis talk[s] endlessly of surefire money-making ventures: beehives; something called 'bed and breakfast'; a catering company; an orphanage" (222). Switching on from baby-girl wishes they continuously talk about love and "men waiting for them in the desert or by cool water; of men who once had desperately loved them; or men who should have loved them, might have loved them, would have" (222-223). These are the wishful thoughts in which they indulge themselves. This reveals that they are not homosexuals indulged in strange activities but they are ordinary girls who wish to have happy and comfortable lives with male partners who do not insult or degrade them but provide a loving and caring partnership. It is through these women-characters Morrison "strongly rejects the domination theme. It recognizes a more rewarding equal partnering that breeds acceptable peace in conflict management and resolution" (Alkali, 2015, 589).

Mavis keeps herself physically busy in cooking and other activities with the girls of the Convent, but mentally she is living in the company of Merle and Pearl. She buys a truck and a doll for them. Thinking that soon they will be six and a half years old she buys a Barbie doll for Pearl. She is surprised to think "how they changed and grew" (258). She thinks that when they departed they were so small that they could not hold their heads up and when she heard them in the mansion at that time they were toddlers. She can accurately tell their age from their laughter which she can vividly hear. She thinks, "… based on how integrated they were with the other children who chased about the rooms, she knew how they grew. Now they [are] school age, six and a half, and Mavis ha[s] to think of age-appropriate birthday and Christmas presents" (258). This tells that her relationship with her departed-children has been very intense. They have never been away from her. In fact, they are emotionally living together in the same mansion where they are growing and now they have reached their school-going age. One day, on feeling very lonely, she decides to visit the school of her other children. Thinking that they must have grown-up also, she might not recognize them, but at the same time she is not sure whether she should go to them and identify herself or not. She thinks that she must be looking weird which might frighten the school children so she decides to hide herself and look at them at the same time. This is the love of the mother which has not faded by remaining away from them. She has confronted the truth that she cannot live without Merle and Pearl, which is why she has decided to leave the house of her mother because the mother is asking her to accept the death of her children which she is not ready to accept that is why she has decided to live with Connie who has put no such compulsion on her. Page says that these women are "[s]eeking to possess a space and therefore find a viable place in American space and time, the town is still dispossessed, living in its past with a stagnant present and no vision of a future" (2011, 644).

Like a typical mother, while doing shopping, Mavis is in a hurry because she is worried about the twins in the Convent and wants to go to them as soon as possible. She changes buses one after another and hurriedly reaches the car parking where she has parked her Cadillac. As she reaches the Convent, she is happy to find that the twins are happy. She also finds happiness in the company of Connie. They have developed a good rapport with each other. Mavis is feeling worried about Connie's health because recently she has developed a strange behavior as if she is listening to someone and answering in yes or no or nodding as if responding to someone's conversation. Mavis feels concerned about her friend but is happy that Connie has "never questioned the reality of the twins and for Mavis, who ha[s] no intention of explaining or defending what she [knows] to be true, that acceptance [is] central" (259-260). Comparatively she is relaxed than before because the frequency, with which the night visitor used to horrify her while sleeping, is reduced. Now the focus of her attention is not the man who used to attack her from back and get hold of her neck like a fierce animal but her children Merle and Pearl.

All five women who have taken refuge in the Convent are killed by nine men, but Toni Morrison takes the reader to that phase of life where they are shown in life after death state, she "portrays the women of the Convent as living presences after they have been murdered, [so] Morrison requires of the reader an act of imagination and an acceptance of something more than or outside of our comprehension of life" (Krumholz, 2002, 30). Consequently one day Mavis meets her daughter accidently in a restaurant. There also, it is seen that the daughter wants to keep contact with mother whom Mavis avoids. Though Mavis lovingly offers her food and kisses her on her cheek on parting but she does not want to keep any contact with anyone of them. Sally tells her about the elder brother who is good in his studies while the younger one is spoilt but she just tells Sally to give her love to the elder one and she might meet the younger one. Sally shares her fears with mother saying that after she left home, Sally remained scared all the time, she repeats the phrase "[a]ll the time" to assure the truth of her statement. She says that she has been afraid even before the death of twins but when her mother left the home the feeling increased in intensity, "I mean I was scared to fall asleep" (314). Mavis does not give any consolation to the daughter, instead changes the topic by offering her food. When she tells that her father always remains drunk and tries to bother his daughter, Mavis feels sorry for the daughter but not to the extent of helping her or giving her a feel that she is not alone or she has a mother to care and worry for her. She wants to avoid her and does not give any assurance that she will provide her help in case of any problem. When Sally insists the mother that she should talk to her brothers, she says that she will, but she does not take their addresses or contact numbers. The daughter "apologizes and expresses her love to Mavis" (Tsai, 2008, 201). She again tells her mother that she has remained very scared all the time to which Mavis replies that she too has remained scared all the time. Mavis tells her that she has been sneaking back to get a look of them at their school but she cannot afford to go back to that house where she has passed the most difficult period of her life. When they both embrace each other to say good-bye, astonishingly, Mavis still feels pain on the side where Sally pinched her so hard many years ago. It became unbearable for her to tolerate the pain but she remained silent because she felt that the daughter is "stronger than [her]" (314). That side of her back still hurts her, which tells that her experience with her husband and the daughter has been so painful that she can still remember the pain even after her death and never wishes to go back to them. When the daughter expresses her desire to see mother again, the mother does not answer. She hurriedly says bye to the daughter and within few minutes disappears in the crowd. The daughter is surprised where the mother has disappeared without taking her address and without paying her bill to the cashier.

CONCLUSION

The anxiety has not left Mavis even after the death. She avoids argumentation, accusation and questions to keep her broken-self collected. This physical and mental evasion of Mavis from domestic violence advantages her to confront the situation with confidence imbued within her by her friends. She uses evasion as a strategy to survive amid unusual conditions. The life-events must be acknowledged by the survivor no matter how bitter they are; only then the past no longer remains harrowing.

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NEGO-FEMINISM AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN PATRIARCHY AND MATRIARCHY IN ZAYNAB ALKALI'S *THE STILLBORN* AND *THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN*

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ABSTRACT
The Stillborn (1984) is Zaynab Alkali's debut novel that captured the attention of many researchers and critics alike. *The Virtuous Woman* (1986) that arrived two years after has not attracted much critical attention. Alkali is a prominent Nigerian female writer, whose concern is always the place of a girl-child in a patriarchal African society. Literary reviews on the texts have highlighted concept of women oppression and their emancipation (Okereke, 1996, Razinatu and Kurfi, 2011). Alkali believes that, it is only education that can play the role of emancipation of a girl-child in a patriarchal society. In *The Stillborn* and *The Virtuous Woman*, Alkali attempts to prove this by portraying a female character (Li) in *The Stillborn* who triumphs at the end both educationally and economically. And in *The Virtuous Woman* three female characters are portrayed as successful ones educationally. But in so doing, Alkali seems to alienate the male characters in the two texts. The objective of this paper is to examine the aspect that is given less attention hitherto – the female dominance over the male character(s) as portrayed by the author. It also uses textual analysis as the methodology in analyzing the two texts. Nego-feminism is the theory to be used as conceptualised and theorised by Obioma Nnaemeka (1999). It is a new feminist theory which is hoped to be used as a negotiating tool between patriarchy and matriarchy. The expected finding hopes to create a better and balanced society that accommodates the sexes.

Keywords: Bridge, Matriarchy, Nego-feminism, and Patriarchy.

INTRODUCTION
Ogunbiyi (1988) defines feminism as ''a direct challenge to the misogynist interpretation of the women as physically attractive second class and domestically responsible creation'' (p. 291). Larsson (1997) also defines feminism as ''a political and intellectual movement that has existed in different configuration since 18th century (p. 158).'' Rosalinda Delmar (1986) in her book entitled, *What is Feminism*? defines feminism as, ''an active desire to change women's position in society'' (p. 8, 9-10).''. Feminist studies generally are often focussed on female oppression. The nature of oppression takes different forms. It could be in a form of physical, psychological, economical, educational, political oppression, etc. Randomly selected texts of African literature would show that African female writers have always been concerned with the issues of female oppression/subjugation in a patriarchal African society. In most of the African societies, specifically Nigeria, economic, education, and political are the aspects that female child suffers most. Yakubu (1999) sees Alkali coming from the society that is less concern with English literary fictional world. Alkali's society values patriarchal life with Islam as its dominant religion (p. 27). In northern Nigerian society men are superior and women are

considered as inferior beings whose roles are tied to mostly domestic chores in nature (Ibrahim, 2002: p. 282).

Zaynab Alkali is not just a Northern Nigerian writer; she is also one of the major Nigerian writers whose literary works are mostly on women question. Alkali believes that the female child should not be eternally dependent on marriage as an answer to her needs. The female child should by all means strive hard to acquire meaningful education which provides options in life and economic independence. Ojinmah & Egya reaffirm that, it is through hard work that Alkali's female characters make success in life not by depending on men through marriage ties as the society of Alkali exposes or orients female child to see it as the ultimate achievement in her life. Thus:

> ''any self-fulfilment that Alkali's female protagonists in her fiction achieve are so done by dint of hard work, as each character has to surmount traditional and cultural inhibitions that attempt to relegate the female child to the status of perpetual dependence''(Ojinma & Egya, 2005: p. 1-3).

Most of Alkali's literary works show her concern for the position of a female child in a patriarchal African society. In the *The Stillborn* (1984) and *The Virtuous Woman* (1987) Alkali expresses such concern by highlighting her female characters that are oppressed by the patriarchal society and their attempt to emancipate themselves through education and economic empowerment, which she also emphasises as the only emancipator tools for the female child. So, for Alkali to achieve this she subordinates the male characters in the selected novels in order to show how her female characters emancipate themselves through the two aspects (education and economic empowerment) and such portrayal of male characters by Alkali appears to be unfairly treatment.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Alkali in her literary participation for two decades has attracted the attention of critics and reviewers around the globe. Full textual studies have been conducted in areas that presuppose Alkali as a feminist writer. Chioma Opara (1990) in ''The Foot as a Metaphor in Female Dreams: An analysis of Zaynab Alkali's novels'' examines the attempts by Alkali's female characters to intricate themselves from patriarchal holds through a metaphoric analysis of the foot as a means by which the female characters walk out of bondage imposed upon them by society (p. 158-166). In most of Alkali's works, she portrays male characters as lame gender and therefore, incapable of wielding homogeneity in the family or community matters while the female protagonists like Li, Magira Milli, and Seytu often come in like super woman characters and make amend for the overall good of family and community.

Also, most of the reviews conducted on Alkali's literary writings focus on the roles of female characters. For example, Okereke (1996) in her article titled, Woman's Quest for Autonomy in Zaynab Alkali's *The Stillborn* sees women as insignificant, inferior sex, just considered as part of the male with no identity of her own apart from her father and male relations in the family. She is also un-achiever in the societal structure especially; education and economy (p. 97). Alu (2007) in his article titled, ''Dynamic of Power and the Face of the New Woman in Zaynab Alkali's *The Descendants*'' examines how women are oppressed especially through the institution of marriage. In *The Descendants* Alkali portrays one of the principal characters (Seytu) as a victim that suffers patriarchal oppression through marital tie. The reviewer concludes that Alkali deploys education as a multi-dimensional emancipating liberator to outlaw all inhibitive cultures and tradition in the north and the nation at large (p. 1-18). Chinade (2016) in his article titled, ''The 21th

Century Northern Nigerian Woman and Challenges of Womanhood: A Reading of Zaynab Alkali's *The Initiates,*'' sees African literature as a male created work of arts. Male African writers hardly talk about the plight of African women. The African women suffer injustice in the form of oppression marginalization and other traumatic experiences associated with being female (p. 23). In Nigeria also the same picture is portrayed. It is a male dominated literary world. Ogunyemi describes Nigerian literature as ''Phallic by male writers and critics who deal exclusively with male characters and male concern, naturally aimed at predominantly male audience'' (p.60).

This paper intends to highlight that Alkali focuses on male characters whose roles seem to be inferior compared to that of female characters in *The Stillborn* and *The Virtuous Woman*. Also, male characters are subordinated for female characters to get a place in a society and have a say, and this in the northern Nigeria where voices of female are hardly heard hitherto, Alkali's literary works are expected to receive serious critical attention. Consequently, her works receive such attention as exemplified in the preceding paragraph. However, despite Alkali's prominence as a prolific female author in Nigeria whose literary works mostly are on female gender, in *The Stillborn* and *The Virtuous Woman* male characters seem to be overlooked by the author, which this paper intends to examine. Male characters are subordinated in order for the author to be able to depict how the female characters in the selected novels struggle to emancipate themselves from patriarchal shackle through education and economic independence.

Objective of the paper

The objective of this paper is to examine how Alkali highlights her female characters that are oppressed by patriarchal society and their struggling to emancipate themselves through education and economic empowerment and the subordination of the male characters in the selected novels.

Theoretical Framework

Before discussing the theory to be used in this paper, there is need to reflect back on the previous theories used by feminists in their attempts to end the gender conflict or at least reduce it to a barest level. Such theories applied by feminists include, Radical, Liberal, Marxist feminist theories to mention some of the most popular theories. All these theories and others not mentioned were used and the end result appeared fruitless. One very important reason among others is that, most of the previous theories' approaches were confrontational in nature. So, in view of this, the author of this paper seeks to use a new theory namely, nego-feminism theory, with hope it serves as a reconciliatory tool between the sexes. The author sees the possibility of ending the conflict or reducing it to a barest minimal level through this theory (nego-feminism theory), since previous ones fail to yield the desired goal.

Nego-feminism formulated by Obioma Nnaemeka in her article entitled, ''Nego-feminism: Theorizing, Practicing, and Pruning African's Way'' (1999) as ''feminist of negotiation; ''no ego'' feminism'' (360). The point here is that nego-feminism encompasses issue of peace, conflict management and resolution, negotiation, give and take, and cooperation. It is a theory that is not confrontational like other theories such as radical, Marxist, liberal feminist theories that are all confrontational in approaches, to mention but few. Nego-feminism seeks to establish peace between the disagreeing parties through negotiation, reconciliation and cooperation. According to Alkali (2013) ''Nego-feminism is a feminist approach for social movements, feminist communities in its power for the woman (p. 33-34). It is a theory that can go beyond the ''victor'' and ''defeat'' in a gender war. Thus, it does not call for the winner and loser, but calls for negotiation,

reconciliation of the differences between sexes. Alkali asserts that, the new theory could be used by disputing parties to resolve their issue of disagreement, even without the third party coming in. The two disagreeing parties can sit and negotiate their rights and privileges (p. 33-35). In a nut shell, the new theory advocates negotiation, cooperation, and reconciliation between the disagreeing parties. Lastly, this theory really seems to be applicable for resolution to any conflict not necessarily gender conflict.

How the theory is conceived, nursed, and finally came into being is worth mentioning here. Nnaemeka, the theorist is inspired by the great experiences she gained through her great work with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and grassroots constituencies in Africa from literature, health, human rights in some nations like, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan, and to ethnicity, peace conflict and resolution in Rwanda, Burundi, Sierra Leone, have helped her to rethink towards possibility of formulating a new theory. The article she produced titled, ''Nego-feminism: Theorizing, Practicing, and Pruning Africa's Way'' reflects what she learned from the men and women she worked with in a healthy and enthusiastic manner where academy meets. The meeting centre which refers to as the academic world allows coexistence, interconnection, and interaction of thought, dialogue, planning, action, and constitutes the arena where she witnessed the unfolding feminism in Africa. The theorist finally says, ''I will use the different features and methods of feminist engagement in Africa to propose what I call Nego-feminism'' (Nnaemeka, 1999: 360).

Methodology

The methodology to be used in this paper is a textual analysis. A thorough reading would be made using the new theory (nego-feminism) in order to examine how Alkali highlights her female characters struggling to emancipate themselves from the patriarchal appendages through education and economic empowerment and the subordination of male characters in the selected novels. And to also explore how the new theory could be used as a reconciliatory tool between the sexes or what role can the new theory perform with regards to gender war. The expected result is a hope to bring the sexes into negotiation, reconciliation, and cooperation process so that, at end gender war would be reduced or eradicated completely. A through reading the two texts using Lois Tyson's method of reading a literary work with the grain one can easily interprets Alkali's selected texts the way she perfectly portrays female characters under patriarchal oppression and their attempt to emancipate themselves from such patriarchal shackle through education and economic empowerment. On the other part, ''reading her work against the grain, one can easily analyzes elements in the text of which the text itself seems unaware'' (Tyson: 2006, p. 7). Here the author sees Alkali being unaware of her alienation of the male characters in her attempt to highlight the female characters' achievement in the two texts. In view of this, Alkali could not provide the means by which the dominated male characters can use to liberate themselves. Even if she is aware, she will not provide the means for the male characters, since she supports matriarchy.

Subordination of male characters in *The Stillborn*

Alkali attempts to highlight the successes and achievements of her female characters who struggle to break away from the shackle of patriarchal society, and in the course of doing so, she ends up alienating the male characters in *The Stillborn* and *The Virtuous Woman*. For instance, Habu Adam one of the central male characters seems to be portrayed as inferior to that of female characters in terms of the role assigned to male characters in *The Stillborn* by the author. From the initial stage of the story, the author introduces Habu

Adam in a very bad picture that seems to relegate him to the background through the eyes of Awa (an elder sister of Li) who observes his dressing and comments:

> ''....Awa wondered what Li saw in that stranger to risk their father's anger. Good-looking, yes, but what woman needed a man for his face? For that was all he had, a face. In those clothes he looked like a market beggar. Why, the short hardly covered his buttocks. And he called himself ''the son of-the-chief (*The Stillborn*, p. 22)

The roles assigned to Habu by the author seem to belittle him in the eyes of his society. Habu seeks the hands of Li for marriage which her parents accepted. He pays the dowry and excuses himself to go to the city and get ready for Li to join him later. Since he left for city, he never shows up or send message for four years. Li had to keep on waiting, and taking all the mockery of the people in her village. And when finally, she is conveyed to Habu's house in the city she receives an unwelcome smile. When Li leaves for her village to see the condition of her ill-father who later passes away, with Habu's eight months pregnancy, he refuses to come and pay a condolence to Li and even to see the child she gives birth to as his own. The same gossip and mockery continues against Li in the village. The insults Li receives from some of the women in the village whose husbands attempted wooing her such as; ''unsaddled horse!'' ''The Vulture that isn't anybody's chicken!'' ''Rich man's play thing!'' and etc, prompted her to go back to school in order to attain a higher education. This is the kind of the roles assigned to male characters such as Habu among others by the author that discredits him in face of his society and subordinates him to the female character, such as Li who is portrayed as more successful and superior after finishing her advanced education than him.

Other male characters are portrayed with similar pictures by the author like Habu Adam in *The Stillborn.* Such male character includes, Dam Fiama, known as the Headmaster (HM), who is portrayed as a drunkard person in the village. The HM like Habu Garba is assigned with a role that disfigures him in his society by the author. The HM is known as one of the best persons in the village who dreams of being promoted to the principal of the new secondary school that would be built in the primary school where he works as the headmaster (HM) and his wife the head of adult women education suddenly becomes a drunkard person and abandons his wife Awa and their children. You only see him when he is in need of money for drink. Awa retorts: The HM is just some drunken fool who comes home from time to time to harass their mother for drink-money (p. 87).

Another male character that is assigned with a role that degrades him in his society is Garba, the husband of Faku (a close friend of Li). Li in her conversation with Faku inquires about Garba. Faku is reluctant to respond to the inquiry, but manages to explain to Li that Garba keeps on telling her that he is a businessman, he travels from one place to another which she could not precisely tell the kind of business he does. Even his first wife that they are together for the first twenty years could hardly knows the type of business he is doing.

> Faku relates: ''how is Garba? She asked, changing the subject ''I don't know'' Faku replied. ''I don't see him often.'' ''He says he is a businessman. What kind of business he does I do not know. His wife ought to know. Twenty years is long enough to find out'' (p. 79).

This is how Alkali subordinates male characters in *The Stillborn* in order to highlight female characters struggling to fight patriarchal oppression.

Subordination of male characters in *The Virtuous Woman*

In *The Virtuous Woman*, almost the same picture is given. For instance, Dogo is another victim that is assigned with the role that discredits him in the face of his society. Dogo is made to appear anti-feminist by refusing to take any of his female-child to school when he is advised to do so. He regrets having six female daughters and only one male child from his wife. He instead prefers to let them be with their mother at home helping her. When it is time for them to marry they do so. But sending them to school is a waste, Dogo explains:

> What is the use of sending a female child to school? If she turns out well, the man she marries gets the benefit of her education, if she gets spoilt in the school, I get the blame. It's my name that dragged into the mud. It's my house that becomes her refuge. Whichever way you look at it, the father of a female child is the loser. Let the girls stay at home and help their mother; when it is time for them to marry, let them marry (*The Virtuous Woman,* p. 47)

This does not stop there; Dogo takes a second wife with hope to get a male child from her and abandons the first wife. Fortunately or unfortunately for him the new wife takes a very long time before she delivers him a twin-male children. Some few days after celebration, the twin-children died. This destabilizes his life and he turns to drinking and gambling. His abandoned wife successfully becomes economically buoyant and she is able to sponsor the education of the two girls and cater for the rest of the children. Such is the role assigned to male characters which seems to be inferior compared to female characters in *The Virtuous Woman*. The woman nostalgically narrates the situation of Dogo:

> Dogo remained with the young wife, who was sickly and could no longer have children. His life seems to be turned inside out. It was then he took serious drinking and gambling, and that was how he reigned himself completely. When it became evident that Dog would soon join the street-walkers, the young wife left...and the senior wife? Nana perused. God bless her, she prospered through sheer hard work. She would go to the farm before cockcrow and would not come back until the chickens had gone to roost (p .49).

The two boys going to Kings College (Abubakar and Bello) are portrayed as inferior beings compared to the female characters (Nana, Hajjo, and Laila) going to Her Majesty's College. The author seems to enjoy highlighting the educational achievement of the female characters in the text. When the two girls gained admission into Her Majesty's College, a famous Girls' Boarding School, and one of the best in the Federation, the village seems to be at festive mood. But for the boys nothing was said or done about their going to the King's College. We were not even told whether they have gained admission into the school like their female counterparts or not. The admission of the two more girls was a great achievement to the Zuma society, and for that of the boys was nothing to Zuma village when compared. Thus:

> The admission of the two girls was therefore a great achievement for the village of Zuma, considering the fact that there were many deserving primary schools in the province (p. 2-3).

When the head master of Zuma primary school was praised as being the best in Zuma village, he proudly comments on the successes of his female pupils that gained admission into the most prestigious College in the Federation. Thus:

> ...the headmaster had been heard to boast. This was not the first time that Zuma had come into the limelight. Four short years before, a brilliant child by Nana Ai had received a similar offer for her outstanding performance in the Common Entrance Examination. The chief of the village had held a big feast in her honour and many local musicians had graced the occasion with their presence (p. 3).

But for the boys as I have said, we were not told whether they gained admission into King's College or not, and even if they gained admission like their female counterparts, nothing was done to celebrate their success in Zuma village. This shows that Zuma society gives more preferential treatment to girl-child education than male and thus the male characters are dominated by the female characters in *The Virtuous Woman.*

Nego-feminism as a bridge between patriarchy and matriarchy

Principally, the title of the paper clearly shows there is the need for bridging the wide gap between patriarchy and matriarchy which is the sole business of nego-feminism. As a reconciliatory tool, through reading the pages of the two texts under study, gaps are noticed. Alkali in her course of highlighting how female characters are oppressed and their struggle to emancipate themselves through education and economic independence, male characters are subordinated in the two texts. For instance, Alkali in the selected novels for this study seems to create two folds; superior(s) and inferior(s), in which she places her female characters as the former and male characters as the latter. Looking at Awa, one of the female characters in *The Stillborn* and her husband Dam Fiama, the head master (HM) serves as typical example where Alkali creates a conflict between the couple. What Alkali should have done here is to portray the two trying to resolve their differences in an amicable manner, which is one of the characteristics of nego-feminism. They should sit and discuss their grievances and try to settle them peacefully. Each should know that he is a complement of the other, thus each needs the other to survive.

Faku and her husband, Garba have the same conflict like that of Awa and her husband, the HM. So, here too, Alkali should have allowed the two to try and settle their differences in a peaceful manner, which again is the characteristic of nego-feminism. Portraying the two, that is Faku the wife and her grown up boy suffering at the hands of her husband Garba who is also portrayed as irresponsible husband would continue creating the gap between the two, and gender war still remains.

Lastly, for Li as the principal female character, Alkali seems to attempt reconciling the couple; Li and her husband Habu Adam which she could have done the same to the preceding couples discussed. Habu humiliates Li for leaving her in the village waiting for the consummation of their marriage for four good years. At the end, when Li acquires higher education with economic independence, and when she no longer needs any man to depend on, Li goes back to her injured husband. Alkali here shows that, each needs the other as a complement, so they reconcile which is one of the characteristics of nego-feminism.

In *The Virtuous Woman* when reading the pages a gap between the sexes is created by Alkali. Dogo abandons his wife for giving him six daughters and only one male-child, and takes another wife hoping to get more male-children. Fortunately and unfortunately for him, the second wife gives birth to a male- twins to Dogo after seven years of marriage, and few weeks after, the twins died. Dogo lost bearing and takes up to drinking and gambling. The abandoned wife strives hard and she prospers economically. Alkali here too should have portrayed the couple trying to settle their differences in a peaceful way. May be by allowing Dogo to accept what God has given him and pray for better, rather than blaming his wife, which is not her doing. On the other instance, Alkali

should not have portrayed Dogo as anti-feminist, for this will continue to create conflict between the sexes. Alkali also portrays Zuma village as a matriarchal society. Zuma village seems to advocate female-child education as its priority. They support girl-child education and seem to neglect male-child. By doing this, Alkali supports and encourages gender conflict to continue. Alkali should have tried to present a society that gives equal opportunities to both male and female, and see that cooperation, mutual understanding and peace between the sexes exist which are what nego-feminism advocates. In addition to this, African literary writers should try to shift their literary discourse to nego-feminism which the author of this paper hopes that, this could eliminate or reduce so much of the discussion of offensive literatures or conflicts in novels of both male and female writers in Nigeria and Northern Nigeria in particular. Also, literary texts taught in schools which portray conflicts between the sexes could be replaced with the ones that depict peace, mutual co-existence, and understanding between the sexes (nego-feminist characteristics). This will in no doubt infuse the idea of nego-feminism in the mind of the generation to come and gender war is hoped to be a history.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper attempts to give a brief definition of feminism and also a brief explanation of the author and her feminist ideology. Thus, Alkali coming from northern Nigeria, a region that strongly values patriarchal life is able to raise women question in her literary writings. Her main concern is the place of girl-child in a patriarchal African society. Alkali also believes that the only way to emancipate women from oppression is to give them meaningful education. Literature review is also discussed; where most of the articles written on Alkali's literary works examined one theme; women oppression and emancipation. The objective of this paper is to examine how female characters dominate male characters in *The Stillborn* and *The Virtuous Woman*. The methodology used is a textual analysis of the two texts (*The Stillborn* and *The Virtuous Woman*). The theory used in this paper is nego-feminism formulated by Obioma Nnaemeka (1999). It is a theory that advocates negotiation, reconciliation, and cooperation. It is also a theory that is non-confrontational and hoped to be used in this paper as a negotiating tool between patriarchy and matriarchy in order to reduce gender war or eradicates it completely as expected result.

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A STUDY OF COMPLIMENT RESPONSES OF MALAYSIAN CHINESE UNDERGRADUATES

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study is to investigate compliment responses (CRs) produced by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates. The data of this study was collected from 30 Malaysian Chinese undergraduate students in one of the public university in Malaysia. The data was collected by role-play scenarios which consisted of 8 situations that were recorded and transcribed by Dongmei Cheng's (2011) framework. The findings of the study show that Malaysian Chinese undergraduates' CRs are greatly influenced by social distance and they tend to use *Acceptance* strategy at the macro level. At the micro level, the most preferred strategy is *Appreciation* which is under macro strategy of *Acceptance*. On the contrary, *Rejection* and *Offering* have been the least preferred CRs strategies.

Keywords: compliment-response strategies, Malaysian Chinese undergraduates, social status, social distance, role-play scenarios

INTRODUCTION
Many empirical researches (Allami & Montazeri, 2012; Cheng, 2011; Tang & Zhang, 2009) conducted on speech acts give evidence that speech acts are very likely to be realized quite differently across cultures. Researchers on speech acts showed that although speech acts are cultural universals, each speech act can vary from one society to another (Holmes, 1988).

Compliment and compliment responses have been investigated across cultures too. Compliment is a widely applied behavior that is typically considered as an important speech act in social-cultural contexts (Tang & Zhang, 2009). Holmes (1986:485) defined compliment as "a speech act that explicitly or implicitly attributes credit to someone other than the speakers, usually the person addressed, for some 'good' (possession, personality, ability). Structurally, a compliment is an adjacency pair as it is generally followed by compliment responses (henceforth CRs). Compliment responses not only show the rules of language use in a speech community, but also reflect the value system of individual speakers as well as the community (Yuan, 2002). In other words, compliment responses are so deeply related to society, culture and language that they serve as a mirror to reflect pragmatic awareness, social norms and cultural values of the speakers.

Nevertheless, compliments may be face threatening acts and communicators may find them defensive, uneasy or doubtful. Pomerantz (1978:81) contented that the recipients of compliments are facing two contradictory constraints for speakers when responding to compliments: (a) Agree with the speaker by acceptance; (b) Avoid self-praise. In consequence, people may encounter a dilemma when responding to compliments (Shahsavari et al., 2014).

Meanwhile, it has been shown that non-native English speakers face a difficult task in acquiring the appropriate ways to communicate language functions (Cheng, 2009; Farnia, & Suleiman, 2009). Pragmatic failure in communication occurs when the communicators are not aware of the social-linguistic rules of the language being used.

Hence, studies which describe the speech acts in various cultures would increase people's understanding of norms of the language use and reduce any miscommunication which may occur in inter-culture communications (Fania & Suleiman, 2009).

Although a wealthy of studies have been conducted on CRs, they mainly investigated the compliments given by familiar people who have equal social status with respondents (Chen & Yang, 2010; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Thevendiraraj, 2006). Variables of social distance and status exert great effect on speakers' CRs strategies (Cai, 2012; Holmes, 1995; Sims, 1989). Thus there is a need to examine the influence of social status and social distance on Malaysian Chinese's CRs.

This study is an attempt to shed light on compliment responses generated by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates with the purpose of studying compliment responses patterns as well as possible influence of social status and social distance on CRs. The findings will contribute to research in compliment responses in a Malaysian Chinese social context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Compliments

Hobbs (2003: 249) defined compliments as "a speech act that explicitly or implicitly bestows credits upon the interlocutor for some possessions, ability, personality, or the like, which is positively evaluated by both speaker and the addressee". Yuan (2002) stated that the ethnolinguistic term used to describe compliment behaviors in Chinese term is "*赞美*" (literally 'beautify'). Based on the definition posed by Hobbs (2003) and Yuan (2002), it is generally believed that the typical function of compliments is to establish solidarity between speakers and addressees (Manes, 1983; Wolfson, 1989). Manes (1983), for instance, maintains that praise in American English functions to both establish and reinforce social solidarity between interlocutors. There are other functions served by compliments such as encouragement, congratulation, replacement of other speech acts, softener of criticism and conversation openers (Allami & Montazeri, 2012; Holmes, 1995; Manes, 1983; Wolfson, 1983).

Studies conducted on compliments in Western societies showed that more values are attached to compliments on items like newness and change in outlook (Wolfson, 1989). However, more compliments are given on personal ability rather than possession and appearance in Japanese social context (Daikuhara, 1986). In the Chinese society of Singapore, the most common compliment is paid on academic performance, achievement, ability and potential career success (Lee, 2009, 2015). Past studies have shown that the most compliments given in daily communication fall into four categories, namely appearance, character, ability and possession (Cheng, 2009).

With regard to compliments, it is widely believed that compliments are influenced by a variety of factors. Holmes (1995) contended that relative social distance plays a significant role in determining certain aspects of compliments and responses. Sims (1989) illustrated that the compliment structures are influenced by the status and gender of the speakers. Previous studies showed that plenty of compliments are given to addressees of the same age and status (Wolfson, 1981; Herbert, 1990; Knapp et al., 1984).

Compliment responses

A surge of studies has been conducted since the early l970s to explore compliment responses in different countries by various sub-fields of linguistics such as pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics (Cai, 2012).

Table 1. CRs categories of Cheng (2011)

Macro level	Micro level	Example
Acceptance	Appreciation	Thank you very much.
	Agreeing	Yeah, I really like it.
	Downgrading	It's nothing.
	Qualifying	I love doing it.
	Returning	Yours is nice too.
	Non-idiomatic	I am very happy.
Evasion	Credit-shifting	My pleasure..
	Commenting	I like red color.
	Reassuring	Are you kidding?
	Offering	You can use mine if you like it.
	Ignoring/Giggling	No response Shifting to another topic Giggling/Smiling
Combination	Acceptance + Evasion E.g. Appreciation + Credit-shifting	E.g. Thank you so much. It is a gift from my brother.

There are diverse models of CRs strategies categorized based on distinct classifications such as nationality, culture, language and so on (Chen, 1993; Holmes, 1988; Shahsavari et al., 2014; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Thevendiraraj, 2006). Cheng (2011) conducted an analysis of CRs produced by Chinese EFL, ESL and American native English speakers and classified them into 11 micro levels: 1) *Appreciation*, 2) *Agreeing*, 3) *Downgrading*, 4) *Qualifying*, 5) *Returning*, 6) *Non-idiomatic*, 7) *Credit-shifting*, 8) *Commenting*, 9) *Reassuring*, 10) *Offering*, 11) *Ignoring/giggling*. These were further subsumed within three macro categories of *Acceptance* (1.2.3.4.5.6), *Evasion* (7.8.9.10.11) and *Combination* (see Table 1).

The studies on compliment responses within Mainland China have been generated until the late l980s (Cai, 2012; Chen, 1993; Chen & Yang, 2010; Yuan, 2002; etc.). Chen (1993) found that college undergraduates of Xi'an Chinese applied *rejecting* strategy up to 95.7%, while they accepted compliments only 1.03% of total. Tang & Zhang (2009) found Chinese mandarin speakers preferred to accept compliments than strategies of *Deflecting/Evading*; however, the last favored responding type was *Rejecting*. Cheng (2011) showed that Chinese ESL almost applied *Acceptance* strategies "*Thank you*" in all settings which was similar to the previous CRs studies of Chinese in Chinese language, especially those studies done within the latest 10 years (Chen, 2003; Chen & Yang, 2010). Previous studies also indicate that participants may utilize diverse CRs on different topics (Cheng, 2011; Tang & Zhang, 2009). Not only mainland but also overseas Chinese paid great attention to compliments researches which showed that *acceptance* is the most preference of the participants (Chen, 2003; Cheng, 2003; Lee, 2009, 2015). Within the Malaysian context, Tamil and Malay speakers are prone to applying acceptance as responses to compliments (Farnia & Suleiman, 2009; Thevendiraraj, 2006).

Cai (2012) found that variables of social distance and status exert great effect on Chinese' CRs strategies. Explicit *acceptance* strategies are favorable when the complimenter's social status is relatively high or social distance is far, nevertheless, strategies of *deflection* and *rejection* are more preferred when complimenter's social

status is relatively equal or social distance is close. Cai's (2012) study shows that the greater the distant between the compliment giver and receiver, the greater the power of the compliment giver over the receiver, the greater imposition of the speech act, and thus the speech act is more face-threatening. Therefore, the participants should apply more face-saving strategies.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

For the purpose of the present study, a total of 30 Malaysian Chinese undergraduates were selected from a local university. All the participants were introduced by friends of the researcher. Participants consisted of 16 males and 14 females. Previous studies proved that a sample size of 30 participants is considered sufficient for the study of speech acts through Discourse Completion Task (DCT) (Kasper & Dahl, 1991; Thevendiraraj, 2006).

Instruments

The data in this study was mainly collected through role play scenarios (Appendix A) which were adapted from DCT of Tang and Zhang (2009). Role plays allow the research to elicit more real-life data (Shahsavari et al., 2014). There are four situations with compliments on appearance (situation 1), character (situation 2), ability (situation 3) and possession (situation 4) in the present role play scenarios (see Table 2). In each situation, there are 2 sub-settings (a and b) that are under the same social setting, however, involve two different social variables: social status (high >/ equal =) and social distance (familiar +/ unfamiliar -). Questionnaire was another instrument employed in this study. The questionnaire can be used to gather a large and useful corpus of data in pragmatics studies (Tran, 2006). There are four questions (Appendix B) replicated from Thevendiraraj (2006) due to the similar function of acquiring deep insights of participants regarding their responses to the compliments. In addition, this questionnaire was also used to verify the reliability of the study.

Table 2. Situations of CRs related to the social status and social distance

Situation	Subject	Social Power	Social Distance
1a	Appearance	>	+
1b	Appearance	=	-
2a	Character	>	-
2b	Character	=	+
3a	Ability	>	+
3b	Ability	=	-
4a	Possession	>	-
4b	Possession	=	+

Procedure

At the beginning of the data collection, some Malaysian Chinese undergraduates in a local university (University of Malaya) were invited to join the study. Participants were given a clear description of the study. After that the consent forms were signed by the participants. The participant was required to read the situation typed on card first then two complimenters gave the compliments on sub-situations in sequence. The participant just responded orally to the compliments. The whole process of the role play was audio

recorded. After the role play, participants were given the questionnaires and they wrote down their answers to the questions individually by recalling their performance in the role play and everyday life. All the data of compliment responses in the recordings of the role plays were transcribed based on the transcription model of Thevendiraraj (2006) (Appendix C) who adapted Jefferson's (1972) transcription model to investigate CRs of Malaysian Tamil community.

Data analysis

In order to identify various CRs strategies, the CRs categorization of Cheng (2011) was applied to account for CRs data. There are 11 micro levels which are further subsumed within three macro categories (as shown in Table 1). For the sake of accuracy of the data transcription, the researcher and an academic supervisor jointly coded the data in this study. The questionnaire data was analyzed descriptively.

RESULTS

In this section, the results of the study are presented in two parts: 1) general CRs at macro and micro levels; 2）CRs strategies on four topics (appearance, character, ability and possession) with regard of difference of social status and social distance.

The general CRs strategies

Based on Cheng's (2011) framework, a total of 240 CRs (8 responses from each participants) were collected from the 30 participants. There were no CRs strategies of *Ignoring* in this study which means that all participants responded to compliments. In terms of the content of the responses, all participants used idiomatic English (e.g. *Thank you / You are welcome / You too*) which is commonly used by speakers in daily English communication. Although some CRs were not grammatically accurate (e.g. *I not think so*), they were easily understood by the researcher and the academic supervisor. Therefore, there were no CRs accounted as *Non-idiomatic* in this study.

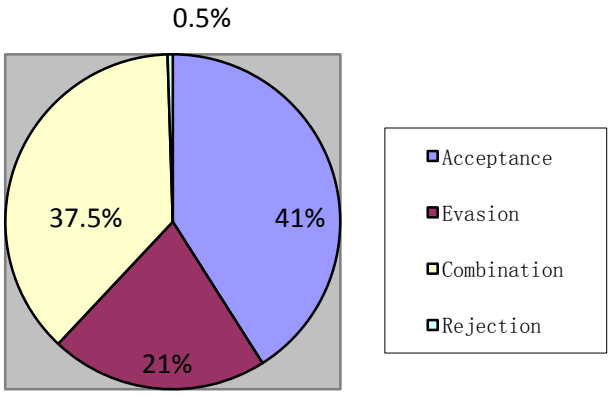


Chart 1. CRs at micro-level

Chart 1 shows the CRs strategies at macro level employed by the Malaysian Chinese undergraduates. It shows that Malaysian Chinese undergraduates preferred to accept compliments. However, *Combination* (37.5%) was the second favorable response to compliments, in which 70 % of total *Combination* was strategy of *Acceptance + Evasion* (e.g. *Thank you. Giggling*), 28 % was *Evasion + Acceptance* (e.g. *Smile. Thank*

you). The remaining 2 % of *Combination* involved *Rejection* (e.g. *Oh is it? I don't think so (...) But anyway thank you so much / En I not think so. Giggle*). Compared with the third popular pattern of *Evasion, Rejection* has been rarely used. Therefore, at the macro level of CRs, Malaysian Chinese followed the preference in the order of *Acceptance, Combination, Evasion* and *Rejection*.

Table 3. CRs at micro-level

CRs Type	Number	Percentage (%)
Acceptance		
Appreciation	171	43
Returning	25	6
Qualifying	17	4
Agreeing	10	2.5
Downgrading	10	2.5
Total	233	57.8
Evasion		
Giggling/Smiling	62	16
Commenting	39	10
Credit-shifting	34	8.6
Reassuring	14	4
Topic-shifting	9	2
Offering	3	0.8
Total	163	41.4
Rejection	3	0.8
TOTAL	399	100

Table 3 presents the frequency and percentage of each CRs strategy at micro level by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates. It shows that Malaysian Chinese undergraduates used diverse CRs and there were 12 patterns of micro level CRs classified by Cheng's (2011) framework, namely, *Appreciation, Returning, Qualifying, Agreeing, Downgrading* (which are under *Acceptance*) and *Giggling/Smiling, Commenting, Credit-shifting, Reassuring, Topic-shifting, Offering* (under *Evasion*) as well as *Rejection*. As it is shown in Table 3, *Appreciation* was the most preferred response at micro level by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates. The participants mostly responded to the compliments by using '*thank you*'. On the contrary, the strategies of *Offering* (e.g. *Oh is it?)* and *Rejection* were the least used patterns of CRs in the study.

According to the questionnaire, when the subjects received compliments, 28 out of 30 participants claimed that '*thank you*' would be their most instant response even without doubting the reality of the compliments. Most of the participants mentioned that they were growing up in Chinese families where they were taught to treat others friendly. As a minority in Malaysia, explained by some participants, Malaysian Chinese need to face people from other ethnic groups who may have different religions, languages and cultures, therefore they need to build up a harmonious relationship with everyone around them. In order to avoid conflicts in daily communication, generally speaking, they tend to agree with others. As a consequence, Malaysian Chinese in this study tended to accept the compliments from others to maintain harmony in the interaction.

The second favorable strategy was *Giggling/Smiling*. According to the questionnaires, two reasons were given by the participants to account for the application of *Giggling/Smiling*. First of all, 16 out of 30 participants regarded smiling/giggling as an appropriate way to show politeness in their daily communications no matter who the

interlocutors are. As mentioned by participants, they needed to return the politeness since others complimented them in a polite way, which was defined as *礼尚往来 Li Shang Wang Lai* (Courtesy calls for reciprocity). Participants thought it would be rude to break the face of compliment givers if they did not show their happiness of receiving the praises. Therefore, smiling/giggling plays as an indicator of politeness for Malaysian Chinese in their social life. Secondly, 18 out of 30 participants mentioned that they did not know what to say or how to make better responses in particular situations. Among these 18 participants who admitted they had no idea what to say, 14 had got band 3 or 4 in the Malaysian University English Test (MUET), which shows that participants ranking as modest or competent users of English were more likely to use more non-verbal expressions of giggling/smiling to offset their low proficiency of English in responding to compliments. Examples are given by participants of No.3 (band 3 of MUET) and No. 10 (band 4 of MUET) who used *Giggling/Smiling* strategies 5 times among 8 responses as they explained that they could not express themselves well in English.

The CRs regarding to situations

The findings in this section provide a further analysis of the data corresponding to four compliment topics, appearance, character, ability and possession, thus an in-depth distribution of compliment responses is presented.

CRs for appearance

Table 4 demonstrates that the micro strategies of *Agreeing*, *Downgrading*, *Commenting*, *Credit-shifting* and *Offering* have not been used by participants in situation 1 (with compliments on appearance). As shown in Table 4, the micro patterns in the situation of appearance are consistent with the general CRs in Table 3. Participants used more *Appreciation* (e.g. *Thank you*) than other CRs strategies. It indicates that Malaysian Chinese undergraduates are direct in accepting compliments on appearance. *Giggling/Smiling* was another popular strategy used. However, respondents were more likely to show smiling or giggling after *Appreciation* (e.g. *Oh thank you. Giggle*). The respondents also indirectly returned compliments to compliment givers by *Returning* (e.g. *You too*).

Table 4. Micro-level CRs for appearance

CRs Strategy	Number	Percentage
Appreciation	54	51%
Agreeing	0	0
Downgrading	0	0
Qualifying	2	2%
Returning	16	15%
Credit-shifting	0	0
Commenting	0	0
Reassuring	6	6%
Offering	0	0
Giggling/Smiling	20	19%
Topic-shifting	6	6%
Rejection	1	1%
Total	89	100%

Figure 1 displays the variations between the CRs strategies in sub-situation 1 in which compliments were given by different speakers. *Appreciation* (e.g. *Thank you*) was the most preferred type among all the strategies in situation 1a and 1b. However, there are more *Appreciations* used in situation 1a than situation 1b. The participants in the study typically responded to two interlocutors by expressing '*Thank you*' to show gratitude. *Appreciation* strategies give great predominance to the agreements with the compliments and show less emphasis on the modesty issue in responding to the praise on appearance.

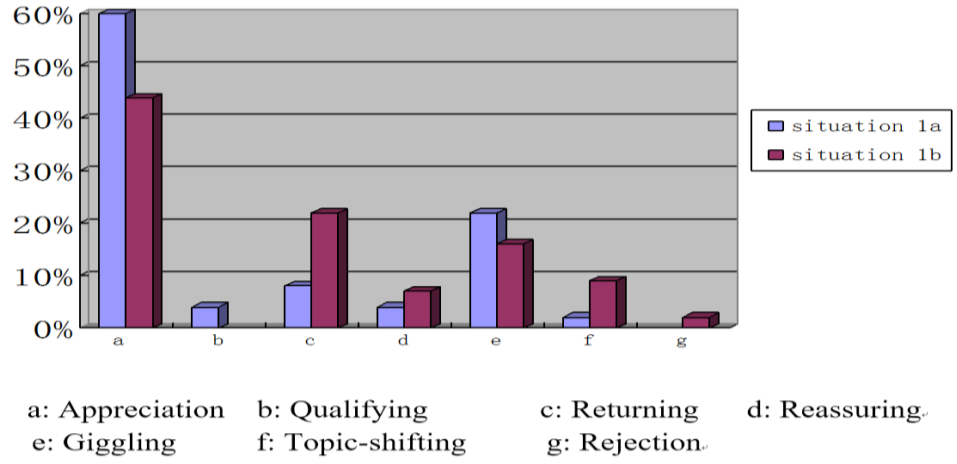


Figure 1. Micro-level CRs for appearance

When responding to familiar complimenter in higher status, the second most favorable pattern was *Giggling/Smiling*, moreover it is *Returning* (e.g. *Wow you too*) when responding to unfamiliar complimenter in equal social status. For the strategy of *Giggling/Smiling*, Malaysian Chinese undergraduates preferred to use more *Giggling/Smiling* to close complimenter in higher social status than unconversant compliment payer in same social status. Another noticeable tendency is that a few strategies of *Qualifying* (e.g. *This party is a memorable one because it celebrates the end of examination, so I think I should dress well*) were only used to respond to familiar complimenter in higher status, while a little *Rejection* (e.g. *En I not think so*) was only used with unfamiliar complimenter in same status.

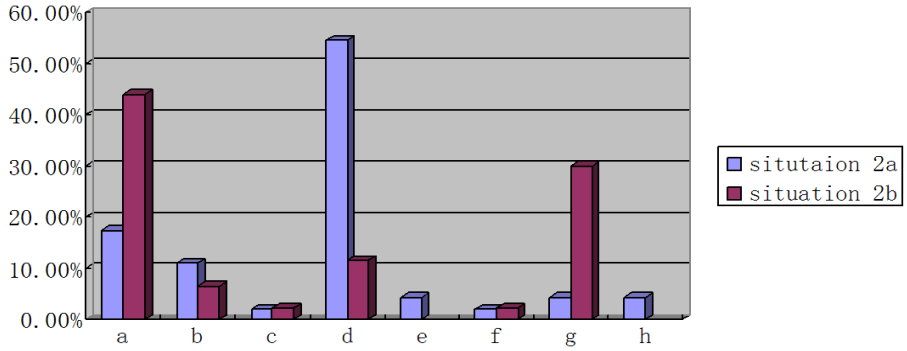
CRs for character

Table 5 shows that the most preferred strategy used by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates is *Credit-shifting*, where the respondents would like to shift the credits back to the compliment giver by expressing '*You are welcome*' or '*Welcome*'. It suggests when recipients responded to compliments on character, they would place more emphasis on showing gratitude to complimenters rather than the praise on their good character, which is a common way to avoid self-praise. *Appreciation* (e.g. *Thank you / Thanks*) was the second preference by respondents. *Giggling/Smiling* has been used less than the above two strategies. It is interesting to notice that strategies of *Agreeing*, *Offering* and *Rejection* have not been used by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates in this setting.

Table 5. Micro-level CRs for character

CRs Strategy	Number	Percent
Appreciation	27	30.3%

Agreeing	0	0
Downgrading	8	9%
Qualifying	2	2.2%
Returning	1	1%
Credit-shifting	30	33.7%
Commenting	2	2.2%
Reassuring	2	2.2%
Offering	0	0
Giggling/Smiling	15	16.9%
Topic-shifting	2	2.2%
Rejection	0	0
Total	89	100%



a: Appreciation b: Downgrading c: Qualifying d:Credit-shifting
e: Commenting f: Reassuring g: Smiling h:Topic-shifting

Figure 2. Micro-level CRs for character

Figure 2 shows that the variation of CRs is more significant in this situation. First, participants showed a stronger preference of *Credit-shifting* (e.g. *You are welcome / Welcome*) by shifting the credit back to the unfamiliar complimenter in higher status, in contrary, this strategy was not popular with familiar friends. Participants may regard offering help to others is a common behavior so they evaded the praise from someone they helped. Nevertheless, when receiving the compliments from their close friends, they were prone to accepting them by *Appreciation* (e.g. *Thank you / Thanks*) so it was the most preferred strategy responding to familiar complimenters in same status. *Giggling/Smiling* was still greatly used to respond to familiar friends but rarely applied with unfamiliar officers in higher status.

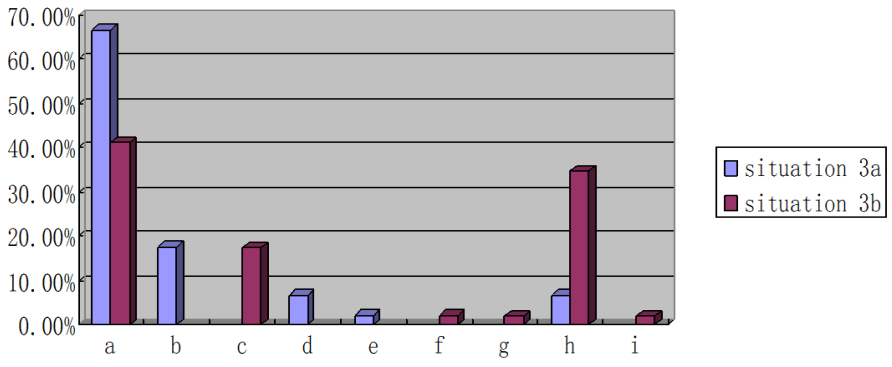
CRs for ability

Table 6 shows that the most preferred CRs for ability at micro level is *Appreciation* (e.g. *Thank you very much / Thank you*) and followed by *Giggling/Smiling*. This finding is in accordance with Table 4 for compliments on appearance. However, in situation 2 on character, the most preferred strategy is *Credit-shifting* (e.g. *You are welcome / Welcome*). This strategy is less preferred in both situations for appearance and ability. Moreover, other strategies were minimally used (see Table 6). Strategies of *Agreeing*, *Downgrading* and *Rejection* have not been chosen as responses to compliments on ability.

Table 6. Micro-level CRs for ability

CRs Strategy	Number	Percent
Appreciation	49	53.8%
Agreeing	0	0
Downgrading	0	0
Qualifying	8	8.8%
Returning	8	8.8%
Credit-shifting	3	3.3%
Commenting	1	1%
Reassuring	1	1%
Offering	1	1%
Giggling/Smiling	19	20.9%
Topic-shifting	1	1%
Rejection	0	0
Total	91	100%

Yet, surprisingly with the unbalance of distribution of the CRs in this situation shown in Figure 3, the CRs of *Qualifying* (e.g. *I practiced it for a long time*), *Credit-shifting* (e.g. *Thank you for your lectures*) and *Reassuring* (e.g. *Oh really?*) only appeared when the compliments were given by a familiar lecturer but were never used to unfamiliar classmates in the role plays. On the other hand, strategies of *Returning* (e.g. *I am sure you can do it well), Commenting* (e.g. *This topic is very interesting*), *Offering* (e.g. *Oh..if you need some suggestions, just ask me*) and *Topic-shifting* (e.g. *How is your preparation?*) were only found in responding to unfamiliar classmates. With reference to the mutual strategies in two sub-situations, *Appreciation* (e.g. *Thank you / Thank you for your comments*) was the most preferred pattern for both familiar lecturer and unfamiliar classmates, in which Malaysian Chinese undergraduates were more likely to show *Appreciation* to familiar lecturer than unfamiliar classmate. Conversely, more *Giggling/Smiling* strategies were produced to unfamiliar classmates whereas less used with the familiar lecturer.



a: Appreciation b: Qualifying c: Returning d: Credit-shifting e: Reassuring
f: Offering g: Commenting h: Smiling/giggling i: Topic-shifting

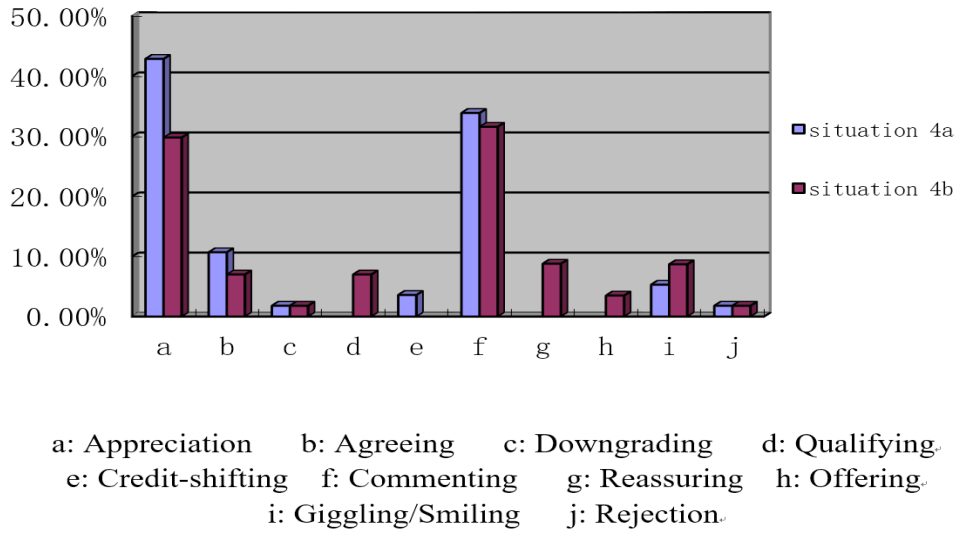
Figure 3. Micro-level CRs for ability

CRs for possession

Table 7 shows that the majority of Malaysian Chinese undergraduates mostly applied two strategies without a big distinction, *Appreciation* (e.g. *Thank you*) and *Commenting* (e.g. *This is ya the latest phone / It costs like 2000 plus ringgits*). Therefore, participants valued both the acceptance and evasion of the compliments on that topic. Yet unlike the other three complimentary topics, *Giggling/Smiling* has not been a frequently used strategy on possession. In this situation, strategies of *Qualifying*, *Returning* and *Topic-shifting* were not used.

Table 7. Micro-level CRs for possession

CRs Strategy	Number	Percent
Appreciation	41	36 %
Agreeing	10	8.9 %
Downgrading	2	1.8 %
Qualifying	0	0
Returning	0	0
Credit-shifting	2	1.8 %
Commenting	37	33 %
Reassuring	5	4.5 %
Offering	2	1.8 %
Giggling/Smiling	8	7 %
Topic-shifting	0	0
Rejection	2	1.8 %
Total	113	100%



a: Appreciation b: Agreeing c: Downgrading d: Qualifying
e: Credit-shifting f: Commenting g: Reassuring h: Offering
i: Giggling/Smiling j: Rejection

Figure 4. Micro-level CRs for possession

Figure 4 demonstrates that both *Appreciation* and *Commenting* were the two most applied responses to unfamiliar communicators with higher status and close friends. The

distributions of the CRs in Figure 4 indicate the distinctions between situation 4a and 4b. Firstly, recipients performed more *Appreciation* with the unfamiliar complimenter in higher social status than close friends; on the contrary, a little more *Commenting* was given to their close friends when responding to the compliments. The respondents would mostly comment on the phone by giving a general description (e.g. *It is great*) or describing history of the purchase (e.g. *I just bought it like one week ago*). Additionally, the high or low expenditure of the phone was often told without specific price (e.g. *Ya but it costs like thousand plus ringgit*). The variation between two sub-situations also depends on the use of some strategies that only exist in one sub-situation: *Credit-shifting* (e.g. *It's bought by my father*) was only used with unfamiliar one in higher status; moreover, *Reassuring* (e.g. *Oh, really?*), *Qualifying* (e.g. *Maybe that's why it's called a smart phone*) as well as *Offering* (e.g. *You can have a look*) were only responded to close friends.

DISCUSSION

Macro and micro level CRs

As shown in Chart 1, the majority of Malaysian Chinese undergraduates employed *Acceptance* strategy in responding to compliments. This finding is in line with previous studies that found the similarly strong preference of accepting the compliments among Taiwanese Mandarin-Chinese, Mainland Mandarin-Chinese, and Chinese ESL speakers from People's Republic of China and Singapore Chinese university students (Chen, 2003; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Cheng, 2011; Lee, 2015). The second most preferred macro pattern is *Combination* which is mainly of the type: *Acceptance + Evasion*. This is different with the study of Tang & Zhang (2009) that mandarin Chinese used more *Evade + Accept* and *Reject + Accept* while Australian English speakers preferred a more straightforward way of *Accept + Accept*. A number of recipients also chose to apply macro pattern of *Evasion* to avoid direct acceptance of compliments. Nevertheless, participants did not favor *Rejection* much which is far less than previous studies (Chen, 1993; Thevendiraraj, 2006). However, this finding is in line with Tang & Zhang (2009) as well as Cheng (2009) who discovered that mainland Chinese in both mandarin and English did not like to use *Rejection* as CRs.

Among all the micro CRs strategies in this study, other than the CRs framework of Cheng (2011), there were no CRs strategies of *Non-idiomatic* and *Ignoring* in this study. The most favorable response type was *Appreciation*. This result is in accordance with investigations of CRs studies by mainland Chinese, especially those done after 2000 (Yuan, 2002; Chen, 2003; Tang & Zhang, 2009; Chen & Yang, 2010; Cheng, 2011). Malay undergraduates in Farnia & Suleiman's study (2009) also showed same trend as they considered acceptance expressions like '*thank you*' or '*thanks*' as the 'safest' respondents to compliments. As elaborated by Farnia & Suleiman (2009), the respondents viewed being over humble to reject the compliments was inappropriate and to some extent impolite. Another favorable pattern is *Giggling/Smiling* which is similar to Kuang et al. (2011), in which they found Malays also used a few non-verbal expressions like 'smiling' when they interact. *Giggling/Smiling* was frequently used in this study due to its function of offsetting the limitation of English proficiency which is in line with Chinese EFL participants in Cheng (2011) who had lower English competence so produced more *Giggling/Smiling*.

CRs on topics with social status and social distance

With reference to social distance and social status, according to the questionnaires, 24 out of 30 (80%) respondents stated that they have taken the social distance or the so-called

familiarity into consideration when responding to compliments. Other influential factors such as social power, gender, topic, mood, age or intonation of the utterance have been mentioned less than three times for each. It seems that social distance is the most influential factor on the compliment responses of Malaysian Chinese undergraduates. It justifies the conclusion of Holmes (1995) that relative social distance plays a significant role in compliment responses. Based on the further inquiry, Malaysian Chinese participants explained that familiarity is highly important than social status in their daily communication. They would like to show good manners to anyone because it is highly important to build a harmonious relationship with all the members in the society then they can be welcomed and accepted by others. Obviously, Wolfson's (1989) opinion that status relationship is greatly affecting the CRs has been challenged by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates. Moreover, this finding is different from the study of Chen (2003) on Mandarin Chinese speakers in Taiwan in which their CRs strategies were significantly influenced by social status of the complimenter. Generally speaking, Malaysian Chinese undergraduates still uphold the idea of collectivism in Malaysian context by saving each other's faces, preserving harmony and avoiding conflicts being maintained (Hofstede, 1984; Storz, 1999), which is viewed as drawing their conscious or unconscious values from the Confucianism of traditional Chinese culture (Storz, 1999).

Malaysian Chinese undergraduates prefer to apply more patterns of CRs strategies on the topic of possession. With compliments on appearance, *Appreciation* has been used most to show acceptance with the compliments, which accords with Tang & Zhang's (2009) and Cheng's (2011) findings of Chinese mandarin and ESL speakers. The respondents in this study also used a number of *Giggling/Smiling* as responses, which is in contrast with Cheng (2009). Nevertheless, *Qualifying* and *Rejectio*n have not been favored by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates. Facing different compliment givers, *Appearance* and *Giggling/Smiling* were the most preferred strategy to both complimenters while more of these two strategies were paid to familiar interlocutors.

With regard to compliments on character, *Credit-shifting* was the most preferred type as CRs, in which Malaysian Chinese undergraduates were more likely to shift the credits back to the unfamiliar complimenters. This finding is in accordance with Tang & Zhang (2009) and Cheng (2011) in which *Appreciation* has been applied as second most preferred CRs that was preceded by *Credit-shifting*. The finding is totally opposite to Cai's (2012) study that Chinese college students favored *Acceptance* strategies to respond to unfamiliar complimenters whose social status is higher while *Evasion* and *Rejection* to familiar interlocutors.

With reference of compliments on ability, participants were prone to using *Appreciation*, which is similar to Cheng's (2011) study that Chinese ESL speakers used *Appreciation* most, however, the Chinese EFL speakers used more *Offering* than Malaysian Chinese undergraduates on that topic. There is a huge variation of CRs preference by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates when responding to different complimenters. Participants utilized more *Appreciation* to familiar complimenters while more *Giggling/Smiling* to unfamiliar ones.

Lastly with compliments on possession, in addition to *Appreciation*, participants would like to comment on the object as well. The studies of Tang & Zhang (2009) and Cheng (2011) also found out that the *Appreciation* was the most favorable CRs on possession, but there were more strategies of *Downgrading* employed than *Commenting* in their studies.

In contrast with the study of Cai (2012) on Mainland Chinese college students, Malaysian Chinese undergraduates preferred to use more *Acceptance* strategies (*Appreciation*) to respond to familiar complimenters on the topics of appearance,

character and ability. However, the participants preferred to give more *Acceptance* strategies (*Appreciation* and *Commenting*) to unfamiliar compliment givers and it is in line with the study of Cai (2012).

According to the analysis of questionnaires, 25 out of 30 participants explained that they would feel happy, excited or pleased by receiving compliments; therefore, majority of Malaysian Chinese undergraduates viewed compliments as a positive speech act than a face-threat (Tang & Zhang, 2009). This may be the reason for the preference for *Acceptance* and *Appreciation* as well as least use of *Rejection* strategies.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has investigated the speech act of compliment responses (CRs) produced by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates. The findings show that Malaysian Chinese undergraduates utilized diverse CRs strategies when responding to various compliments in English context. Their compliment responses were influenced by Chinese culture norms and English proficiency. On the whole, Malaysian Chinese undergraduates preferred to use *Acceptance* more than other strategies. Among all the micro-level CRs, *Appreciation* has been the most favorable strategy which was prior to *Giggling/Smiling*. Social distance has a great impact on the CRs of Malaysian Chinese undergraduates; on the contrary, social status is not regarded as an influencing factor by Malaysian Chinese undergraduates in responding to compliments. They preferred to use more *Appreciation* to respond to familiar complimenters on the topics of appearance, character and ability. However, when they dealt with compliments on possession, more *Appreciation* and *Commenting* were given to unfamiliar communicators.

The findings of this study can contribute towards and enhance the existing investigations in the field of pragmatics, especially in the area of compliment responses among Chinese undergraduates in Malaysia. This study provides a platform for greater understanding of Malaysian Chinese undergraduates' responses to compliments thereafter a better understanding of their CRs may reduce the misunderstanding of communication and build up a more harmonious conversation. Additionally, since speech acts are cultural in essence, speakers should be made familiar with the interlocutor's culture, which is good for facilitating successful communication. This study showed some cultural norms of Malaysian Chinese in their CRs, as a consequence, other non-Chinese communities in Malaysia can gain a better understanding of Malaysian Chinese's culture in speech.

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APPENDIX A

ROLE PLAY SCENARIOS IN PRESENT STUDY

Please read all the situations given.

Situation 1 Appearance (The outward or visible aspect of a person or thing**)**

a.

Your lecturer (whom you are familiar with) organized a party to celebrate the end of examination (task). You have dressed up for the party. As you arrive at the party,

Your lecturer says: "Dress nicely! You look so nice today!"
Your response:

---

b.

You greet to your good friends. They introduce a new friend (unfamiliar) to you.

The new friend says: "Hey, you look great! You are really beautiful (handsome) today!"
Your response:

Situation 2 Character (The combination of traits and qualities distinguishing the individual nature of a person or thing)

a.

You and your best friend meet an office staff (whom you are unfamiliar with) in the hallway carrying some files. You help her (him) to take files to her (his) office.

The officer says: "Thank you so much, you are really a helpful and caring person."
Your response:

_____

b.

You and your friend get out of the office. She/He smiles at you.

She (he) says: " Wow! You like helping others. You are so kind and caring!"
Your response:

_____

Situation 3 Ability (The qualities required to do something)

a.

You have completed a presentation. After that your lecturer (whom you are familiar with) gives you immediate feedback.

She (he) says: "Well done, your English is very good. And your presentation is well-organized. Thank you."
Your response:

_____

b.

You go back your seat. One of your classmates (whom you are unfamiliar with) smiles at you.

The classmate says: "Wow, that's brilliant! I hope I can do it the way you did. Well done!"
Your response:

_____

Situation 4 Possession (Anything that is owned or possessed)

a.

You have bought a new mobile phone. When you visit your close friend's family for the first time, your friend's father (whom you are unfamiliar with) notices your mobile phone.

He says: "Your phone looks very nice. I believe it is a good phone!"
Your response:

_____

b.

When you receive a call, your close friend (whom you are familiar with) notices that your phone is a new one. Having looked at it and tried some functions,

She (he) says: "Wow, how smart! It looks so nice. My phone doesn't have such functions. It is really great!"
Your response:

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you think your responses are typical of what you would do in real life?
2. What is your instant response normally to a compliment?
3. Do you intentionally choose particular response strategies in particular situations?
4. What factors influenced your choices?

APPENDIX C
DATA TRANSCRIPTION MODEL

1. Parentheses with dots enclosed **(.) (..) (...)** shows intervals within utterances. The number of dots approximately categorizes the intervals as short, medium or long.
2. A dash **(-)** indicates a cut off of speech and appears when speakers are doing self-repair during their responses.
3. The word **Smile** or **Giggle** indicates the smiling or giggling of the speakers during their responses.
4. Words like '**en**' '**ya**' or '**oh**' indicate the gutturalness or interjection of utterance.

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