

# International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL)

Vol-3, Issue-5, Sep-Oct, 2024

Journal CrossRef DOI: 10.22161/ijeel

**IJEEL**  
Peer-Reviewed International Journal

[chiefeditor.ijeel@gmail.com](mailto:chiefeditor.ijeel@gmail.com)

<https://ijeel.org/>

# International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies

**(IJEEL)**

**ISSN: 2583-3812**

**DOI: 10.22161/ijeel**

**Vol-3, Issue-5**

**September - October 2024**

*Editor in Chief*

**Dr. Luisa Maria Arvide Cambra**

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International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies

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*Vol-3, Issue-5; September-October 2024*  
(10.22161/ijeel.3.5)

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# Risks and Countermeasures Faced by Graduate Ideological and Political Education in the Era of AI

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 25 Jul 2024;                      Received in revised form: 19 Aug 2024;                      Accepted: 26 Aug 2024;                      Available online: 01 Sep 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords</b> – <i>Cultivation of translation talents, medical education, teaching innovation, school-enterprise collaboration, translation technology.</i></p>	<p><i>The cultivation of translation master talents in medical colleges and universities plays an important role in promoting the development of medical undertakings, and the research on this problem has realistic significance. This paper intends to put forward the difficulties encountered in the current training of masters of translation, including the shortage of characteristic textbooks, teaching mode with singularity, slow update, and slow iteration of translation technology. And then put forward certain solutions to these problems. The first is to establish school-based teaching materials with medical characteristics, the second is to innovate the teaching mode, establish the school-enterprise cooperation and collaborative education mechanism, and the last is for the school can cooperate with enterprises to learn translation technology.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

AI technology is driving a reformation in education. The artificial intelligence(AI) era presents both opportunities and challenges for graduate ethics education, prompting significant reflection on the impacts and implications for the ideological and political education of graduate students. Institutions of higher education must contemplate how to effectively harness AI technology to enhance the quality and efficacy of ideological and political education for graduate students while simultaneously addressing issues related to student development, ethics, and social responsibility.

### 1.1 The Emergence of the AI Era

The essence of artificial intelligence is the information process of computer simulating human consciousness and thinking. Simply put, it is an intelligent machine that can make similar reactions to human intelligence. This field also includes robots, speech recognition, image recognition, natural language processing, and expert systems (Zhou Ying, Zheng Wenming, Xu Wei, Zhu Jie, 2020). The term "AI era" refers to the age of artificial intelligence, also known as the era of machine learning or the digital age. The widespread application and influence of artificial intelligence technology is becoming increasingly prominent in social, economic,



educational, and technological domains and so on. The development of artificial intelligence (AI) can be traced back to the mid-20th century. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the concept of AI began to emerge, marking the first mention of the term "artificial intelligence." Early AI research focused on symbolic reasoning and expert systems, with scientists endeavoring to construct computer programs capable of simulating human thinking and problem-solving abilities. From the 1980s to the 1990s, machine learning began to rise, with researchers employing statistical methods and neural networks to build intelligent systems. In the early 21st century, with the advancement of computing power and the rise of the internet, AI experienced a new surge. The availability of big data and enhanced computational capabilities created favorable conditions for the development of machine learning and deep learning. Particularly, deep learning achieved significant success in the fields of computer vision and natural language processing. From the mid-21st century to the present, AI technology has been widely applied across various domains, including autonomous driving, voice assistants, financial forecasting, medical diagnosis, robotics, smart homes, and industrial automation. Automated decision-making and autonomous systems have also become increasingly powerful. Ray Kurzweil(2006), a technological futurist and inventor, mentioned the "acceleration of technology" in his works, emphasizing the era-changing potential of artificial intelligence in the future. The proliferation of AI presents both opportunities and challenges across all sectors<sup>2</sup>. Issues involving privacy, law, and ethics have become increasingly important. Improper use of AI may lead to privacy infringements, algorithmic discrimination, and other ethical concerns. Over time, AI technology continues to evolve, exerting profound influences on education. The AI era has multifaceted impacts on graduate ethics education.

## 1.2. The Importance of Graduate Ideological and Political Education

The establishment of graduate degrees in the Western world can be traced back to medieval

Europe, with the earliest universities like Bologna University and the University of Paris, introducing specialized master's and doctoral degrees between the 12th and 13th centuries. Initially associated with the church and law, these degrees gradually expanded into various fields over time. In contrast, graduate education in China commenced in the early 20th century, with the founding of the first graduate school at Peking University in 1912. However, due to historical challenges, graduate education in China faced disruptions in subsequent decades. The establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 marked the beginning of extensive higher education reforms, exemplified by the founding of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 1950. This signaled a new era in graduate education, with universities subsequently establishing graduate schools and developing programs.

The emergence of graduate education prompted the introduction of courses in political and ideological education. Zheng Yongting(2006) et al. put forward the opinion that political and ideological education refers to the purposeful, planned, and organized influence exerted by a society or social group using specific ideological concepts, political perspectives, and moral norms to shape the ethical and ideological conduct of its members<sup>3</sup>. It is widely acknowledged that political and ideological education began developing in the early stages of the education sector. During the learning phase, students are inevitably exposed to various ideological currents, underscoring the significance of ideological education.

Graduate students, as the backbone of contemporary youth and the main force behind technological innovation, play a crucial role in societal development. The political and ideological education of graduate students is particularly pivotal. Contemporary Chinese graduate students must recognize their responsibility to leverage their academic knowledge and research capabilities for the positive advancement of academia and society. Importantly, personal development must precede professional accomplishments. Graduate students

should possess the correct ideological and political education literacy before contributing to society. Only by demonstrating exemplary political and ideological literacy along with a sense of social responsibility in both work and personal life can graduate students make meaningful contributions to societal stability and development.

## II. ANALYSIS OF THE CAUSES OF THE PROBLEMS IN GRADUATE IDEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The appearance of different issues is a feature of each era. And it is important to address other problems. With the advent of the AI era and the rapid development of artificial intelligence, digitalization in education has become an inevitable trend. In this era of rapid informationization, issues such as information cocoons, information bubbles, information overload, and the problems brought about by the information age are endless. The environment in which we live is no longer just a physical environment composed of simple space and time but rather an environment transformed by technology, with a digital and intelligent mimetic nature, where the virtual and the real merge. Compared to the traditional physical environment, today's graduate students are also in a virtual world brought about by the digital information age. In an environment filled with artificial intelligence and technology, students not only enjoy the dividends brought about by rapid technological development but also suffer from the negative impacts of such development. Especially now, the virtual world lacks relevant laws for regulation.

### 2.1 The Inevitable Trend of Integrating New Technology and Education

The emergence and application of new technologies are constantly infiltrating the education industry because the development of science and technology has become a good choice to improve efficiency, reduce cost, and improve the quality of education. However, digital technology makes the acquisition, dissemination, and utilization of information more convenient and efficient, thus

promoting the development of the information society. The digital age has become an inevitable trend that has had a profound impact on education and even global development. Therefore, adapting to and making use of digital technology and mastering digital ability has become a necessary condition for the survival and development of modern society. Therefore, following the pace of technological development has also become a required course for contemporary graduate students. However, the development of new technologies has changed the students' learning styles and learning environment.

The proliferation and development of AI technology have made it easier for students to access information from diverse sources, including social media, news websites, personal blogs, and more. However, the authenticity, objectivity, and credibility of such information vary widely, leading to the potential presence of misinformation, rumors, biased viewpoints, and other distortions, thereby causing interference and misguidance in the ideological and political education of graduate students.

The Internet and digital technologies make it easier for students to access various learning resources, including textbooks, academic papers, teaching videos, and more. Although the advances in artificial intelligence expand the scope of obtaining learning resources, it has also caused the problems of information explosion and information overload. Information explosion makes graduate students faced with a large number of information sources and materials, which is easy to lead to information overload, and it isn't easy to screen and manage information effectively. Graduate students may be distracted by too much information to focus on in-depth study and research. Information explosion also brings the challenge of information authenticity and credibility. When obtaining and using information, graduate students may be affected by false and inaccurate information, leading to incorrect and misleading research results.

In the age of AI, misinformation and propaganda can be spread more easily and effectively through social media platforms and other

online channels. If graduate-level political education relies heavily on digital resources or online platforms, students may be exposed to misleading or false information, undermining the integrity of their education.

## **2.2 Analysis of the Reasons for the Ideological Education of Graduate Students.**

Network security has an impact on the ideological education of graduate students, mainly in their information acquisition and utilization ability, network literacy and information literacy, academic integrity and academic ethics, etc. All of these factors should be considered. The first is the impact of the credibility and authenticity of information on graduate education. Network security problems may lead to a large number of false, inaccurate, or misleading information on the Internet, which may affect the ideology and cognitive structure of graduate students, making it difficult for them to accurately understand and evaluate the problems and events in the real world.

In the face of the massive amount of information on the network, graduate students need to have good information filtering and screening abilities to identify and select real valuable information. Nonetheless, network security problems may make it difficult for graduate students to distinguish between the authenticity and credibility of information, leading to deviation in information selection and utilization, and thus have a certain impact on students' ideology. Network security issue also involves knowledge and skills in network literacy and information literacy, including network security awareness, information recognition ability, privacy protection awareness, etc. The lack of these qualities may make graduate students vulnerable to network fraud. Consequently, the formation of their ideas and behavior habits will be affected.

Cybersecurity also involves academic integrity and academic ethics, such as academic fraud and plagiarism. Graduate students need to abide by academic integrity and academic norms when conducting academic research and paper writing, and network security issues may threaten academic

integrity and affect the academic ethics and professional ethics of graduate students. Another reason is the availability of social media and the virtual anonymity of the Internet. It creates environmental conditions for personal privacy leakage, information security, and online bullying to occur. Specifically, compared with real-life behavior, the regulation and control of cyberspace are relatively weak. The lack of effective rules and systems makes cyberbullying more likely to spread and spread on the Internet.

## **2.3. Reasons for Ideological Fragmentation and Ideological Differences.**

With the gradual application of artificial intelligence in the field of education, the various information it brings needs to be more systematic and deeper compared with our traditional textbooks. Various fast-food cultures have become popular, and the fragmentation of ideology in students may lead to the need for more systematization and depth of ideological education. Students are only exposed to some scattered and one-sided ideological information, but need more understanding of the overall ideological system and historical background. This situation may lead to students' shallow ideological understanding, and it isn't easy to form a complete worldview and values.

AI-driven personalized learning systems may inadvertently create information cocoon or echo chambers, where students are only exposed to information and perspectives that align with their existing beliefs. This can hinder critical thinking and exposure to diverse viewpoints, which are essential for a comprehensive understanding of political ideologies and systems. Information cocoon refers to the individual being limited to specific ideas or information sources in information acquisition and contact, resulting in the information they contact showing a state of filtering, limitation, or deviation. This state may be due to individuals selectively contacting information consistent with their perspectives, or because algorithmic recommendation and filtering expose individuals to only specific types of information while ignoring



other views or sources of information. Take TikTok, for example; TikTok Will take users to do behavior analysis. TikTok By analyzing users' behavior data, including browsing history, thumb-up records, comment interaction, etc. The users' interests and preferences will be analyzed, and then use the collaborative filtering algorithm to recommend videos to users. This algorithm recommends some of the favorite videos of users to other users with similar interests by comparing the similarity of interest between users. TikTok can identify the types and styles of content that users are interested in so as to recommend relevant videos to users.

In a fragmented ideological environment, students may be more susceptible to the influence of a single ideology, producing paranoia and extreme tendencies. They may be inclined to accept a certain ideology while questioning or even rejecting other views, which will prevent them from thinking and judging problems objectively and rationally. The ideological fragmentation may lead to increased antagonism, with a lack of dialogue and understanding between different ideological groups, but rather to adopt aggressive and even hostile attitudes. This situation could be more conducive to the all-round development and growth of students.

In addition, the algorithm bias will also have a bad impact on the ideological education of graduate students. There are biases in AI Algorithms. AI algorithms are often trained on large datasets, which may contain biases from human creators or historical data. If these biases are not identified and corrected, they could perpetuate or even amplify existing social, cultural, or political biases. This could lead to a distorted or one-sided presentation of ideological or political content in educational materials, affecting the quality and objectivity of graduate-level political education.

The use of AI in education raises ethical concerns regarding privacy, autonomy, and consent. AI systems may collect sensitive data about students' beliefs, behaviors, and preferences, raising questions about how this data is used, stored, and protected. Additionally, there may be ethical dilemmas

surrounding the use of AI for ideological or political indoctrination, particularly if students need to be given the opportunity to engage with the material presented to them critically.

Although AI has entered the education industry, its use causes students to lack interaction. While AI technologies can enhance educational experiences in many ways, they cannot fully replace the role of human educators in fostering critical thinking, empathy, and open dialogue. Over-reliance on AI-driven educational tools may lead to a lack of meaningful human interaction, which is essential for effective political education.

### III. RISKS OF GRADUATE POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN THE AI ERA

Over the past century, China's system of graduate political and ideological education has been continuously improved and developed, reaching a considerable level of maturity in certain aspects. However, challenges and areas for improvement persist. Up to now, China has established a relatively complete system of graduate political and ideological education, including regulations regarding curriculum design, textbook compilation, teaching methods, and assessment. Universities across the country commonly offer courses in political theory to cultivate students' proficiency in Marxist theory and social responsibility. Today, resources for political theory education for graduate students are increasingly abundant. Textbooks, courseware, and online resources, among others, have been widely developed and applied. Universities are also actively introducing advanced teaching methods and technologies, such as online teaching platforms and multimedia teaching tools, to enhance teaching effectiveness and promote academic research.

Furthermore, Chinese universities and research institutions are actively conducting academic research in the field of graduate political and ideological education, continuously exploring new educational concepts and methods. The research findings are not only recognized in academic circles but also provide valuable guidance for practical

application. However, with the advent of the AI era, graduate education faces certain challenges. Technological advancements and information security issues impact graduate education. In the field of computer science, there exists a certain problem of information overload and information filtering. Meanwhile, the issues of social media and personal privacy are gradually becoming prominent, leading to fragmented challenges to ideology and causing differences in the thinking of graduate students, as well as issues with the group.

### 3.1 The Impact of Technological Development

Technological advancements have various implications for the ideological and political education of graduate students. Suppose students cannot discern and think critically. In that case, they may unquestioningly accept or imitate the discourse and behavior found online, thereby being influenced by negative ideologies and potentially being led towards extreme or radical ideological positions. Technological development also brings about the issue of information overload, wherein the sheer volume of information surpasses individual information needs, processing capabilities, and utilization capacities, thereby rendering audiences unable to select and apply relevant information effectively. Despite receiving vast amounts of information, individuals may need help to integrate, organize, and internalize it into the information they require. Consequently, this affects their ideologies and changes in thought.

In the era of information explosion, a plethora of irrelevant and useless data severely disrupts individuals' ability to select useful information accurately. The volume of information across various media far exceeds what individuals actually need. The abundance of redundant information significantly interferes with audiences' ability to select relevant, useful information accurately. Academic knowledge, news consultations, social entertainment, and other forms of information continue to increase, with thousands of pieces of information retrievable through a single keyword search. Students face the challenge of information

overload, requiring them to sift through vast amounts of information to find content beneficial to themselves.

However, due to the diversity and sheer volume of information, students need help to accurately assess the authenticity and importance of information, making them susceptible to biased or non-objective information, thereby affecting the correctness and comprehensiveness of their ideological and political education. They may encounter clashes and conflicts between different value systems. Additionally, Herbert A. Simon, an economist and computer scientist, once pointed out that information-rich societies lead to attention scarcity because individuals tend to focus on information that aligns with their viewpoints when processing vast amounts of information, thereby forming limitations in information<sup>3</sup>.

### 3.2. The Potential Hazard of Cyber Security

In the era of AI, cybersecurity has become an increasingly formidable challenge for the moral and intellectual cultivation of graduate students. Students may face issues such as cyberbullying, personal privacy breaches, and online scams, which could negatively impact their psychological well-being and cognitive development.

Cyberbullying is a new type of bullying that has emerged with the rapid development of the digital age, and currently, scholars do not have a specific definition for this term. Cyberbullying refers to individuals using electronic information devices as a medium to repeatedly engage in hostile behaviors with the purpose of harming others<sup>4</sup> (Herbert, 1996). This article defines cyberbullying by synthesizing various online information and behaviors associated with cyberbullying phenomena. Cyberbullying refers to the continuous, intentional, and malicious use of electronic devices and online platforms to verbally attack, harass, intimidate, or humiliate others through the dissemination of insulting, threatening, harassing, or embarrassing language, behavior, or information.

Cyberbullying takes various forms, including but not limited to verbal attacks,, malicious tagging

and dissemination of false information, malicious account hijacking, and online exclusion and isolation. Among these behaviors, students are most susceptible to malicious manipulation and account hijacking, and the impact of online exclusion and isolation is particularly significant. In the digital age, with the support of AI technology, cybercriminals use hacking methods or phishing websites to steal others' account information and engage in malicious activities, spread false information, or attack others' accounts. However, students' long-term learning and living areas are often protected by schools, parents, and others, making it difficult for students living in ivory towers to discern whether these accounts have been hijacked, making them vulnerable to traps woven by cyber criminals. On the other hand, students now exist in a space that includes a network dimension. In addition to the traditional dimensions of time and space, students also exist in network dimensions, where they are prone to exclusion and isolation. When students act to exclude or isolate certain individuals or groups in online communities, they aim to exclude them from existence and participation in the network.

Liu Heng, Wang Wei, and others (2023) have pointed out that the forms of cybersecurity threats are becoming increasingly complex, and traditional protective measures are insufficient to address the cybersecurity risks in the AI era<sup>5</sup>. The challenges of privacy rights and information security are growing with the development of AI technology. The large-scale collection of personal information may lead to infringements of privacy rights and increase the risk of information security, making personal information more susceptible to hacker attacks. But just as 'China's Network Security Talent Construction Report (2022)' shows that with the rapid development of digital, network, intelligent, network security-related high-end talents are still in short supply, full-time engaged in related education and training teachers are insufficient, practical teaching guidance, practical training long-term mechanism to be formed. Because of the shortage of training teachers in the area of cybersecurity,

students lack the education of cybersecurity.

### **3.3. Fragmentation of Ideology and Variations in Thought**

In the AI era, the fragmentation of ideology and variations in thought pose significant challenges to graduate education. The widespread application of artificial intelligence technology in information dissemination and social media may lead to the fragmentation of graduate ideologies. Postgraduate students, as adults, possess their own communication devices and can search for and collect various information online. The information they encounter on the internet may be influenced by algorithmic recommendations, making students more susceptible to exposure to specific viewpoints and ideological paradigms. Communication scholar Nicholas Carr(2009) points out that the design of the internet and social media may incline users to encounter information that aligns with their existing beliefs, forming what is known as a filter bubble, reducing exposure to diverse viewpoints<sup>6</sup>. Social media may lead to groupthink, making individuals more susceptible to the influence of the same group, forming information islands. This may result in the reinforcement of specific viewpoints among students while needing more understanding of other perspectives. Media theorist Eli Pariser(2011) discusses the filtering effect of algorithms in his work "The Filter Bubble", indicating that individuals are more likely to be fed information consistent with their past browsing history, thus forming information islands<sup>7</sup>. This ideological fragmentation and ideological education may lead to students' lack of critical thinking ability; they may only be accepted passively for the presented ideological views and lack of questioning and reflection on these views. This situation will weaken the students' independent thinking ability and critical thinking ability.

The widespread use of social media poses a series of risks to graduate education regarding ideology education. Social media platforms collect a vast amount of data and analyze users' behaviors and interests to achieve personalized recommendations. However, this may also lead to

the misuse of user information or the formation of filter bubbles, where users are exposed only to information that aligns with their existing viewpoints. Algorithms may selectively expose information, reinforce existing viewpoints, and weaken diverse thinking.

#### IV. COUNTERMEASURE TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS

To mitigate these risks, educational institutions must adopt transparent and inclusive approaches to AI-driven political education, prioritizing critical thinking, diversity of perspectives, and respect for ethical principles. Additionally, ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of AI systems are necessary to address biases, safeguard against misinformation, and ensure that graduate-level political education remains rigorous, objective, and relevant in the AI era. Strengthening the integration of technology and ethics to drive educational system reform and students' awareness of cybersecurity will be of great help in dealing with the risks. Meanwhile, students are supposed to enhance their sense of responsibility and cultivate a comprehensive personality.

##### 4.1 Strengthening the Integration of Technology and Ethics to Drive Educational System Reform

As the era of intelligence unfolds, the content of ideological and political education must also be updated accordingly. Educational curricula should incorporate key social issues and ethical challenges to prompt students to contemplate their roles in society and stimulate awareness of social responsibility. Chen Baosheng, the Minister of Education of China, suggests that ideological and political education should keep pace with the trends of the times by introducing contemporary hot-button issues, enabling students to understand society better and cultivating their ability for independent thinking. Consequently, with the development of technology, the educational system should evolve accordingly. Technology and education should complement each other, leveraging the advantages of internet technology to drive continuous and in-depth reforms

in ideological and political education in higher education institutions<sup>8</sup> (Li Xin, 2018). The education authorities can establish guidelines on technological ethics, clarifying the ethical norms and bottom lines of technology applications in the field of education. This will guide educators and students in understanding and utilizing technology correctly, thereby avoiding technological misuse and ethical risks.

To address the problem of cyberbullying, it requires joint efforts from all sectors of society. Cyberbullying not only causes serious psychological and emotional harm to the victims but may also affect their daily lives, studies, and work and even lead to extreme consequences such as suicide. Firstly, it is necessary to regulate cyberbullying behavior and establish corresponding laws and regulations. Under the constraint of the law, those who engage in bullying behavior will hesitate, ensuring the cyber safety of students. In regular education, teachers should instruct students to preserve all evidence related to cyberbullying, including malicious messages, images, or videos. These pieces of evidence may help students seek assistance or take legal action when necessary. If a student is subjected to bullying, teachers should provide corresponding support, actively guide them, and help them emerge from the shadow. Students should have a clear understanding that they should maintain their self-esteem; the purpose of cyberbullies is to hurt their feelings and self-esteem. Don't let them succeed. Remember your value, and don't let others' remarks affect your self-esteem. Similarly, strengthen your inner self and don't let cyberbullying influence your behavior.

In graduate education, universities need to incorporate technological ethics education into both formal curricula and extracurricular activities. Through methods such as case studies and discussion sessions, students should be guided to delve into and discuss the ethical issues behind technological applications, nurturing their abilities for moral judgment and ethical awareness. University educators should actively enhance their

training in technological ethics, improving their understanding of and sensitivity to technological ethical issues in educational practice to ensure they can effectively guide students in the correct use of technology.

Students need to continuously enhance their technological literacy, including abilities such as information retrieval, information processing, and information evaluation, to cope with the complex and ever-changing online environment. They must cultivate the ability to sift through information, discern its authenticity and reliability, and utilize it correctly. In this regard, schools and families need to guide students in forming correct cognitive and value systems to ensure safe influences on their ideological cognition and value shaping.

#### **4.2 Strengthening Students' Awareness of Cybersecurity**

In light of the cybersecurity challenges prevalent in the era characterized by the proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI), it becomes imperative for students to heighten their awareness regarding cybersecurity concerns. Educational institutions are encouraged to institute robust cybersecurity frameworks, leveraging technological resources to bolster security measures. Moreover, integrating cybersecurity education within the curriculum framework is advocated alongside initiatives aimed at regulating the development and deployment of AI technologies. It is posited that the efficacy and safety of AI systems can only be enhanced through the attainment of a heightened level of technological resilience<sup>9</sup>(Yu Xiang, Liu Yongjie, Yang Jin, 2023). Consequently, the creation of a secure and ethically sound online environment is pivotal for facilitating the ideological and political education of students. This necessitates the reinforcement of privacy protection statutes and protocols within the educational milieu, ensuring compliance with pertinent privacy regulations by social media platforms and other entities engaged in data collection endeavors. Furthermore, academic institutions are urged to establish comprehensive cybersecurity management mechanisms

encompassing protocols for information system security and safeguards for personal data. It entails the imposition of stringent oversight mechanisms to monitor and regulate students' online conduct, thereby mitigating potential infractions and ensuring adherence to cybersecurity protocols.

Schools can use technological means such as network filtering software, security protection equipment, etc., to strengthen the security protection of school networks and prevent malicious attacks and illegal access. Schools should also incorporate cybersecurity education into the school curriculum system, provide training on information security and privacy protection, and help students better protect their personal information. By addressing these issues, graduate education can better respond to the challenges between social media and individual privacy while cultivating students' awareness of information security and privacy rights. Teach students how to use the Internet correctly, protect personal privacy, guard against online fraud, and improve their cybersecurity literacy.

In addition, teachers can enhance students' awareness and consciousness of cybersecurity through classroom education, campus propaganda, etc., making them aware of the potential harms of cyberattacks, personal information leakage, etc., and cultivating self-protection awareness. Students should also be encouraged to expand their sources of information in the classroom actively, avoid falling into information filter bubbles, strengthen multicultural education in ideological and political courses, guide students to actively seek and understand different opinions, and cultivate the ability to discern information sources and think from diverse perspectives. Teachers should emphasize the cultivation of graduate students' information literacy, including critical thinking and information identification abilities. Educators should focus on cultivating students' ability to discern information, guiding them to think about issues from multiple perspectives. Cultivate students' alertness to personalized recommendations so that they can better understand the sources of information and the



operation mechanism of algorithms.

#### 4.3. Strengthening Social Responsibility and the Cultivation of Comprehensive Qualities.

During the era characterized by the prominence of artificial intelligence (AI), the divergence of ideological perspectives and cognitive disparities present notable obstacles to graduate-level pedagogy. Effectively navigating these challenges necessitates the implementation of holistic strategies underscored by the promotion of social conscientiousness and multifaceted competencies. Consequently, contemporary educational paradigms ought to advocate for interdisciplinary scholarship, facilitating the acquisition of knowledge and proficiency spanning diverse disciplinary realms. Such an educational framework empowers students with the capacity to comprehensively comprehend and engage with issues across various domains, thereby ameliorating ideological discordance. It is noted that resources pertinent to ideological and political instruction frequently exhibit tendencies towards singular sourcing, possess relative insularity, and encounter limitations imposed by temporal and spatial constraints, thereby impeding optimal dissemination and exchange(Chen Xuewen, 2023)<sup>10</sup>.

Schools can provide an open platform for discussion, encouraging students to share diverse perspectives and thoughts. This measure can be facilitated through online forums, seminars, panel discussions, etc., aiding students in understanding and respecting different modes of thinking. Simultaneously, institutions should promote international exchange and cooperation, introducing ideas from diverse cultures and educational systems to broaden students' perspectives and foster a more globalized mindset.

## V. CONCLUSION

In the era of artificial intelligence, graduate ideological and political education has been more or less affected. Technological developments and information security issues influence their education. In the field of computer science, there are certain problems of information overload and information

filtering. At the same time, the emergence of social media and personal privacy issues is gradually becoming prominent, challenging ideological unity and causing differences in graduate students' thinking and issues related to group thinking.

The solution lies in strengthening the integration of technology and ethics, and students should enhance their awareness of cybersecurity. Schools can establish network security management systems, utilize technological means to ensure security, and incorporate cybersecurity education into the curriculum. The solution his creates a positive online space for the ideological and political education of students.

The development of education in the AI era is both a challenge and an opportunity. Artificial intelligence injects new momentum into the innovation and development of education in the new era. Li Yadong, Yan Guohua(2024) once pointed out that it will also empower ideological and political education in universities to achieve innovation in educational teaching models at the micro level, innovation in ideological and political education theories, and transformation of the ecological system of ideological and political education at the macro level<sup>11</sup>.

In conducting graduate ideological education, it is necessary to fully utilize artificial intelligence's advantages and avoid its pitfalls to better cultivate well-rounded individuals and graduate students with noble moral character.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work was supported by the Guangxi Education Science "14th five-year plan" special project (2023ZJY2159) and Innovation Project of Guangxi Graduate Education (JGY2022277)

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# The Teaching of Reading to English Majors in China (1950-2020): Historical Development, Current Predicament and Potential Solutions

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 27 Jul 2024; Received in revised form: 25 Aug 2024; Accepted: 01 Sep 2024; Available online: 07 Sep 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords</b>— <i>English major education in China, Intensive Reading course, Comprehensive English course.</i></p>	<p><i>This paper examines the historical development, current predicament, and potential solutions pertaining to the teaching of reading to English majors in China, with a specific focus on the course commonly known as "Intensive Reading" or "Comprehensive English". It investigates its evolution over a span of more than seventy years. It reveals that the educational objective for English majors has increasingly emphasized the development of language proficiency and humanistic literacy. The positioning of the course, however, has largely remained as a comprehensive language-skills training course, lacking clear objectives and effective operational norms. To better align with current educational goals, this paper proposes the course positioning as an enlightening and inspiring course that promotes language proficiency, enhances humanistic literacy, and establishes connections with disciplinary knowledge. It also sets the objectives as providing perspectives from literature, linguistics and related disciplines, and guidance on learning methods, aiming to guide students in exploring and studying texts to achieve a profound understanding in both language and ideas. Based on an analysis of the challenges associated with the traditional practice, content-based instruction and production-oriented approaches, this paper proposes potential solutions that involve integrating autonomous learning with in-class instruction and incorporating disciplinary knowledge into language learning.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

For historical reasons, the development of foreign language teaching and research in China didn't follow its intrinsic logic (Qu 2020). Foreign language

policy shifts were to a great extent politically motivated and lacked consistency (Chang 2006).

By the time the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, about 49 of the 205 universities in

mainland China had English departments (Fu 1986:64-65). The curriculum then was heavily influenced by Western education, particularly the British and American systems, with a strong focus on the study of English and American literature (Li et al. 1988:419). At that time, only a select few were able to gain admission to the English departments of these universities. These had already acquired a solid foundation in English in secondary school, and were able to adapt to the teaching methods used in Western universities (He 2003).

The early 1950s saw two major changes in the curriculum. First, given the low language proficiency of the freshmen (Hu 2008:18), priority was given to the development of students' practical language skills. Then the English proficiency of high school graduates could no longer compare to that of the past, as Russian had replaced English in many high schools. Even for those who studied English, their foundation was generally weak after only three years of study in high school. As a result, the priority for students entering English departments in universities was to learn and master the language (He 2003).

Second is the adoption and wide implementation of the subject-based approach to language teaching. Following the practice of the Soviet Union, language learning was divided into separate subject areas, such as grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Each area was treated as a distinct subject, with specific courses designed accordingly. The impact was far-reaching as the general education tradition in foreign language departments is gradually disappearing, giving way to a more practical, skills-oriented approach to foreign language education (Wang 2013).

In this context, intensive reading course, intended as a course for the comprehensive training of language skills, emerged in the English major curriculum and became the major "core course" with the most credits and the longest class hours. The course has been known by various names throughout different historical periods, with the most commonly used ones being Intensive Reading and Comprehensive English. This paper explores the issues related to the course under the following headings:

1. The history of the course
2. Current Predicament

### 3. Potential Solutions

## II. THE HISTORY OF THE COURSE

Understanding the course's development history is crucial for comprehending its influence, current challenges, and potential solutions. This section examines the course as outlined in different curricula over time. From 1950 onwards, the education of English majors in China has been guided by six national documents that outline the curriculum, teaching plans, and syllabi.

In Draft Curriculum for Higher Education Institutions: Departments of Arts, Law, Science, and Engineering (1950 Curriculum), "Basic Readings" is a mandatory foundational foreign language course. Grammar, dictation, and other related courses were to be integrated into these classes, or offered separately, depending on specific circumstances (See Li et al. 1988:421)

In Teaching Plan for English Language and Literature Majors (1961 Teaching plan), "English" course is offered as specialized course, with 1450 credit hours out of 167 weeks.

Preliminary Drafts of the Four-Year Curriculum for English Majors in the School of Foreign Languages, English Language and Literature Majors at Comprehensive Universities, and English Majors at Higher Teacher Education Institutions (1979 Curriculum) stipulates that "English Practice Course" is a compulsory course, as Intensive Reading for English departments in comprehensive universities, Essential English for schools of foreign languages, and Intensive Reading for Normal universities.

The subsequent syllabuses made clear the course objectives, principles and methods.

Syllabus for the Foundational Stage of English Major Programs in Higher Education Institutions (1986 Syllabus) stipulates Comprehensive English course as comprehensive skill training course. The objective is to impart the fundamental language knowledge (phonetics, grammar, vocabulary, discourse structure, language functions/expressions, etc.), train the basic language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), cultivate students' ability to communicate in English, and guide their learning

methods and logical thinking, in order to establish a solid foundation for entering higher grades. Emphasis is placed on training the ability to reuse language in both oral and written forms (See Li et al. 1988:468-470).

In Syllabus for English Major Programs in Higher Education Institutions (2000 Syllabus) (SCFLM 2000), the course is renamed as Essential English, a professional skills course. It aims to enhance students' overall English proficiency through language foundation training and textual analysis. Compared to the 1986 syllabus, it places greater emphasis on developing reading comprehension as well as oral and written expression skills.

Teaching Guidelines for Undergraduate Foreign Language and Literature Majors at Higher Education Institutions (2020 Guidelines) changes the name back into Comprehensive English as a professional course (SCFLM 2020). It aims to cultivate students' comprehensive ability to use English language knowledge and skills for communication. The guidelines build upon the 2000 syllabus by incorporating the development of critical thinking and reasoning skills through the application of learned knowledge and techniques. In the course content description, the guideline for the first time explicitly emphasizes the systematic emphasis on language knowledge and highlights the humanistic characteristics of literary and cultural knowledge.

The changes can be understood in two ways. First, as for the course itself, it began during a historical period when students had low levels of entry proficiency and were in urgent need of language skills training. The course has had multiple names: English, Intensive English, Essential English and Comprehensive English. Regardless of the name, the course's position remains unchanged, i.e. a course for the comprehensive training of language skills. Second, from the changes in the syllabus, it can be seen that the course has consistently prioritized teaching language knowledge and training language skills. The trend over the years has been to increase the requirements for not only language knowledge and skills, but also communication and thinking abilities. This is in line with the increasing entry-level of students, and at the same time highlights the English major's recent shift in focus from skills-based and composite talent development to returning to its

academic roots. This provides an important context for our discussion of the teaching of reading to English majors.

### III. CURRENT PREDICAMENT

Over the course of more than 70 years, the intensive reading course has focused heavily on imparting basic language knowledge and training basic language skills. This emphasis on the fundamentals of language has weakened the course's intellectual content, causing it to gradually fall into a predicament where it is unable to reflect fundamental differences from other skill-based courses, while also failing to demonstrate its humanistic and disciplinary nature. The difficulties faced by the course are common to English majors' skill-based courses, and exploring solutions to these difficulties may provide insights for reforming other courses.

For over 70 years, changes have continued in the understanding of language learning, social needs, and students' entry-level, but the reading course has not shown significant changes in its positioning, teaching content and methods. The lack of adaptation despite the changes has emerged as a significant factor contributing to the challenges faced by the course. In the early 1990s, there was even controversy surrounding whether or not to abolish the intensive reading course (Wen 2008; Cai 2010). Two major challenges are identified as follows.

First, the course's positioning and objectives lack clarity (Hou 1994; Lu and Ding 2002; Kang 2016; Chen and Cheng 2015) and connection to other courses (Wang 1987). Apart from the language teaching objectives, the course lacks specific instructional targets for professional knowledge content, making it difficult to help students construct a comprehensive knowledge structure (Chang and Jin 2012). Even for language teaching objectives, as the course aims to develop a broad range of language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating, without clear and specific target levels or criteria, the result is an overwhelming and impractical set of objectives that lacks feasibility and focus.

Second, due to the lack of clear course positioning and actionable objectives, the teachers often struggle



to define a clear sense of purpose and direction for the courses, which is a common issue across language training courses (He 2003), resulting in a haphazard approach to instruction. The teaching methods lack effective, systematic operational norms (Lu and Ding 2002; Kang 2016). Teachers may either follow the traditional pedagogical methods, or rely heavily on their disciplinary background and personal interests, resulting in a significant degree of arbitrariness and making it challenging to ensure effective teaching outcomes.

Wen (2018) specifies two kinds of the text-centered and input-based instruction in mainstream education in Mainland China: bottom-up (popular from the 1950s onwards to the mid-90s and still used in some remote areas in China) and top-down (increasingly dominant since the late 1990s). The former puts much emphasis on individual language items, and the latter on the meaning of a text.

The traditional method of teaching intensive reading in the 1950s and 1960s involved first discussing the content of the entire text and then explaining the vocabulary and grammar points, and the main shortcomings of this teaching method is being too focused on teaching, giving too little guidance, and laying too much emphasis on written language (see Shu 2005). The course primarily focuses on text-based content and employs an input-based approach, with a predominant teacher-centered methodology. Its main objective is to impart knowledge, particularly regarding the English language.

It is noteworthy that the influence of traditional intensive reading practices remains significant. Over the years, foreign language teaching methods have evolved, transitioning from grammar-translation to audio-lingual, communicative, task-based, and output-oriented approaches. However, the practice of breaking down texts into isolated vocabulary and grammar components still persists in some contexts. The actual teaching practice of the course has not moved beyond the confines of traditional intensive reading courses (Wen 2008), and the methods employed do not fundamentally differ from those used in general language schools (Qu and Chen 2018).

The reason for the significant influence of this approach may be attributed to its alignment with

behaviorist and structuralist perspectives in language teaching, as well as its resonance with ancient Chinese philology (Qu 2019:73) and the emulation of Soviet teaching practices.

Adopting the intensive reading method as a teaching method has many drawbacks. Short (1984) argues that breaking down texts into individual vocabulary and grammar elements deprives students of the opportunity to guess word meanings and understand meanings through context; Fu (1986:127) points out that immersion in intensive reading can constrain students' thinking and make them accustomed to achieving understanding through analysis and translation, which is not conducive to broadening their knowledge base and training their rapid reading skills. Overemphasizing language at the expense of other skills also prevents other abilities from being systematically developed and trained (Cai 2001; Qu 2016).

#### IV. POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

The proposed solutions are grounded in a redefined understanding of the traditional course positioning and comprehensive objectives by aligning them with contemporary educational demands.

##### 4.1 Course positioning and objectives

Identifying the educational goals and objectives is the first step in course design (Fink 2013:69). The positioning of a curriculum is not an isolated event, and understanding it requires a clear understanding of the nature of English as a discipline.

Looking back at the development of English education in China, we can see that it has essentially embodied and materialized the utilitarian nature of English (Dai and Zhang 2007), and foreign language majors have long been influenced by instrumentalism, which has blurred the concept of the discipline (Lan 2009).

Qu and Chen (2019) proposes that as English proficiency levels have generally improved in China, it is essential for the English major to keep up with the changing times by adjusting its disciplinary hierarchy and attributes to ensure that the training goals are in line with society's expectations for undergraduate education. Zha (2018) points out that as an undergraduate program, the English major has

both humanistic and professional components, with a focus on literature, culture, linguistics, and area studies. Jin (2008) concludes that the essence of foreign language education is humanistic education, emphasizing the value of mental training and emotional cultivation. Foreign language skills are the fundamental proficiency of this discipline, with the ultimate goal of comprehending the literature, history, society, politics, culture, and spirit conveyed by the foreign language.

In conclusion, English majors are expected to have a strong command of the language and a high level of humanistic literacy, which constitute the focal points and core of their education.

The concerns for the course reflect the dissatisfaction with the reading course being merely a language knowledge and skill training course, a course assembled from separate and disconnected components. There have been researches exploring the unique value of this course, which originated from intensive reading, beyond its function as a skills-based course. The course can be characterized by its focus on intensive reading, emphasizing a comprehensive and profound interpretation of discourse meaning from multiple perspectives (Lu 2002). It can go further as to build a strong foundation of knowledge and provide intellectual challenges for students (Han 2001).

Combining the disciplinary attributes and curriculum positioning, Han (2001) contends that English majors have the potential to break away from the long-standing instrumentalist approach and purely technical training methods, and become a true humanities discipline. In this picture, Intensive Reading can serve as a valuable course for transitioning from purely technical training to a more comprehensive understanding of the discipline, a foundational course particularly well-suited for enlightening and engaging students.

Comprehensive English course differs from specialized courses in linguistics and literature, which have their own disciplinary framework, providing systematic knowledge and research methods that fully reflect the nature of English as a discipline (He 2004). However, as a fundamental course in the early stages of English major education, Comprehensive English has its own unique mission.

While students' overall language proficiency has generally improved upon admission, English majors often lack a solid foundation in language, literature, and cultural knowledge (He 2004), and students in some institutions exhibit poor basic skills (Wen 2019). Additionally, if students fail to develop critical thinking habits and lack an understanding of language and cultural knowledge during their early years of study, they may struggle to fully engage in the advanced-level coursework (Han 2001). Therefore, there is a need for a bridging course like Comprehensive English to help students establish a strong language foundation, connect with the subject content, and bridge the gap with specialized courses.

Based on such understanding, the positioning of the comprehensive English course will no longer be limited to the traditional approach of comprehensive language skills training. Instead, it will serve as an enlightening and inspiring course that promotes language proficiency, enhances humanistic literacy, and establishes connections with disciplinary knowledge. The clarification of the disciplinary nature and positioning of the English major course is instrumental in setting effective teaching objectives.

The 2020 Guidelines provide the following description of the course objectives: This course aims to cultivate students' ability to use English language knowledge and skills for communication. Through course study, students should be able to accurately distinguish and use standard English pronunciation and intonation, adapt to major English variations; identify various word classes and their grammatical forms, proficiently grasp common word formation processes, as well as the usage of basic sentence patterns and syntactic structures; recognize different genres and styles, skillfully employ various cohesive devices, common rhetorical techniques, writing skills in different genres, as well as techniques for transforming, paraphrasing, and translating complex and difficult sentences; apply acquired knowledge and skills for critical thinking, engage in discussions on practical issues or hot topics in real-life contexts, express opinions, and develop reasoning abilities (SCFLM 2020: 15).

It is evident that the core objectives encompass the learning of language knowledge and the training of language skills, including phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse. The language skills training

covers listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translation. To a large extent, the content of the course still overlaps with other language skills courses at a similar level, lacking emphasis, and thus making it challenging to achieve significant depth in any particular aspect.

Based on the understanding of the course's positioning as mentioned above, the Comprehensive English course is not merely about delivering content and practicing language for the sake of language itself. Instead, it adopts a content-based approach. Carefully selected texts are chosen, with a focus not on traditional informational or skill-based knowledge, but rather on structural knowledge and intellectual inquiry. The course provides perspectives from literature, linguistics, and related disciplines, as well as guidance on learning methods, aiming to guide students in exploring and thoroughly studying texts to achieve a profound understanding in both language and ideas.

At the linguistic level, the course emphasizes recognizing the correlation between language forms and meanings, as well as comprehending "the complexity of language expression" (Qu 2016), leading to the development of systematic knowledge. At the conceptual level, it involves delving deeply into the thoughts and cultural implications embedded within the works, cultivating students' intellectual skills and habits of thought.

#### 4.2 Teaching Processes

The instructional challenges faced by the Comprehensive English course, to a large extent, stem from the continued adoption of the traditional "intensive reading" approach as a fixed and unchanged teaching method, applied indiscriminately in classroom instruction.

In recent years, there has been a systematic exploration of teaching methods for skills courses. Chang and Xia (2011)'s experiment indicates that Content-based instruction brings better outcome than Skill-oriented instruction in developing language knowledge, language skills and disciplinary knowledge, achieving the general objectives of the national curriculum more effectively than the latter. Wen (2020) advocates for the promotion of the production-oriented approach, which emphasizes the integration of learning and application. Tang (2020)

demonstrates the application of this approach in the design of intensive reading courses. In her case study, Yi (2020) sets goals for three levels of cognition, language, and discipline knowledge, finding that using meaning as a guide and analyzing text logic can deepen students' understanding of the text. Furthermore, explaining complex sentence structures contributes to language learning, and incorporating theoretical perspectives from different disciplines promotes the development of critical thinking.

In fact, the emphasis on input over output is not limited to intensive reading courses. Whether in Comprehensive English class or literature and linguistics classes, if teachers view their primary task as imparting knowledge, there is a high likelihood of prioritizing input, regardless of whether it is tool-based language knowledge or humanities-based literary knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to update their teaching philosophy. We must acknowledge that the era of solely imparting knowledge has passed. In many fields, the pace of knowledge updating surpasses the pace of acquisition. In this context, cultivating students' awareness and ability for autonomous learning becomes crucial. Students should be regarded as the active agents of learning, and effective teaching should facilitate their engagement in active learning, knowledge processing, and reorganization.

Content-based instruction and production-oriented approach disrupted the traditional focus on language knowledge input and rote language skills training. However, in the rush to escape the shortcomings of traditional teaching methods, there is often a tendency to swing to the other extreme.

In traditional intensive reading classrooms, which are teacher-centered, there is an excessive emphasis on textual explanation and language training. In contrast, contemporary classrooms are more student-centered and richer in content, but the text itself is often marginalized. It is viewed merely as a topic to initiate discussion, while the training of critical thinking skills is conducted using supplementary resources related to the topic of the text (Qu 2016:6). There is a lack of in-depth interpretation and appreciation of the text within the curriculum.

He (2004) points out that language teaching provides favorable conditions for cultivating students' abilities and qualities. Language serves as a vehicle for conveying thoughts, and the selected texts used as teaching materials not only provide students with means of expressing language, but more importantly, they offer intellectual content, convey information, stimulate students' thoughts, cultivate their thinking abilities, and subtly influence their personal growth and development. However, the significance of foreign language teaching in this regard has not been fully recognized. Even after twenty years, the value of reading the selected texts is still underestimated.

Designing diverse activities based on themes facilitates the stimulation of students' interest in learning. However, an excessive reliance on divergent activities may oversimplify complex texts and themes, akin to being enthusiastic about film and television adaptations while neglecting the original works, resulting in a lack of depth.

Additionally, activities designed for the purpose of output often face another challenge. Taking the example of designing communicative scenarios related to Chinese cuisine in the production-oriented approach (Wen 2020:107-108). The teacher proposes three scenarios in which students are required to explain how to make dumplings to foreign friends, with the intention of encouraging their desire for expression. The chosen topic may motivate students to search for appropriate expressions, but it may provide limited cognitive challenges in terms of knowledge and ideas, which may not effectively inspire students' motivation for output. Therefore, it is crucial that the learning content and output tasks go beyond language proficiency and also address students' cognitive needs in terms of knowledge and ideas.

Furthermore, since such activities often unfold spontaneously in the classroom, with group discussions and presentations occupying a considerable amount of class time, it becomes challenging for teachers to provide targeted feedback and suggestions within the limited time available.

To bridge classroom learning with autonomous learning, we can integrate certain traditional classroom activities into students' autonomous learning processes. The time in class is then used for

highlighting key aspects. Given that conventional teaching content such as vocabulary, grammar, and background information is readily accessible to students through reference books and textbook-based platforms, the focus for teachers in class is on addressing the challenges students cannot overcome through autonomous learning.

The course is divided into three stages. Before class, students embark on a self-directed learning journey that begins with watching instructional videos on effective learning strategies. This prepares them for the deeper engagement required in the subsequent stages. They then independently read the assigned article, marking noteworthy passages and identifying challenging sections. To aid their understanding and analysis, students use various resources such as dictionaries, teaching materials, courseware, and linguistic corpora to explore potential solutions. Furthermore, they link their personal reading experiences by compiling a list of works that resonate with the text, complete with brief introductions, which they share on a collaborative platform.

This preparation sets the stage for the peer evaluation and teacher feedback phase, conducted on the same platform. Here, students and the teacher exchange feedback and comments covering perspectives, content, structure, grammar, vocabulary, and other aspects of the submissions. This collaborative review enhances the learning process by incorporating diverse viewpoints.

In the autonomous learning stage, students engage in guided reading, interpreting the text based on their own understanding, which primes them for the in-depth class discussions that follow. During these discussions, they analyze the text's overall meaning, structure, and language usage, focusing on identifying underlying principles. This deep understanding serves as a foundation for further exploration of related works in both the original and target languages, applying literary, translation, and other analytical approaches.

Following the preparatory work, in-class activities are led by the teacher, encouraging students to think deeply about the text, and guiding them to consider meanings that go beyond the surface. Using instruction, questioning, and discussion, students are led through several critical analysis exercises.



Students probe into the text by identifying the central theme and primary concepts, aiming to grasp the core messages. They also recognize the organizational structure or pattern of the text, which aids in understanding how the argument or narrative is constructed. Additionally, they analyze and appreciate the language usage, examining the selection of words, exploring nuances of meaning from a semantic perspective, and considering the author's intended effect from a pragmatic perspective. This comprehensive analysis provides a robust foundation for students to explore related works that share themes across both languages, utilizing approaches from literary analysis to translation studies.

A jigsaw-like approach is employed for the teaching of disciplinary knowledge. Specific aspects of disciplines such as literature, linguistics, and translation are highlighted based on the language features of the text. Through consecutive learning, students gradually develop a comprehensive understanding. For instance, when examining shades of meaning, the focus is on semantic relations, and students learn to explore semantic, distributional, collocational, dialectal, and stylistic differences, which fall within the realm of lexicology. This inquiry prepares students for future studies in theoretical courses for English majors. Students not only acquire information through reading, but also learn to assemble and organize knowledge, seeking explanations for linguistic phenomena, and exploring the profound thoughts and cultural aspects embedded in language.

The entire process integrates autonomous learning with in-class instruction, as well as fosters in-depth thinking alongside the acquisition of language, culture, and related aspects.

## V. CONCLUSION

The practice of intensive reading or comprehensive English courses originated from a historical period when students had lower language proficiency and were in urgent need of language skills training. Over the course of 70 years, there have been continuous changes in students' language proficiency upon admission, and the understanding of language instrumentality and humanity, as well as the

objectives and disciplinary attributes of English majors. In today's context, it is crucial to reconsider the course positioning, objectives, and teaching processes.

As for course positioning, it is an enlightening and inspiring course that promotes language proficiency, enhances humanistic literacy, and establishes connections with disciplinary knowledge. It adopts a content-based approach by selecting meaningful texts that provide perspectives from literature, linguistics, and related disciplines, while also offering guidance on effective learning methods. The primary objective is to foster a profound comprehension of both language and ideas through the exploration and meticulous analysis of texts.

Based on the aforementioned understanding, the teaching processes integrate autonomous learning with in-class instruction, as well as foster in-depth thinking alongside the acquisition of language, culture, and related aspects.

The challenges encountered by reading course reflect broader issues within skills-based courses for English majors. Therefore, the exploration and implementation of effective solutions for this course not only have the potential to provide valuable insights for the reform of other related courses.

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# Climate Fiction: Literary Ripples in the Climate Crisis

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 31 Jul 2024; Received in revised form: 28 Aug 2024; Accepted: 04 Sep 2024; Available online: 11 Sep 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords—</b> <i>Climate Fiction, Anthropocene, Eco-cosmopolitan Community.</i></p>	<p><i>Since the Anthropocene, there has been a significant increase in human-caused climate crises such as severe weather events, natural disasters and climate change around the globe. Climate fiction, which conveys the unique environmental experience of the Anthropocene, comes into being in this context. Research and criticism of climate fiction also followed. The representative works of contemporary climate fiction and their key critical concepts not only outline a broad spectrum of cultural analysis, but also depict a lasting mode of world existence and a broad prospect of the Anthropocene, providing a new perspective for the construction of eco-cosmopolitanism community. This paper tries to give an overview of the background, development, criticism and future path of climate fiction in order to alert people to the issue of climate change, construct a new research framework of world literature and offer a new theoretical perspective for the writing and dissemination of world literature history.</i></p>

## I. BACKGROUND OF CLIMATE FICTION: CLIMATE CRISIS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

On March 19, 2024, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) released *State of the Global Climate 2023*. The report noted that records for greenhouse gas levels, surface temperatures, ocean heating and acidification, sea level rise, and retreat of Antarctic marine ice caps and glaciers have again been broken. According to the report, the misery and chaos caused by heat waves, floods, droughts, wildfires and tropical cyclones have thrown millions of people's daily lives into disarray and caused billions of dollars in economic losses. As the American Economist Andrew T. Guzman has stated in his book *Overheated: The Human Cost of Climate Change* (2013), climate change is not only an environmental issue, but also an economic one. He analyzed the costs of climate change from an

economic perspective through a wealth of data and examples. In detail, global warming and extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts, can affect agricultural production and damage infrastructure. It will lead to food shortages and famine, affect global supply chains, and ultimately result in commodity price volatility and global economic instability.

Ironically, however, it was the pursuit of so-called economic development that caused such a severe climate crisis hundreds of years ago. It all started with the Industrial Revolution, which changed the fate of mankind. The Industrial Revolution was a profound change in human history that dramatically increased productivity, promoted economic development, changed social structures and influenced cultural patterns. However, the Industrial Revolution brought a series of negative consequences to the environment. At that time, in

order to meet the energy needs of mechanized production and large-scale factories, large quantities of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas were mined and burned. Such behavior increased the concentration of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane in the air, resulting in the continuous rise of global temperatures. Global warming, in turn, triggered problems such as rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and ozone depletion, posing a serious threat to humans and other living things. Global climate change meant not only global warming, but also more frequent, longer lasting and more harmful extreme weather events such as droughts, heat waves, hurricanes and floods.

In other words, since the Industrial Revolution, human activity has been a major influence in altering the climate, geological and ecological composition of the planet. In 2000, Nobel Prize-winning chemist Paul Crutzen proposed for the first time the term “Anthropocene” to refer to this new geographic epoch of anthropogenic-driven changes in the Earth’s operating system. And in 2002, Crutzen and American marine biologist Eugene Stoermer jointly published an article “Geology of Mankind” in *Nature*, which clearly pointed out that the Earth has ended the 11,700 years of Holocene and entered the Anthropocene.

Climate change is the most compelling evidence of the widespread and profound impacts of human activity and the most important manifestation of the Anthropocene. But some climate changes are obvious, such as air pollution in London, the Chernobyl nuclear accident in the Soviet Union and the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident in Japan. Others are less easily visualized, such as the cyclical El Niño and La Niña phenomena, the hole in the ozone layer, global warming, and rising sea levels. Such phenomena often cover vast geographic regions, extending beyond the borders of multiple nations, and persist for extended periods of time, surpassing the lifetimes of multiple generations. These occurrences, which are greater in both time and space than most people imagine, are discernible only by the specific, localized effects they induce.

This phenomenon, whose spatial and temporal scale is beyond general imagination, is called “hyperobject” which was coined by Timothy Morton, an American ecological philosopher. Its semantic

scope refers not only to object, but also to events and phenomena. From the definition and characterization given by Morton, the phenomenon of climate change is a typical hyperobject. The spatial and temporal scale of climate change far exceeds that of general events, and human beings can intuitively feel local, specific, and transient weather changes, but it is difficult to feel global, overall, and long-term climate change. Climate change is also fully consistent with the five characteristics of hyperobject: exceeds the general time and space (temporal undulation), is not limited to a certain region (nonlocality), profoundly affects the whole earth and all kinds of organisms (viscosity), be presented through other objects and phenomena (interobjectivity) and can only be understood at a higher logical level (phasing).

However, the emergence of such a complex and unpredictable “hyperobject” in the Anthropocene does not seem to have aroused a sense of crisis. The slow process of climate change and seemingly localized ecological disasters on the time and space scales to which humans are accustomed tend to produce a sense of indifference and numbness, resulting in many misunderstandings, suspicions, and even denials about climate change. For example, climate change skepticism and climate change denial have always existed in American society; the climate change countermovement initiated by right-wing think tanks in the United States has influenced many American people; the Trump administration even announced the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement on the grounds of protecting American jobs, seriously undermining global efforts to combat climate change.

Against this backdrop, it is the responsibility of the intellectual community as a whole to demonstrate the causes and dangers of climate change and to encourage practical action to address it. However, past experience has shown that science, based on facts and logical rigor, has its shortcomings in demonstrating climate change. First, many people still lack the scientific literacy to understand climate change. For example, science generally makes only trend-based climate predictions, but this rigor is seen as a loophole by many skeptics who believe that science cannot objectively prove that climate change exists. Second, the statistics, equations, graphs, and other means of presentation that science is



accustomed to using are often neutral, even pedantic, and do little to convey the powerful sensory impact of visualizing the profound effects of climate change that would inspire change in action. For example, science can predict the rate of sea level rise, but it is difficult for people to visualize the devastating effects of sea level rise that will inundate coastal cities and cause the breaking up of families.

Therefore, the arts and literature provide a valuable supplement to the study of climate change. Professor Dipesh Chakrabarty of the University of Chicago notes that individuals are limited in their experiences and cannot fully grasp the scope of "survival as a species." However, works of literature and art can assist in achieving this comprehension and provide objective information about the realities of climate change. They communicate to a general audience the facts and intricacies of this pressing issue, allowing them to fully perceive the shared crisis that humanity faces as inhabitants of this planet. Chakrabarty posits that creativity and resilience play vital roles in providing hope during the current period. Climate change, throughout world history, has served as a platform for expressing a range of emotions, encompassing both hope and despair.

Therefore, in the face of this unprecedented scale of hyperobject, more and more writers have resorted to writing, in order to reproduce and reflect on the cognitive rupture, ethical anxiety and aesthetic challenges brought by the Anthropocene. Against this backdrop, a new genre: climate fiction (climate change fiction) or cli-fi, has born. As "the most complete climate imagination of the Anthropocene," the rise of climate fiction is considered the most recent attempt to represent global climate change in eco-literature. Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick, an Australian environmental scientist, argues that creating, reading and researching climate fiction "may encourage readers to change their daily behavior" and "we still have time to reverse catastrophic climate change... we still have the ability, collectively and individually, to make sure we limit warming. It's up to us." Looking at the Western literary scene today, climate fiction has become a major creative endeavor for many writers.

## II. DEVELOPMENT OF CLIMATE FICTION: LITERARY REPRESENTATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUE

### 2.1 Definition of Climate Fiction

Taken literally, it seems that any work of fiction that features climate change can be considered climate fiction. In the long literary genealogy of humankind, flood narratives, extreme cold narratives, and other reproductions of extreme climate change abound. Strictly speaking, however, as the American scholar Matthew Schneider-Meyerson (2017) defines it in his essay *Climate Change Fiction*, "only those texts that are consciously and explicitly related to anthropogenic climate change can be called climate change fiction". Much of pre-21st century science fiction that included climate change themes or elements would only qualify as "proto-cli-fi" as per Schneider-Meyer.

The key difference between the former and the latter is "Anthropogenic". The development of climate science not only draws a line between the truth and falsehood of the concept of the Anthropocene, but also clearly attributes the causes of climate change to humans themselves. As a literary representation of the climate change issue, the "climate" in climate fiction is not only a theme and a backdrop for the unfolding of the fiction, but it also reshapes the basic narrative operation: it significantly alters the relationship between character, plot, and setting, undermining the passivity of the locale and allowing it to actively participate in the transformation of the world-system. Climate fiction, which "no longer focuses on human relationships but increasingly assumes the connection between human beings and everything else", has arguably altered the assumptions of human relationships to place, conceived the greater possibilities for social and political organization, and redefined the globalized, mechanized, and consumer economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### 2.2 Three Development Stages of Climate Fiction

As a literary representation of the issue of climate change, the development of climate fiction is closely related to the change in social attitude towards the issue of climate change. Accordingly, the development history of climate fiction can be roughly divided into three stages.



The first stage was the 1960s-1980s. British science fiction writer J. G. Ballard was a pioneer in global warming climate change fiction. His *A Wind from Nowhere* (1961), *The Drowned World* (1962), and *The Burning World* (1964) all dealt with climate change, the last of which can be considered the first fiction to feature anthropogenic climate change. So far, Western climate fiction has begun, but its successors were few and far between. In the following two decades, only *Heat* (1977) by the American writer Arthur Herzog, *The Road to Corlay* (1978) by the British writer Richard Cowper, and *The Sea and Summer* (1987) by the Australian writer George Turner were published. All of them can be regarded as the forerunners of contemporary climate fiction. The time fault in the first stage of climate fiction is constrained by climate change skepticism on one hand, and by the entanglement of interest groups such as political conservatives and the religious right on the other.

The second stage, from the 1990s to the beginning of the 21st century, saw the first explosion of climate fiction with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. Germany's first climate fiction *Der Planet Schlägt Zurück* (1993) was published. The American writers have also published works such as *Gaia Weeps* (1998), *The Doomsday Report* (1998), and *Greenhouse Summer* (1999) were published. During this period, climate change began to increasingly "enter the cultural imagination" and began to exhibit more solid scientific thinking on climate change. As Schneider-Meyerson noted, "While storytellers have been imagining the outcomes of climate change for millennia, fictional presentations based on scientific evidence and rationale have only begun to proliferate since the 1990s." A group of writers, represented by Octavia Butler, borrowed some of the predictions from climate science research and coupled them with science fiction-style plotting to make more realistic predictions about the world and explore humanity's response to dramatic climate change. The most typical works were Butler's *Parable of the Sower* (1993) and its sequel, *Parable of the Talents* (1998). It was at this stage that climate fiction developed into a truly conscious new genre, driven by both climate science and political activism.

The third stage was from the beginning of the 21st century to the present. During this period, the increasingly serious climate crisis formed the ground for the rise of climate fiction. The topic of climate change has become the focus of the academic world in the current era, which frequently appeared in the United Nations issues, media discourse and the public's personal experience of life. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released a report in 2001, which for the first time clarified the main responsibility for global climate change caused by human activities. The genre of climate fiction of this period was prevalent in North America. Among them, *A Friend of the Earth* (2000) by T. C. Boyle, *Flight Behavior* (2012) by Barbara Kingsolver, *The Water Knife* (2015) by Paolo Bacigalupi, *New York 2140* (2017) by Kim Stanley Robinson and *Oryx and Crake* (2003), *The Year of the Flood* (2009), and *Maddaddam* (2013) by Canadian author Margaret Atwood, were all important representatives. And then, the rise of Europe, which only began to catch up in 2005, opened the door to the cross-regional, cross-cultural impact of climate fiction. As the mainstay of this force, Britain contributed many highly regarded works such as the seminal work of feminist climate fiction *The Carhullan Army* (2007), *Solar* (2010) and so on.

Since the 21<sup>st</sup> century, these climate fiction writers have begun to explore the intricate constraints between the fields of nature, culture, economy and science, and to present the connection between climate change and human society from a psychological and social perspective. They link climate change to the discourses of the capitalist system, neoliberal ideology, and consumerist lifestyles, and pay more attention to the connection between the climate crisis and the real context of contemporary society. Climate change is no longer seen merely as a meteorological or ecological crisis, but more as a phenomenon that permeates our lives and beyond. It is also no longer portrayed merely as a backdrop to possible worlds, but is foregrounded as a "social, cultural, and political phenomenon" at the heart of the fiction. Today, the burgeoning climate fiction in turn serves as a major cultural force that inspires a growing sense of urgency and engagement among governments and the public, brings out realistic alternatives to fossil fuels, leads

the interweaving of environmental movements around the world and contributes to the transformation of the nature-culture dichotomy.

### III. CRITICISM OF CLIMATE FICTION: UPDATED ITERATION OF ECOCRITICISM PARADIGM

Although the rise of climate fiction in the West is the latest trend in the development of ecological literature, there is a certain lag in the corresponding literary criticism of climate fiction. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, traditional ecocriticism does not involve “genre study”. While climate fiction is often regarded as “genre fiction”, which has led many ecocritical scholars not to pay enough attention to its vigorous development in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Secondly, a considerable number of climate fiction writers have long been engaged in science fiction or fantasy writing, such as Kim Stanley Robinson, Paolo Bacigalupi, and Ursula K. LeGuin, etc., which are often considered “bestsellers” writers rather than “serious” writers. Traditional ecocriticism emphasizes “serious” works over “bestsellers”. It was not until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century that climate fiction formally entered the world of literary criticism, triggering heated discussions among eco-critics. Many critics who advocate that climate fiction should be regarded as a new literary genre have begun to devote themselves to searching for its roots and compiling its chronology.

Journals such as Matthew Schneider-Meyerson’s *Climate Change Fiction* (2017), Adam Trexler and Adeline Johns-Putra’s *Climate Change in Literature and Literary Criticism* (2011) and Adeline Johns-Putra’s *Climate Change in Literature and Literary Studies: from Cli-fi, Climate Change Theater and Ecopoetry to Ecocriticism and Climate Change Criticism* (2016), and academic works like Adam Trexler’s *Anthropocene Fictions: The Novel in a Time of Climate Change* (2015), Antonia Mehnert’s *Climate Change Fictions: Representations of Global Warming in American Literature* (2016) and Astrid Bracke’s *Climate Crisis and the 21st- Century British Novel* (2018) not only provide a more comprehensive overview of the development of climate fiction, but also put forward many literary theories which suitable for the criticism of climate fiction based on the analysis of the

representative works. How climate change has become an important theme in literature and spawned new literary genres and critical theories is the main content of their research.

By studying the above journals and academic works, three main types of literary criticism theories of climate fiction are summarized, namely interdisciplinary literary criticism, Anthropocene literary criticism and climate change criticism. Among them, the Anthropocene literary criticism and climate change criticism have developed from traditional ecocriticism, which reflects the renewal and iteration of the ecocriticism paradigm.

#### 3.1 Interdisciplinary Literary Criticism

Climate change is a complex global issue that requires the joint attention and exploration of multiple disciplines, including literature, environmental science, and sociology. As the first scholarly monograph focusing on the study of climate change narratives in the United States, Antonia Mehnert’s *Climate Change Fictions: Representations of Global Warming in American Literature* (2016) selects long fiction, short stories, short films, and other texts and analyzes them from five interdisciplinary perspectives, providing many new ideas for the criticism theories construction of climate fiction, which is worth highlighting here.

Firstly, Mehnert analyzes the evolution of the consciousness of “space” in climate fiction. He takes Steven Amsterdam’s *Things We Didn’t See Coming* (2009) and Barbara Kingsolver’s *Flight Behavior* (2012) as his main subjects, and analyzes how those works present the global changes brought by climate change in the light of globalization theory and Ursula K. Heise’s Eco-cosmopolitanism. He points out that both are intended to emphasize the idea of “All things are connected” and the threat of global “deterritorialization” posed by climate change. While Amsterdam focuses on “uprootedness”, Kingsolver focuses more on “connectedness”.

Secondly, Mehnert examines the flux of the consciousness of “time” in climate fiction. By combining Fredric Jameson’s theory of archaeologies of the future, Mehnert analyzes the “timescapes” presented in T.C. Boyle’s *A Friend of the Earth* (2000) and Jean McNeil’s *The Ice Lovers* (2009). He believes that the author’s emphasis on the persistence of the

climate crisis is meant to criticize the short-sighted thinking of mankind and the view of time that has long dominated Western society, to warn people to take the “present” as the connection point of the “past” and the “future”, and to advocate people to examine the irreversible damage of human behavior to their own environment with the vision of change and development.

Thirdly, Mehnert explores how climate fiction presents the uncertainty, risk, and security of the climate crisis. He takes Nathaniel Rich’s *Odds Against Tomorrow* (2013) as his main object of study, critiquing the commodification of “risk” in American society and revealing the hidden crises in the mechanisms of power and structures of production. Mehnert points out that the uncertainty of the climate crisis does not justify the skepticism or denial of the climate crisis, let alone ignoring the existence of the climate crisis.

Fourthly, Mehnert discusses how climate fiction warns humanity to build a sustainable environment. Based on a close reading of Kim Stanley Robinson’s “*Science in the Capital*” trilogy, Mehnert points out that Robinson views climate change as a “hybrid entity”, thereby demonstrating the complex connections between nature and culture. He argues that the “*Science in the Capital*” trilogy is a product of “climate culture”, as Robinson deeply depicts the complex and fluid working mechanism of the “climate culture” system.

Fifthly, Mehnert discusses the social responsibility consciousness of climate fiction from the ethical dimension. Climate fiction pays much attention to the daily lives of vulnerable groups in the United States, such as illegal immigrants, the homeless, and low-income people, before and during the climate crisis. And thus, climate fiction has become an important medium for balancing the ethnic gap, promoting environmental justice, counteracting moral slippage, and rebuilding a better home in the United States. In analyzing the works of Octavia Butler and Paolo Bacigalupi in this chapter, Mehnert focuses on the unequal distribution of resources in saving the Earth’s environment as presented in the works. Due to differences in economic, racial, and social status, disadvantaged groups appear to be more powerless in the climate crisis. Mehnert pays special attention to the “most

vulnerable” people who may be overlooked in public discourse, unearthing the indispensable role of climate fiction in the search for environmental justice in his analysis.

### 3.2 Anthropocene Literary Criticism

In addition to interdisciplinary literary criticism, the ecocriticism dimension of climate fiction is self-evident. Ecocriticism is closely related to climate change in the natural environment. While Climate fiction has arisen because of global climate change, depicting the disasters brought about by climate change, analyzing the causes of climate change, and exploring the way out for human beings after climate change. However, in the context of the Anthropocene, the traditional ecocriticism targeting the natural environment can no longer satisfy the current research on climate fiction. Many eco-critics have begun to try to examine climate fiction within the concept of Anthropocene. They use Anthropocene literary criticism to break away from disaster narratives, to criticize human production and lifestyles, such as fossil energy dependence and consumerism, and to reflect on human mindsets and cultures, as well as the political and ecological injustices involved in them.

In his book *Ecocriticism on the Edge: The Anthropocene as a Threshold Concept* (2015), foreign scholar Timothy Clark, first introduced the geological concept of the Anthropocene into the field of literary criticism. He points out that although ecocriticism has received widespread attention and research, it remains marginalized in certain mainstream academic fields. This marginalization brings both challenges and opportunities, prompting ecocriticism to constantly seek innovation and development. In the new context of the Anthropocene, the relationship between human beings and nature has changed profoundly. The traditional mode of ecocriticism may become inadequate or even potentially destructive, so we need to pay more attention to the long-term impact of human activities on the natural environment and seek a path of sustainable development. He believes that “critical interpretation in the context of the Anthropocene implies an irreversible severance of past and existing consciousness and understanding”. Thus, he puts forward the “threshold concept”, pointing out that we need to re-examine and re-

evaluate the methods and purposes of literary criticism in order to adapt to this new context. He calls for a "Clark X" which means the theoretical and practical transformation of ecocriticism in the 21st century. In detail, Clark X is to face up to the issue of climate change and incorporate the essential feature of the Anthropocene, that is, the exacerbation of climate change as a result of human behavior, into literary criticism.

Taking short stories as the main object of study, he re-examines the ecological meaning of literary texts from the perspective of the Anthropocene, analyzes the negative impacts of environmental crises such as climate change on the human psyche, breaks through the ethnic/national literary boundaries and advocates for a global perspective on the representation of climate in literary works. On one hand, the concept of the Anthropocene has changed people's perceptions of environmental issues, "providing a completely new framework for thinking and writing about environmental issues." On the other hand, it puts forward new requirements for the criticism and interpretation of environmental writing, "requiring the formulation of new concepts and the development of new approaches in the humanities".

Clark even extends the influence of the Anthropocene from the field of literature to the entire field of humanities and social sciences. "The concept of the Anthropocene has turned the humanities and social sciences upside down, shaking up paradigms and categories. It is now the earth system sciences, not historians, that name the era in which we live. Scholars in the humanities need to reexamine human behavior in the context of thousands of years of geological-level perspective."

Besides, Adam Trexler's *Anthropocene Fictions: The Novel in a Time of Climate Change* (2015) and Timothy Morton's *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (2013) also provide appropriate theoretical underpinnings for the theoretical construction of Anthropocene literary criticism.

Domestic scholar Prof. Jiang Lifu is the scholar who connects the concept of the Anthropocene with literary theory the most in China, and is also an important guide in introducing Anthropocene

literary criticism into Chinese literary criticism. He (2018) believes that Anthropocene literature is a product of the Anthropocene era and a literary reproduction of the Anthropocene. As a representative of Anthropocene literature, Scholars need to closely scrutinize climate fiction and try to realize the construction of critical discourse.

We can start with the following aspects. Firstly, we should adopt a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary research methodology based on the emerging field of environmental humanities, focusing on the question of the identity and status of human beings on Earth. To interpret and respond to the writing of the Anthropocene, it is necessary to combine the environment with philosophy, history and other disciplines and to explore the new environmental humanities. Secondly, we should adopt a historicist approach to explore the roots and processes of the Anthropocene. The Anthropocene is not only a geological concept, but also reveals the unique human history of the past two and a half centuries, marking a turning point in human and Earth history. The Anthropocene from the perspective of social sciences takes human beings, time and history as the focus of research, aiming at a profound historical reflection. Thirdly, we should break through the traditional "local" thinking in ecological criticism, and adopt the research method of global perspective to explore the subjective responsibility of human beings and the construction of a global community with a shared future for mankind amidst the historical turbulence of globalization and "reverse globalization". Climate change is a global problem, and its solution must depend on global action, which requires the establishment of a global consciousness and the construction of a global low-carbon community.

### 3.3 Climate Change Criticism

In addition to Anthropocene literary criticism, climate change criticism is also an emerging criticism of climate fiction developed from ecocriticism. Foreign scholar Adeline Johns-Putra's *Climate Change in Literature and Literary Studies: from Cli-fi, Climate Change Theater and Ecopoetry to Ecocriticism and Climate Change Criticism* (2016) and domestic scholar Yuan Yuan's *Critical Climate Change: A Theoretical Perspective for the Construction of World Literary History*



(2022) provide insights into climate change criticism, also be known as critical climate change.

According to Adeline Johns-Putra, climate change criticism or critical climate change—a term introduced by Yates McKee—has mainly been formulated in essays in a number of special issues of literary theory journals over the past 5 years, such as the Oxford Literary Review.

Generally speaking, climate change criticism treats climate change in two ways. Firstly, it scrutinizes climate change as a cultural phenomenon using the conventional approaches of literary theory. These approaches, drawn from the broader realm of late 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries' continental philosophy, include deconstruction (inspired by Derrida), analyses of power and discourse (in the style of Foucault), or actor-network-theory (based on the work of Latour). All such theories tend to emphasize the contingent, shifting, and slippery quality of concepts often taken for granted as factual or real: climate change is one such concept. However, theoretical treatments of climate change should not be confused with the kind of cultural relativism that would claim that anthropogenic climate change does not exist; rather, they usually argue that how climate change is understood is a result of a host of interlinked psychological, sociocultural, political, and linguistic factors.

Secondly, climate change criticism sometimes suggests that the contingency and slipperiness that many literary theorists have long argued are now part of a profound but unrecognized condition of our existence and an unavoidable and undeniable part of our day-to-day lives, thanks to climate change. That is, climate change has turned what till now were simply theoretical or existentialist problems into lived experience. Thus, instead of scrutinizing climate change, some literary theorists use climate change, along with the insights of literary theory, to scrutinize contemporary life, culture, and thought.

Much of the work of prominent exponents of climate change criticism falls into the second category. This is the case with many of the critiques inspired by deconstruction, for example. Deconstruction as a literary approach adopts the insights of Derrida to reveal hidden and often contradictory meanings within texts. Broadly

speaking, deconstruction in critical climate change is the recognition that climate change is itself a deconstructive force because it shows the many inconsistencies in our cultural concepts. Clark has been one of the foremost advocates of such a position, suggesting, for example, that climate change has helped to deconstruct some of the anthropocentric assumptions at the heart of ecocriticism, such as those to do with nature and beauty. Other important theorists of climate change as cultural deconstruction are Cohen, who compares the philosophical challenge of climate change to an existentialist threat; the much-respected Derridean scholar Miller, who uses the concept of climate change to deconstruct globalization; and Colebrook, who collaborated with Cohen and Miller on a deconstructive analysis of climate change.

While domestic scholar Yuan Yuan believes that there has been a blossoming of research on literary representations of climate change in Western scholarship since the beginning of the new millennium. Climate change criticism analyzes the narrative innovations and thematic strategies of climate fiction and climate poetry in four aspects, namely, philosophy, history, affect, and politics. It includes six major theoretical routes: climate deconstructionism, climate historicism, holistic climate criticism, climate cognition and affect criticism, climate justice criticism, and empirical climate criticism. This criticism generally situates humans and nonhumans in a shared process of planetary development. Its major purpose is to observe the interrelationship between climate change and the production and transmission of literature in order to explore the role of literature in climate change mitigation and sustainable development, and thus to initiate a new critical paradigm in the Anthropocene.

#### IV. FUTURE PATH OF CLIMATE FICTION AND ITS CRITICISM: TOWARDS AN ECO-COSMOPOLITAN COMMUNITY

In the context of the Anthropocene, climate fiction rises in response to global climate change. And climate change is a classic example of what Timothy Morton calls a “hyperobject”, whose space-time scale far exceeds that of ordinary phenomena

and human intuition. And Adam Trexler notes, "Climate change transcends local places and reaches global space." Therefore, climate fiction and its corresponding criticism are naturally based on the globality, which cannot be separated from such keywords as "global" and "worldwide".

Climate fiction depicts the climate change and ecological disasters which affect the well-being and future of all human beings and threaten the survival of other species, criticizes the consumerist culture and the industrialization wave driven by globalization that is common to all human beings and explores the way out for all human beings and even for all species. Therefore, eco-cosmopolitanism with global consciousness and global species as the key points is the rightful meaning of climate fiction.

Therefore, from the background of its birth and the content of its creation, climate fiction has a natural tendency towards eco-cosmopolitanism, conveying the concept of common interests and sustainable development of the community with a shared future for mankind and the human and natural life community, and reminding policymakers and the public to make the right response to climate change. In terms of future development, climate fiction and its criticism will continue to move in the direction of eco-cosmopolitanism, advocating the establishment of a community of eco-cosmopolitanism that includes human beings and other species in the global ecosystem.

#### 4.1 From Local to Global

Early Western ecocriticism, and its ecological literature were distinctly "local" in their environmental imaginaries and ecological visions. Adam Trexler and Adeline Johns-Putra note in *Climate Change in Literature and Literary Criticism* (2011): "Ecocriticism has long been obsessed with the notion of locality and human dependence on particular environments." While a vibrant sense of place can awaken one's ecological conscience and foster ecological sensibility, ecological responsibility and loyalty to the environment, thereby maintaining a healthy interaction in the relationship between humans and nature. In reality, however, as Timothy Clark points out, "contrary to popular intuition, what may appear to be environmental protection at the local level may lead to environmental destruction at

the regional or even global level". Ecological interests may conflict between different "localities" and between "localities" and wider ecological interests.

The global consciousness of climate fiction breaks through localism. Because the global climate change depicted in climate fiction has both a material aspect and involves human-nature interactions. It is a grandiose event that breaks through the dichotomies of nature and culture, local and global. The nature of climate change itself dictates that one needs a certain kind of imagination and approach that goes beyond the "local" in order to understand the phenomenon in depth. In her book *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global* (2008), American eco-critics Ursula K. Heise contrasts "the sense of place" with "the sense of planet", calling for a shift in the focus of ecocriticism from the local to the global. To achieve this goal, climate fiction and its criticism need to move from the "local" to the global, especially from the "local" in the center of Europe and America to the "global" in the true sense, including developing countries.

#### 4.2 From Human to Global Species

Early on, the vague species consciousness of humans existed on the basis of anthropocentrism. From an anthropocentric perspective, humans do not see themselves as being on the same level as other species. Also, humans tend not to focus on the biological and species-specific aspects of other species, but rather objectify them as resources or tools.

In the context of the Anthropocene, humans as a species have become a major geological force, profoundly influencing and even forever changing the Earth's geology and ecosystem. In order to achieve sustainable environmental development in the future, human beings should have a clear awareness of their own power as a species and recognize the causal logic between human actions and the adverse consequences of ecological degradation, species extinction, climate change and disasters. In addition to cognizant of their own species consciousness, human beings should also build a cross-species consciousness, that is, realize the commonalities and connections between themselves and other species, expand their focus

from the human species to all the species on earth and break through anthropocentrism.

On the basis of explicit species consciousness and cross-species consciousness, climate fiction constructs a global species consciousness. Because there is a consensus among climate fiction writers and critics that while humans affect the Earth and other species on the planet, the Earth's ecosystem also affects humans in return. They tend to use "the more-than-human world" to refer to the natural world outside of humans. But "the more-than-human world" is not a dichotomy with the human world, but rather an inclusionary relationship in which humans are only a part of the natural world and the human world is only a subset of "the more-than-human world".

### 4.3 From Bioregionalism to Eco-cosmopolitanism

In the context of the Anthropocene and global climate change, scholars have gradually moved away from early bioregionalism and expanded their focus from the local to the global, and from humans to global species. According to Mike Hulme, a British climate change scholar, "Climate change breaks the dichotomy between 'global-local' and 'nature-culture'." That is, the geographic extension from the local to the global and the construction of global species consciousness from humans to all species in nature discussed above. As a result, climate fiction and its criticism on the topic of climate change are also leading ecocriticism towards eco-cosmopolitanism.

Eco-cosmopolitanism, as a key theory of the third wave of ecocriticism, was proposed by the American eco-critic Ursula K. Heise in her book *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global* (2008). She defines eco-cosmopolitanism as "an attempt to envision individuals and groups as part of planetary 'imagined communities' of both human and nonhuman kinds". Eco-cosmopolitanism, can be described as an ecological version of cosmopolitanism, or a combination of ecocriticism and cosmopolitanism, which focuses on transcending anthropocentrism, expands the focus of attention to "the more-than-human world" and constructs a community of life between human beings and the whole nature.

Climate change, with its global spatial and temporal scale, affects the well-being and future of all humanity. Therefore, its solution must also depend on global action, which requires, first and foremost, the establishment of a global consciousness. Meanwhile, the global consciousness calls for the new idea of planetary belonging or "eco-cosmopolitanism". Climate fiction, with its focus on environmentally and ecologically catastrophic events and their impacts in the context of climate change, has become the literature of an "eco-cosmopolitanism that can unite people all over the world".

If humanity has already hit the iceberg of climate change, it may be time to think about how to rationalize the use of the few life rafts available to save the human-nature community. As a literary researcher studying climate fiction, one of the future paths of response is to construct a critical discourse on climate fiction on the basis of eco-cosmopolitanism by combining historical contexts and ecological realities. This requires us to break through the geographic and cultural categories of localism and the narrow species-consciousness limitations of anthropocentrism and to think from the perspective of the global ecosphere. Only in this way can people better understand and cope with the climate change in the Anthropocene, and establish an eco-cosmopolitan community that includes both human and non-human species.

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# Feasibility Analysis of Cross-cultural Competence Development in College English Textbooks – A Case Study of *New Horizon College English Textbook for Viewing, Listening and Speaking*

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**Fund:** This paper is funded by the URT (Undergraduate Research Training) program of the Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology, and the number is 2024J00268.

Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 13 Aug 2024; Received in revised form: 15 Sep 2024; Accepted: 22 Sep 2024; Available online: 28 Sep 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords</b>— <i>English textbooks, cross-cultural competence, feasibility</i></p>	<p><i>Against the backdrop of increasingly frequent globalization and international communication, English serves not only as a tool for international exchange but also carries the function of disseminating and communicating diverse cultures. University English textbooks are not just tools for language learning but also crucial mediums for fostering students' cross-cultural communication skills. This paper examines the cultural content reflected in the textbook and its impact on students' cross-cultural communication abilities in the third edition of New Horizon College English Textbook for Viewing, Listening and Speaking (Third edition, Book 2) textbooks from a cross-cultural perspective. A framework of cross-cultural competence teaching for textbook analysis was constructed based on the previous research. The study analyzes the cultural content and its presentation in the textbooks according to the different dimensions of the framework, revealing significant differences in the selection and presentation of cultural content. Research findings show that the textbooks primarily focus on introducing English and American cultures while neglecting the diversity of other English-speaking countries and students' local cultures, resulting in a narrow cultural perspective. Furthermore, the depth and breadth of cultural content are insufficient to comprehensively develop students' cross-cultural communication skills. It is suggested that when using these textbooks for cultivating cross-cultural skills,</i></p>

attention should be given to diverse cultures, balancing the introduction of different cultures, incorporating students' local cultures, and helping them develop a global perspective. By enriching cultural content and implementing diverse teaching activities, students' cross-cultural understanding and communication skills can be enhanced, fostering international exchange and cooperation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Cultural diversity is recognized as one of the characteristics of modern society, particularly in an era where the integration of multiple cultures within nations is commonplace. In this context, enhancing university students' English proficiency has become an essential objective of English language instruction in universities. The essence of foreign language education is cross-cultural education, and the development of cross-cultural competence has been incorporated into English language curriculum standards and teaching guidelines for primary, secondary, and tertiary levels in China, as noted by Zhang Hongling (2022). It is explicitly stated in The Guide for College English Teaching (2020) that one of the key tasks of college English courses is to conduct cross-cultural education, underscoring the importance of integrating cross-cultural education into English language teaching at the university level. College English textbooks, being significant carriers of learning content and vital mediums for teaching interaction and cultural knowledge transmission, play an irreplaceable role in cultivating undergraduate students' cross-cultural competencies.

*New Horizon College English for Viewing, Listening & Speaking* (hereinafter referred to as *New Horizon Listening*) is a textbook for English listening and speaking course employed by numerous universities, including our own institution, accompanied by an online synchronous course system. This textbook was developed and compiled under the guidance of constructivist learning and teaching theories of Piaget and Vygotsky, Schramm's bilateral model of communication, and cognitive theories, following the latest College English Curriculum Teaching Requirements (Trial

prescribed by the Ministry of Education. It aims to offer students more natural language input and output opportunities through authentic scenarios, genuine language, and a variety of exercises, enabling effective listening and speaking practice and eventually improving students' English listening and speaking skills, as well as communicative competence. Therefore, creating an English language environment for students and overcoming the limitations associated with teaching a foreign language in a non-English speaking context are deemed essential.

### 1.2 Significance of the study

Since Xu Guozhang first pointed out the lack of attention to the cultural factors of words in English teaching in China in 1980 and proposed that the cultural aspects of English-speaking countries should be fully paid attention to in English teaching, the cultural teaching of English in universities has been a difficult problem that experts and scholars have been working hard to solve (Xu, 1980). There are many problems in the cross-cultural teaching of English in universities, which can no longer meet the increasing demands of cross-cultural communication in today's world. Therefore, teaching reforms must be carried out, effective measures researched, and a practical system for cultivating cross-cultural communication abilities constructed (Chen, 2014). At present, there are many professional textbooks for cross-cultural communication courses for English majors, but there are few textbooks for the education system of general English in universities. Most of the existing textbooks incorporate cross-cultural content into comprehensive English textbooks, posing issues such as uneven presentation of cultural content, inadequate representation of Chinese culture, and lack of clear objectives in cross-cultural teaching design. Taking the textbook "*New Horizon Listening*" as an example, this paper summarizes the

cross-cultural content and its presentation in the textbook, investigates the presentation effect of the cross-cultural content in the textbook, analyzes the reasons for this presentation effect, and puts forward methods and suggestions to strengthen the presentation of cross-cultural content in the textbook.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Studies on foreign language textbooks in China

Foreign language teaching, particularly through textbooks, conveys knowledge at two levels. The first level is the linguistic knowledge itself, such as vocabulary, grammar, and phonetics; the second level involves non-linguistic knowledge conveyed through language, such as the history and culture of foreign countries, national history and culture, various humanities and social knowledge, as well as ideologies and moral values constructed and transmitted through the target language (Adamson,2004). Looking back at the development history of China's college English courses, the focus was solely on the first level until the College English Teaching Guide and Syllabus remained in that state until 1998. In 1999, the "College English Teaching Syllabus (Revised Edition)" (hereinafter referred to as the "Syllabus") was published, which clearly stated that "culture and language are closely linked, and a certain background knowledge of culture helps to promote language application" (Zhang & Ben,2014) and communicative competence. It further emphasized deepening the understanding of the world, drawing from and assimilating the essence of foreign cultures, and enhancing cultural literacy. However, the "Syllabus" focused only on acquiring elements of Western culture and failed to address the dissemination of Chinese historical and cultural values, leading to emerging problems with long-lasting impacts (Liu Yanhong,2015). Subsequent researchers used questionnaires and personal interviews to investigate students' cultural content needs in English textbooks. Studies found that textbooks primarily spread and indoctrinate Anglo-American culture and hoped that the issue of cultural imbalance could be resolved in future textbook

development.

China has the world's largest number of English learners, but there is a limited amount of research on college English textbooks (Zhao Qinghong,2011;Xu Jinfen,2011). Liu Huaning believes that the presence of Chinese culture in textbooks is insufficient, which is not conducive to the cultivation of students' cross-cultural communication skills. However, these studies have focused more on micro-level than macro-level research, and there are more subjective narratives than empirical research, resulting in personal opinions, feelings, and suggestions outweighing fact-based research conclusions (Liu Huaning,2013,p.69). Through surveys and personal interviews, Zhang Bei and Ma Lan(2004) concluded that the current objectives of college English learners have shifted from purely pursuing academic advancement and passing exams to learning English for professional needs and development, emphasizing professional goals in a domestic work environment. However, the current textbooks only meet students' needs to understand Western social culture and fail to fully satisfy the cross-cultural communication needs of Chinese English learners.

### 2.2 Studies on cross-cultural competence training

Research related to the cultivation of cross-cultural competence can be traced back to the 1950s. British scholars Spencer Oatey and Franklin (2009) defined cross-cultural communicative competence as "the skill of the communicator to engage in appropriate and effective verbal and non-verbal interactions in a context of cultural differences, while mitigating subsequent psychological burdens and communicative consequences." A proponent of communication capability theory, Spitzberg (2000) believed that cross-cultural competence is the ability to communicate appropriately and effectively in a specific context in order to achieve intended goals and satisfactory outcomes; broadly, cross-cultural competence is an impression, that is, the ability perceived by both parties in the communication, not the capacity perceived individually, but a mutually recognized ability demonstrated throughout the communicative process. The study of cross-cultural communication theory in China

began in the 1980s, with Professor Hu Wenzhong being the first to introduce the results of Western research on cross-cultural communication, providing a comprehensive introduction to the development of the field. Some scholars have defined cross-cultural communicative competence as “the capacities and qualities needed for successful cross-cultural communication; it is a bidirectional capability that includes not only an understanding of the target language culture but also an explicit awareness of one’s own native language culture.” (Chen Junsen, Fan Weiwei, Zhong Hua, 2016)

Cross-cultural education is not only necessary, but also very urgent. First of all, people encounter more and more cross-cultural problems and even conflicts in their daily work and life, and they must seek solutions. Secondly, although the media provide a large amount of information about foreign cultures, the information is fragmented, without historical background, cause and effect, and cannot make people deeply understand a certain culture. Finally, cross-cultural education is not only the need to solve practical problems, but also an indispensable part of humanistic education and critical thinking ability training. In a word, cross-cultural education should become an important part of citizenship education in the era of globalization, because in this era of increasing interdependence between countries, we must learn to live together and cooperate across cultures to face the increasing global challenges, so as to realize mutual learning among civilizations and create a better future for human civilization(Sun, 2016).

However, in current daily English teaching, there is no transmission of cutting-edge cross-cultural education concepts and education methods, and it often only focuses on the knowledge of rare words, key grammar and sentence patterns involved in English articles, while Western culture is often explained in a simple way, resulting in the “shallow” understanding of Western culture among college students (Shi, 2023). At the same time, limited classroom time cannot meet the reading teaching needs of English teachers in permeating cultural teaching. Teachers should carry out more activities to guide students to relate to the relevant contents of Eastern culture and

strengthen students’ understanding of cultural differences and Western cultural connotations (Chen,2023).

### **2.3 Studies on cross-cultural content presentation in college English textbooks**

#### **2.3.1 Research on cultural presentation in professional cross-cultural teaching materials**

Qu Yan takes Cross-cultural Communication: A Comparison of Chinese and English Cultures as an example to analyze the cultural content and ways presented in the textbook. In the selection of Chinese and foreign cultural content, the book pays attention to knowledge and richness, which reflects cultural diversity to a certain extent. Among them, part of Chinese culture focuses on the presentation of traditional culture, part of English culture focuses on the mainstream culture of British and American countries. When teaching materials present cultural content, they pay attention to surface cultural knowledge and lack the interpretation of deep cultural connotation. In terms of the presentation of culture, teaching materials are mainly presented through texts from the perspective of cultural comparison (Qu, 2022).

Based on the compilation characteristics of cross-cultural Communication English - Reading Course, Guo Weiji studies the cultural presentation path of the textbook. This textbook combines the instrumental and humanistic nature of college English and integrates cross-cultural communication elements into the general English teaching system. The selection of materials focuses on the comparison of different cultures in the world, in order to fully awaken students’ local cultural awareness and cross-cultural awareness. In the selection of materials to highlight the “cross-cultural” characteristics, in addition to some of the introduction of Western society, history and culture, but also to increase the selection of Chinese culture and Sino-Western cultural exchanges. (Guo, 2023)

#### **2.3.2 Research on cultural presentation in college general English comprehensive textbooks**

Nowadays, more and more scholars begin to pay attention to the presentation of cross-cultural content in general comprehensive college English textbooks. At present, the original foreign teaching



materials written and published in China or introduced in China are mainly based on British culture, which can only meet the needs of domestic non-English major college students to understand British and American social culture, but can not meet the needs of college students' cross-cultural communication. In addition, college English textbooks lack the accumulation of local Chinese cultural knowledge, and they have not paid due attention to the compilation of textbooks (Huang, 2018). At present, many general English teaching materials claim to attach importance to "culture" or "cross-culture", but in fact, the compiling concept is disconnected from the compiling practice, resulting in insufficient (cross-culture) prominence of the teaching materials (Li, 2023).

General English teaching materials play an irreplaceable role in cultivating students' cross-cultural competence. Li Jiajun takes the Comprehensive Course of Cross-cultural English for College as the object and uses the content analysis method to study it. It is found that the proportion of local culture in cross-cultural Course is relatively high. The cultural themes presented include both general culture and country-specific culture. The former shows the general rules of cross-cultural communication, while the latter provides a rich variety of specific national cultures (Li, 2023). Zhang Tiefu, Wang Kelen, Yuan Rui (2023) and others have carried out a cross-cultural analysis of the New Future College English Comprehensive Course. The author analyzes the cross-cultural elements embodied in New Future 3A from three dimensions: macro, meso and micro. The teaching material embodies the teaching goal of cultivating students' cross-cultural ability, integrating cross-cultural attitude, knowledge and skill training, integrating into the world's multi-culture on the one hand, and exerting the influence of local culture on the other hand. (Zhang, Wang & Yuan, 2023) Gu Linyu conducted a study on the cross-cultural presentation of New Horizon College English for Reading, Writing & Translation. The lack of systematic and balanced presentation of cultural themes exists in this set of textbooks, such as the incoherence of cultural themes in the articles and supporting exercises in one unit, the fragmentary cultural themes and the unbalanced

proportion of cultural themes among each unit. Gu Linhe analyzed the proportion of different cultures contained in the textbook in this book. The culture of the target language countries still accounts for a large proportion, especially the culture of the United States, while the culture of other English-speaking countries is largely ignored. American culture accounted for 48.20 percent, British culture 7.61 percent, and Canadian, New Zealand and Australian culture accounted for less than 3 percent. Although Chinese culture (11.08 percent) occupies the third most space in this book, it is less than a quarter of American culture (48.2 percent) (Gu, 2023).

At present, the cross-cultural research on teaching materials by major domestic scholars is mainly reflected in the study of the different countries especially English-speaking countries presented in the teaching materials, the distribution of different cultures in the selected teaching materials and the path of cultural presentation in the teaching materials. Most of the methods adopted are content analysis, which presents the culture and ways of presenting culture of different countries in the form of tables, and calculate the proportion of different cultures in the textbook. So far, studies on cross-cultural analysis of college English textbooks mainly focus on comprehensive textbooks for reading and writing, while few studies have ever chosen a listening and speaking textbook as a sample for case analysis. Therefore, by choosing *New Horizon Listening*, a widely used coursebook for college English study, as the case, this thesis is to analyze the culture presentation and cross-cultural design in the coursebook so as to explore the feasibility of cross-cultural competence development in language teaching.

### III. THE FRAMEWORK FOR CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE TEACHING

The essence of foreign language teaching is actually cross-cultural teaching. Cross-cultural content has been listed as necessities in the foreign language teaching in schools of all levels. In order to clarify and specify the cross-cultural goals for different levels of education, leading her team,

Zhang Hongling (2022) worked out a framework of reference for cross-cultural competence teaching in China's foreign language education. This framework was developed on the basis of learning taxonomies and development psychology, covering cross-cultural competence at elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and universities. At each level, specific goals of cross-cultural competence are clearly described from 3 dimensions and 9 components, including knowledge (foreign cultural knowledge, Chinese cultural knowledge, general cultural knowledge), attitudes (cultural awareness, national identity, global mindedness), and skills (cross-cultural experiencing, cross-cultural dialogue, cross-cultural exploration). This framework provides specific and clear reference for teachers at different levels to follow in cross-cultural competence cultivation, either in setting teaching objectives or design teaching activities.

Taking the framework as a major guidance, and combining the backgrounds and features of the *New Horizon Listening* textbook, a framework is worked out for analyzing the cross-culture competence development in the textbook, which is described as follows:

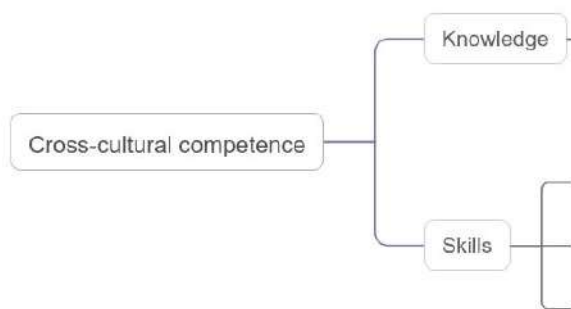


Chart 3-1 The framework of cross-cultural competence teaching for textbook analysis

In this framework, at the knowledge level, "foreign cultural knowledge" refers to knowledge related to history and geography, social culture, politics and economy, literature and art, etc. in foreign countries, including different lifestyles,

communication methods, thinking patterns and values. "Chinese culture knowledge" covers knowledge about Chinese history, traditional culture, philosophy, literary works, etc., understanding China's role in and contribution to the world development and the core values of the socialism. "General cultural knowledge" focuses on the knowledge in cross-cultural communication, cultural diversity, cultural identity and the value of a community with a shared future for mankind. At the skills level, "national identity" means the attitude towards national pride, and the ability to deal with the country bias, spread the good voice of China and set a correct image about China. "Global mindedness" refers to the awareness of the significance of globalization, conformity with a community of a shared future and willingness to participate in the global cooperation and management. "cross-cultural exploration" is concerned with being able to reflect after cross-cultural experiencing and the skills to deal with cultural differences tactfully and avoid cultural conflicts.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Research questions

This study aims primarily to answer the following three questions:

(1) What cross-cultural content does "*New Horizon College English for Viewing, Listening & Speaking*" have, and how is the cross-cultural content presented?

(2) How effective is the presentation of cross-cultural content in "*New Horizon College English for Viewing, Listening & Speaking*"?

(3) How to improve the cross-cultural content in the textbook to better enhance students' cross-cultural competence?

### 4.2 Textbook selection

This study will take the university textbook *New Horizon Listening (Third edition, Book 2)* published by the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press as an example for analysis. *New Horizon Listening* is an English listening and speaking textbook used by many universities, including our own, and is equipped with an online

synchronous course system. This textbook is developed in accordance with the latest *College English Curriculum Requirements (Trial)* of the Ministry of Education under the guidance of Piaget's and Vygotsky's constructivist learning and teaching theories, Schramm's two-way communication model, and cognitive theory. It aims to provide students with more natural language input and output opportunities, achieve effective listening and speaking practice, and ultimately improve students' English listening and speaking skills and communicative competence through real-life scenarios, authentic language, and abundant exercises. One of the design purposes of this textbook is to create an English language environment for students, overcoming the limitations of teaching foreign languages in non-English environments.

#### 4.3 Questionnaire Design

An evaluation survey was conducted at Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology to assess the presentation of cross-cultural content in the course material. Since the material is a required textbook for non-English major students at Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology, the survey targeted all students at the institute. The questionnaire was distributed to students through the Wenjuanxing online survey platform in March 2024, resulting in a total of 260 questionnaires sent out, of which 237 were valid responses. The analysis of the presentation of cross-cultural content in the material will be conducted from three perspectives: questionnaire design, processing of questionnaire data, and analysis of questionnaire data.

The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions, with the 9th question serving as a validation check where selecting option B indicated a valid questionnaire. The 1st question aimed to assess the English proficiency of the respondents; questions 2 and 3 investigated the respondents' interest in cross-cultural issues; question 4 inquired about any past cross-cultural experiences of the respondents; questions 5, 6, and 7 analyzed students' comprehension of cross-cultural content in the material through specific case studies; questions 8, 10, and 11 aimed to gauge respondents' knowledge of cross-cultural concepts and understanding of cross-cultural implications;

questions 13, 14, and 15 examined the impact of different teaching designs on students' cross-cultural abilities; question 16 evaluated the effectiveness of role-play dialogues in enhancing cross-cultural abilities as compared to a control group from question 15; questions 12 and 17 assessed students' cross-cultural competencies.

#### 4.4 Analysis

This paper uses content analysis to address the issue, researching the main cross-cultural content related to viewing, listening, and speaking in "*New Horizon Listening*". Additionally, it investigates how cross-cultural content is presented in the "*New Horizon Listening*" textbook. A cultural information coding framework is developed through the extraction and analysis of cultural information points in the textbook. During the process of inputting cultural information points into Excel, country attributes, cultural themes, cultural dimensions, and presentation paths are identified and determined. After classifying and categorizing cultural information points, cultural themes are generated. Subsequently, the frequency and proportion of country attributes, cultural themes, cultural dimensions, and presentation paths of cultural information points are statistically analyzed. Combining with the "Chinese Foreign Language Education Cross-Cultural Ability Reference Framework" a deep text analysis of the cultural content presented in the textbook and the design of cross-cultural communicative activities in the textbook are conducted.

Using the obtained presentation paths and frequencies of cross-cultural content in the book *New Horizon Listening*, a questionnaire survey of students using the "*New Horizon Listening*" textbook is conducted to evaluate the cross-cultural educational achievements of the textbook. Utilizing data analysis software such as SPSS, the effectiveness of cross-cultural content presentation in the "*New Horizon Listening*" textbook is studied. Suggestions are proposed in educational theory on how to improve cross-cultural content and teaching methods in the textbook and enhance students' cross-cultural abilities.

## V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter begins to analyze the cross-cultural content of this textbook, and a major characteristic of this textbook is the organic combination of instrumental and humanistic elements in its nature.

### 5.1 Cross-cultural content and presentation of the textbook

The cross-cultural content and presentation of *“New Horizon College English for Viewing, Listening & Speaking”* are analyzed from a macro perspective. The preface of this textbook contains 6 occurrences of vocabulary related to cross-cultural communication skills or differences between Chinese and Western cultures, and 4 occurrences of vocabulary related to cultural understanding, cultural literacy, and cultural perception. In the “rationale” section, it is explicitly stated that one of the purposes of this textbook is to enhance cultural understanding and improve cross-cultural communication skills. In the “textbook features” section, it further explains how this textbook utilizes diverse forms of practice activities to cultivate language and cross-cultural abilities. It emphasizes that the language activities in this textbook focus on mental training, the development of cross-cultural awareness, inspiring student thinking through critical questions, guiding students to understand and express Chinese and Western cultural differences through comparative translation, and cultivating students’ ability to solve practical problems through real communicative tasks.

From the perspective of textbook structure analysis, each unit of this book is divided into six parts: Learning objectives, Opening up, Listening to the world, Speaking for communication, Further practice in listening, and Wrapping up. A large proportion of cross-culture elements are demonstrated in the part of “Listening to the world” as this part intends to present the diversity of different fields in the world.

#### 5.1.1 Learning objectives

In the first part of the Learning Objectives, the textbook provides clear, specific, measurable learning objectives to help students clarify their learning focus and facilitate self-assessment. Among all the objectives listed in the textbook, few

mentions the cultivation of cross-cultural competence; rather, it is more about self-reflection and exploration. For example, in Unit 7, “Time of Technology: A Blessing or a Curse” the learning objective is to talk about technology around us, without involving cross-cultural research.

#### 5.1.2 Opening Up

The second part, “Opening Up” introduces unit themes in a vivid manner through images, tests, discussions, and more, aiming to stimulate students’ interest and encourage them to delve deeper into and discuss the themes. It also includes famous quotes, such as using Aristotle’s quote in the first unit - “we learn by doing” to initiate discussions on learning within that unit. This method helps students understand and encounter different cultural concepts and values, thus enhancing their cross-cultural sensitivity and comprehension. Each of the eight units in the book respectively uses quotes from different countries to guide the target topics.

#### 5.1.3 Listening to the World

The third part, “Listening to the World” selects BBC audio and video materials, designs various listening and speaking activities, and provides listening skill explanations to effectively enhance students’ English listening skills. This part is further divided into three subsections: Sharing, Listening, and Viewing. In the Sharing section, BBC street interview videos are used to design around unit themes. The interviewees talk about personal experiences or express their views on specific topics, providing language models and sharing viewpoints for students. Through this activity, students can learn about different cultural knowledge; for example, in the second unit, the textbook describes the culture and history of Istanbul, Turkey through street interview videos. The listening section utilizes original audio materials in various forms, including dialogues, stories, interviews, lectures, and radio programs. This is followed by related listening exercises. The viewing section incorporates original foreign video materials to showcase the diversity of the world and various cultures, enabling students to perceive social phenomena and unique characteristics of different regions, and to help students broaden their



perspectives, enhance cultural understanding, and improve their communication skills. These designs help students understand the differences in cultures, and serve as materials for cross-cultural teaching.

#### 5.1.4 Speaking for Communication

The fourth part, "Speaking for Communication" is designed to improve students' oral abilities based on rich language input materials, through various oral activities and detailed explanations of oral strategies. This section consists of four subsections: Imitation (Books 1-2), Discussion, Role-play, and Public Speaking (Books 3-4).

In the Imitation (Books 1-2) part, authentic and commonly used oral expressions are selected from the original audio and video materials in the Listening to the World section, and recordings of British and American pronunciations are provided for students to imitate and practice, correcting pronunciation and optimizing intonation. By experiencing the differences between British and American English pronunciations, students gain insights into the distinctions between the two English-speaking countries, contributing to cross-cultural education.

The "Role-play" section involves scenario designs based on daily life situations, using original listening materials as input to stimulate speaking. This helps students organize their thoughts and improve their oral expression abilities. The textbook provides themes for students to perform scenarios from different perspectives, promoting cross-cultural education. However, this part overly emphasizes foreign culture, neglecting traditional Chinese culture, making cross-cultural education challenging. While students learn about cross-cultural communication and interaction between different foreign nationals through scenarios, they overlook Chinese traditional culture. For example, in the scripts of this part in Unit 2, there is no trace of Chinese culture, as it portrays a tourist asking for directions in a foreign city's carnival. This pattern is consistent across all eight units of this part. The section on group discussion adopts the approach of group activity tasks, guiding students to actively participate and cultivate innovative thinking and team consciousness through the activity process of

"material input, task decomposition, common discussion, and cooperative output".

This section should be the easiest to achieve cross-cultural education, but the themes in the textbook are more neutral, and the cross-cultural knowledge content in the materials is not obvious. For example, in the first unit, this section lists three articles on teaching methods: "learn by listening" (the teaching case of Stsiner school), "starting young" (Suzuki method), and "homeschooling" (British unemployed children). These three different regional teaching methods can easily be designed for cross-cultural education, but the teaching tips provided by the textbook are: "You can ask students to search for more information about different learning/teaching methods online, and then analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each method based on the information they get." There is no discussion about culture, but more about supplementing and discussing the topics. The cross-cultural education in this section of the textbook is insufficient. This section should involve the collaboration of student groups, taking on the roles of different countries, to engage in cultural exchanges around given themes. Taking the first unit as an example, the textbook lists different teaching methods, including those from Japan, England, and the United States. This provides an opportunity to guide teachers to pay attention to the differences in culture, and to help students understand the local thinking patterns and cultural characteristics through the teaching methods from different regions.

In the "Public Speaking" section (Books 3-4), the format of "explaining an example and then practicing" is used to teach students how to prepare speeches, use body language, and capture the audience's attention, aiming to train students' public speaking skills and academic abilities and to enhance their language application skills at a higher level. This approach can cultivate students' English public speaking abilities. In this module of the textbook, multiple ways of expressing the same purpose are provided, enriching students' means of expression and reducing communication barriers when facing unfamiliar cultural environments. This part of the textbook contains certain cross-cultural educational designs.

### 5.1.5 Further practice in listening

The fifth part, "Further practice in listening", includes three exercises: short conversations, long conversations, and passages. It provides rich listening materials related to the unit theme, gradually improving listening skills from levels 1 to 4. This section uses dialogues to cultivate cross-cultural competence. For example, in the "time out" long conversation in unit three, the conversation discusses the cultural characteristics of the 1960s: short skirts, bright colors, and bell-bottom jeans!

### 5.1.6 Wrapping up

The sixth part, "Wrapping up", corresponds to the learning objectives of this unit, making it convenient for students to examine their learning, reflect on the learning process, and cultivate habits of self-assessment and self-improvement. As the final part of a unit, it serves more as a summary, with no involvement in cross-cultural teaching content.

The analysis of the content organization of the unit shows that the textbook sets cultivating students' language skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and translating, as well as increasing knowledge, expanding horizons, enhancing abilities, and improving cultural literacy as the overall objectives of textbook writing. The aim is to help students effectively enhance their communicative abilities through thematic content, vocabulary distribution, exercise forms, etc., and

also guide students to identify diverse cultures, compare different cultures, delve into issues, and become high-quality talents with international perspectives and innovative spirits. The specific unit themes, structures, and design purposes are shown in Table 1. The analysis reveals that although each unit has a culture notes section in the "Listening to the world" module, the presentation of cultural topics that flash by in conversations is not ideal. For example, in the BBC interview in the first unit's "Listening to the world", out of fourteen sentences in the dialogue, only two mention the knowledge points from the culture notes section of this module. Out of a total of 195 words, words related to culture notes only appear twice, showing that the presentation of cross-cultural content is not prominent. The culture notes in this unit mention two cultural knowledge points, namely Swahili and kayaking. In the interview, there is only one sentence about Swahili, "I'm studying Swahili." Despite the use of authentic BBC interviews in the textbook, with abundant real language data, the cultural information is fragmented, with limited relevant content, making it difficult to achieve the goal of fostering cross-cultural competence. More specifically, the textbook is consistent in unit structure and actual content arrangement, with each unit having a "culture notes" section to supplement students' cross-cultural knowledge. In terms of unit content distribution, the cultivation of cross-cultural abilities is embedded in both "Listening to the world" and "Speaking for communication".

Table 5-1 Unit structure and module content in the textbook

Unit topic	Unit structure	Purpose of design
1. Life is a learning curve	Learning objectives	Present clear, specific and measurable learning objectives to help students clarify their learning priorities and facilitate students' self-evaluation
2. Journeyer into the unknown		
3. Time out	Opening up	Introduce unit topics in vivid forms such as pictures, tests, and discussions
4. Life under the spotlight	Listening to the world	BBC audio and video materials are selected to design rich listening and speaking activities, supplemented by listening skills explanation, to effectively improve students' English listening skills
5. Urban pulse		
6. Climbing the career		

ladder 7. Time of technology: A blessing or a curse 8. Discovering your true identity	Speaking for communication	Based on rich language input materials, oral activities are designed with detailed oral strategy explanation to improve students' oral ability
	Further practice in listening	Provide rich listening materials related to the topic of the unit, and improve listening skills step by step through practice
	Wrapping up	It is consistent with the Learning objectives of this unit, so as to facilitate students to examine their learning situation, reflect on the learning process, and cultivate the habit of self-evaluation and self-improvement

In addition to the textbook, a synchronous online platform called “Unipus” is provided accordingly with the purpose of helping with students’ autonomous learning, enhancing interaction between teachers and students, and provide multiple ways of assessment. Corresponding to the textbook, Unipus provides additional resources for listening and speaking in addition to the identical parts with the textbook, among which two sections “Talk about China” and “View the world” focus on the ideological and moral education, and at the same time cater to the goal of cross-cultural communication. “Talk about China” provides a video or audio materials about the relevant Chinese traditional culture or development, while “View the world” offers materials from the perspective of the global culture or development. In the two sections, the online platform provides ideological and moral education resources related to the topics of the different units, which precisely make up for the lack of Chinese local culture in terms of the cross-cultural aspects, thus making it complementary with the physical textbooks. Although the two sections are not closely connected in its design, by utilizing the online platform, students can gradually form a comparative view between the Chinese culture and the foreign culture, thus acquiring cross-cultural awareness subconsciously. Additionally, teachers can reorganize and integrate textbook content based on the speaking topics, combining relatively isolated small topics into a more macroscopic one, which can better stimulate students' thinking depth and breadth, significantly enhancing the cultivation of cross-cultural competence in teaching materials.

## 5.2 Effects of cross-cultural content presentation in New Horizon Listening

In cross-cultural studies, different cultural perspectives often require the use of various research methods. The cultural analysis in the current textbook employs multiple methods such as quantitative content analysis, symbolic analysis, critical discourse analysis with content analysis aligning closely with the cultural elements under consideration. Establishing a cultural analytical framework by defining coding frameworks across four dimensions is crucial when using content analysis to examine cultural elements in the textbook: cultural classification by country, cultural classification by level, determination of cultural themes and determination of presentation pathways (Li, 2023). This article will also analyze cross-cultural elements based on these four dimensions and the framework constructed in Chart 3-1.

### 5.2.1 Analysis of cross-cultural elements from country distribution

*New Horizon Listening and Speaking* textbooks typically contain scenarios and dialogues from various cultural backgrounds, which may include English-speaking countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, as well as cultural elements from non-English-speaking countries. Through this design, students can learn different English accents and usages while gaining insight into the uniqueness of various cultures within specific contexts. Cortazzi & Jin (1999) categorize the cultural perspective represented in textbooks into source culture (local culture), target language culture (English native language culture), and

international culture (mentioning specific countries that are neither local nor target language cultures). Building on this, Rashidi & Meihami (2016) introduce the concept of culture neutral, referring to cultures that do not fall into the previous three categories, without specific national affiliations.

This paper will make statistics on the countries involved in the textbook with reference to their theories, and include them in the following table: The words that show regional culture in the listening materials and dialogue training of the textbook are counted once.

Table 5-2 Regional culture distribution in the textbook

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
local culture	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
English native language culture	6	5	3	10	9	6	2	5
international culture	6	9	10	2	7	3	1	0
Cultural neutrality	3	3	4	0	1	2	4	1

In each unit of the textbook, regardless of the topic, there will always be cross-cultural content. However, different topics will result in varying cultural frequencies. For instance, in the second unit, "Journey into the Unknown", the material lists a wide range of natural and cultural heritages from different regions, hence the frequency of international culture is higher. On the other hand, in the fourth unit, "Life under the Spotlight", the material extensively features British and American celebrities such as Obama, Misha Barton, and Raynulf Fainss. Overall, through the frequency analysis, it is evident that there is a minimal presence of local culture, with students primarily focusing on learning about British and American cultures, thereby not meeting the intended cross-cultural teaching objectives of the textbook.

there are marked differences in the political culture between democratic and authoritarian countries, affecting citizens' political participation and societal attitudes. Different political systems lead to varying degrees of economic development and economic structures, which significantly influence culture.

### 5.2.2 Analysis of the cross-cultural elements from content design

Historical events and processes shape a country's or region's cultural identity and values. For example, colonial history has a profound impact on the culture of many countries. The geographical environment also determines people's livelihood, social structures, and relationship with the natural environment, thereby influencing the formation and development of culture.

According to the *Framework of Reference for cross-cultural Competence Teaching in China's Foreign Language Education* (Zhang&Wu, 2022), cross-cultural competence cultivation should cover knowledge mainly in the field of politics and economy, history and geography, lifestyle habits, literature and art, as well as knowledge related to globalization.

Literary works serve as important carriers of culture, reflecting the thoughts, values, and emotions of specific societies. For instance, Shakespeare's plays and Chinese classical literature embody the essence of different cultures. Art forms such as painting, music, and dance are not only expressions of culture but also crucial mediums for cross-cultural exchange.

Cross-cultural elements should encompass political economy, historical geography, literature and art, lifestyle habits, and globalization. The political systems and policies of different countries and regions deeply influence culture. For instance,

In terms of lifestyle habits, different dietary habits reflect a region's agricultural production methods, climate conditions, and social customs. For example, the rice culture in Asia contrasts with the bread culture in Europe. Social etiquette in different cultures, such as greeting customs and gift-giving practices, reflects societal values and interpersonal relationship patterns.

Cross-cultural understanding signifies the era of globalization and internationalization, embracing



the concept of a shared human destiny and advocating for national participation in international cooperation and global governance.

The following part is the analysis of the cross-cultural elements of the textbook in terms of politics and economy, history and geography, literature and art, lifestyle habits, and globalization:

Table 5-3 Cultural theme distribution in the textbook

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8
Political economy	1	1	0	0	1	2	1	0
Historical geography	1	5	2	1	3	5	2	3
Literature and art	4	3	3	1	2	3	4	2
Living habits	5	2	4	3	4	4	5	3
Globalization	1	3	1	3	2	2	4	1

Moreover, the analysis highlights a notable concentration on lifestyle habits and literature and art within the cross-cultural elements of the textbook. This emphasis signifies a deliberate focus on these aspects, while other domains such as politics and economy, history and geography, and globalization exhibit a comparatively lower emphasis in the material.

### 5.2.3 Analysis of cross-cultural elements from exercise design

In reference to the theoretical framework (Chart 3-1), a cross-cultural teaching activity design should encompass three aspects: national identity, global mindedness, and cross-cultural exploration.

National identity concerns the development of students' individual cultural identity. Reflected in the design of teaching activities, it aims to provide students with opportunities to engage with and learn about foreign cultures, compare Chinese and foreign cultures, encourage exploration of the profound Chinese culture, and nurture a strong identification with Chinese culture.

Global mindedness is essential for global citizenship education, guiding students to appreciate the diversity of world cultures, understand common human values, grasp the significance of building a community of shared future for mankind, address global issues, and prepare for future participation in global

The vocabulary that appears in the listening materials and dialogues of the textbook that reflect these categories will be recorded in the table once.

Based on the table, it is evident that the cross-cultural elements in this textbook focus more on lifestyle habits and literature and art, with some lack of emphasis on other aspects.

governance on behalf of their country.

Inter-cultural exploration demands students to autonomously learn and explore culture issues. Due to time constraints in foreign language classroom teaching, it is impossible to cover all knowledge and skills comprehensively. Therefore, in the design of cross-cultural capability teaching activities, emphasis should be placed on cultivating students' ability to autonomously explore, reflect, and innovate in cross-cultural learning. For instance, the "Wrapping Up" segment of teaching activities is aimed at developing students' cross-cultural exploration skills.

The textbook's six teaching activity sections— Learning Objectives, Opening Up, Listening to the World, Speaking for Communication, Further Practice in Listening, and Wrapping Up— focus more on global mindedness for global citizenship education and cross-cultural exploration, with some shortcomings in addressing the fundamental aspect of national identity. While in the synchronous electric version, two parts called "World Story" and "China Talk" are specially added as the moral education elements, which can well serve the cross-cultural purpose of national identity and global mindedness.

In terms of activity design, most activities focus on practice of language practice and some open-ended questions and complicated tasks are

also designed to stimulate students' interest, activate their creativity, and cultivate their critical thinking abilities, with some emphasis on cross-cultural communication. The following table is a list of activities in each section and their

demonstration of the cross-cultural competence cultivation in terms of the three dimensions: national identity, global mindedness and cross-cultural exploration.

Table 5-4 Cross-cultural skills design in the physical textbook

	Blank filling	Multiple choices	Questions	Role play	Group discussion	Presentation
national identity	Unit 2 (P29)	Unit 2 (P25)	Unit 5 (P81)	Unit 6 (P100)	Unit 5 (P85)	Unit 2 (P20)
global mindedness	Unit 5 (P79)			Unit 7 (P118)		
cross-cultural exploration			Unit 5 (74)	Unit 4 (64)		

In Unit 5, "Urban Pulse", there is a clear demonstration of cross-cultural content during the activity where students listen to dialogues and fill in a form. Three dialogues describe three cities and compare Dubai, Tokyo, and Sydney using a table, fostering students' global perspectives. This case is a typical example in the textbook where cross-cultural content is combined with language skill teaching design.

However, it should be noted that not all exercises aim to develop cross-cultural competence. Referring to the table above, it can be seen that there are many blanks. The exercises in these units focus more on simple language skill training. The main reason for this phenomenon is that even though cross-cultural competence can be developed through various activities, the design that most clearly achieves this is often closely related to the unit's theme.

Taking the activity on page 79 where students listen to dialogues and fill in a form as an example,

this part is cleverly integrated with the theme of Unit 5, achieving the teaching goal of developing cross-cultural competence. However, in different units, due to varying topics, the integration with cross-cultural aspects differs, and consequently, the development of cross-cultural competence that can be achieved varies. For instance, in Unit 1, "Life is a Learning Curve", this part focuses more on the development of language skill techniques.

### 5.3 Questionnaire analysis

The first question assessing students' English proficiency in 237 valid questionnaires revealed that 199 individuals were at College English Level 4, accounting for 83.97%; 15.61% are at College English Level 6; 0.42% is at Professional English Level 6; and nobody is at Professional English Level 8. This aligns with the main research focus of the questionnaire: the overall English proficiency of students at Beijing Institute of Petrochemical Technology taking Listening and Speaking courses, validating the data of the questionnaire.

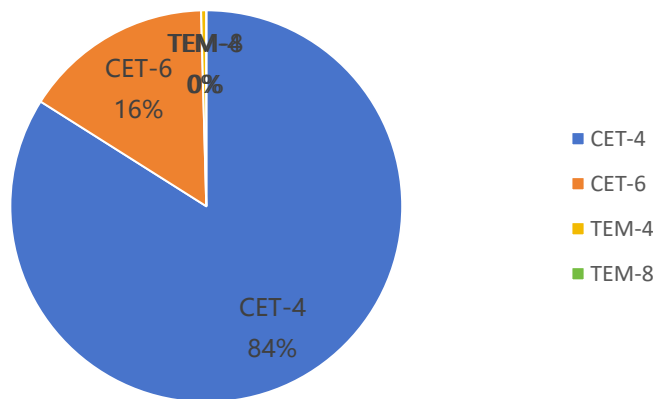


Chart 5-1 Q1 English proficiency distribution

The third question investigated the cross-cultural willingness of the respondents. Option B and C are close in its proportion, taking up the largest part, while Option A and D only constitute 4% and 5% respectively. It shows that the

majority of individuals are not opposed to engaging in cross-cultural communication; rather, most students are willing to engage in cross-cultural exchanges.

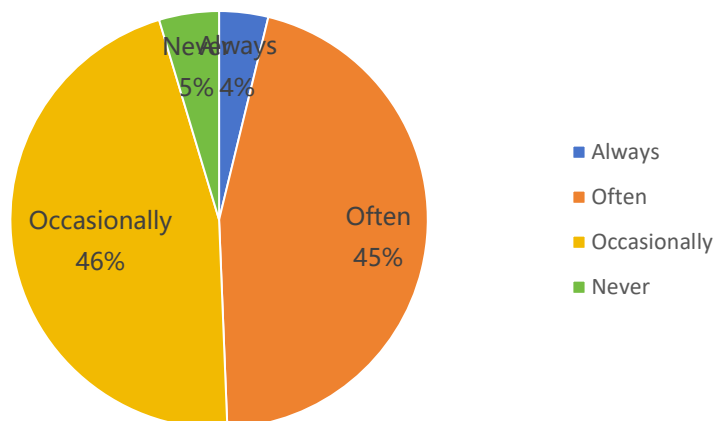


Chart 5-2 Q3 Willingness to talk with foreigners

The second and fourth questions aimed to explore whether the respondents had engaged in cross-cultural activities and their cross-cultural demands. Starting from Question 5 to 17, all the five options range from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. The result of Question 2 reveals that almost 90% students have little interaction with native speakers of English, while Question 4 shows that approximately three fourths of them don’t have overseas travel experience. The figures indicate that despite the willingness shown in the data of the

third question to engage in cross-cultural contact with foreign friends, the actual frequency of interactions with foreign friends is limited due to real-life constraints. Additionally, in daily life, most individuals do not have significant cross-cultural demands, which appears to be a reason why students are not actively learning cross-cultural skills. This is also evident in questions 12 and 17 where students' cross-cultural abilities are notably lacking.

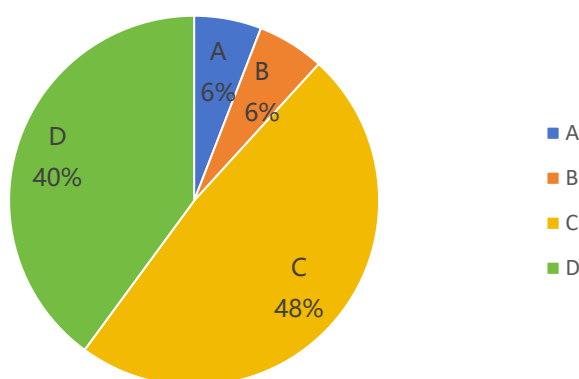


Chart 5-3 Q2 Frequency of communication with foreigners

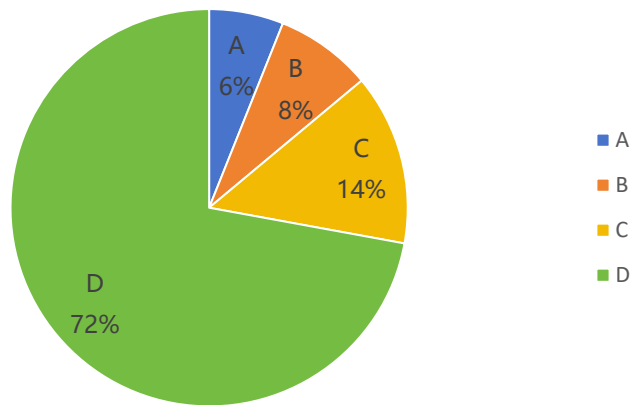


Chart 5-4 Q4 Frequency of overseas travelling

Questions 12 and 17 are related with students' ability to explain Chinese culture to foreigners, which is a crucial goal in cross-cultural communication. The results, however, show that a large percentage of the respondents (80% and 61% respectively) don't have the confidence to talk

about Chinese culture in English. It can be observed that even though students have learned some theoretical knowledge on cross-cultural aspects and possessed cross-cultural awareness to some extent, completing cross-cultural tasks remains a significant challenge.

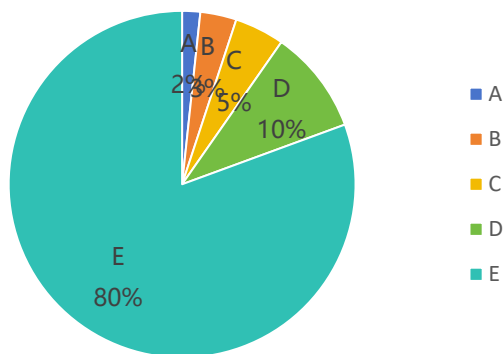


Chart 5-6 Q17 Effects of simulated dialogues

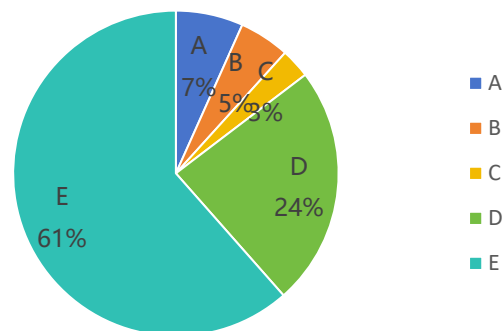


Chart 5-5 Q12 Effects of textbook study

The 5th, 6th, and 7th questions analyze students' grasp of specific cross-cultural content in textbooks through specific cases. The three questions revolve around Unit 1, and the questions 5, 6 and 7 are all about the specific design of cross-cultural content in the textbook of Unit 1. Question five asks about the Mbira, question six about Swahili, and question seven about Brazilian culture. Results show that around 90% of the

respondents still don't know about Swahili. Question 7 reveals that about 80% don't acquire the culture knowledge about Brazil. This indicates that students generally can grasp the cross-cultural knowledge points in the textbooks, showing that the reason for the poor performance in cross-cultural abilities is not due to the foreign cultural knowledge points in the textbooks.



Table 5-5 Students' understanding of specific cross-cultural knowledge

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Question 5	48	20.2%	170	71.7%	6	2.5%	5	2.1%	8	3.3%
Question 6	51	21.5%	116	48.9%	43	18.1%	17	7.1%	10	4.2%
Question 7	2	0.8%	15	6.3%	178	75.1%	10	4.2%	32	13.5%

Questions 8, 10, and 11 aim to understand whether the respondents comprehend the meaning of cross-culturalism and the necessary theoretical knowledge. In question nine, differences in expression were identified; question ten inquired about understanding cultural differences; question eleven asked about cross-cultural art, investigating from the dimensions of discovery, understanding, and application. The table clearly shows that as the investigation deepens, the level of identification

also declines. It is evident that the data is concentrated on option Strongly agree, indicating that for the majority of students, understanding different cultural points and the necessary skills for cross-culturalism can be achieved through textbook learning and teacher instruction on cross-cultural education. This once again demonstrates that the poor presentation of cross-cultural competence is not due to the foreign cultural knowledge points in the teaching materials.

Table 5-6 Students' comprehension of cross-cultural knowledge

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Question 8	158	66.6%	50	21%	6	2.5%	7	2.9%	16	6.7%
Question 10	156	65.8%	48	20.2%	9	3.7%	11	4.6%	13	5.4%
Question 11	126	53.1%	87	36.7%	10	4.2%	11	4.6%	3	1.2%

Questions 13, 14, and 15 focus on studying the impact of different teaching designs on students' cross-cultural competence. It is apparent that different teaching design elements have varying effects on students' cross-cultural competence development, indicating that students' perception

at the design level is not as strong as in questions 8, 10, and 11. In terms of teaching design, the data predominantly favors option B, highlighting that the instructional activity design for cultivating cross-cultural competence in the teaching materials is inadequate.

Table 5-7 The impact of cross-cultural teaching design

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Question 13	146	61.6%	70	29.5%	9	3.7%	5	2.1%	7	2.9%
Question 14	32	13.5%	130	54.8%	50	21%	17	7.1%	8	3.3%
Question 15	163	68.7%	56	23.6%	5	2.1%	8	3.3%	5	2.1%

Question 16 serves as a control group with Question 15, presenting the evaluation of the effectiveness of the group simulation dialogues, which are the most effective in fostering cross-cultural competencies. A clear comparison with Question 15 reveals that group simulation dialogues are more effective in cultivating

cross-cultural competencies. This further illustrates the differential impact of various teaching design elements on fostering students' cross-cultural competencies, indicating that the lack of designed teaching activities is a primary reason for the poor presentation of cross-cultural competencies in the material.

Table 5-8 Effects of group simulation dialogues

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Question 15	5	2.1%	5	2.1%	5	2.1%	5	2.1%	5	2.1%
Question 16	99	41.7%	95	40%	19	8%	10	4.2%	14	5.9%

In the questionnaire, it is evident that there are issues with the presentation of the cross-cultural competence development of the textbook. Questions 12 and 17 reveal that students have negative perceptions about their ability to engage in cross-cultural communication. Despite the presence of cross-cultural educational cultivation in the textbook, at the students' perception level, they only perceive differences in cultures and still remain distant from being able to truly engage in cross-cultural interactions. Moreover, the textbook falls short in addressing some cultural differences. For instance, in questions 5, 6, and 7, and in the first unit's cross-cultural knowledge points related to foreign musical instruments and languages, students demonstrate a stronger cross-cultural perception compared to their understanding of cultural connotations. Questions 8, 10, and 11 indicate that although students are willing to engage in cross-cultural activities, the materials provided by the textbook limit their ability to develop their own cross-cultural competence.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This chapter aims to summarize the findings of this study, the limitations and implications of this paper, and suggestions for further research. The main conclusions of this chapter come from text analysis and quantitative analysis.

### 6.1 Main Findings

The presence of cross-cultural content in this textbook is evident. Data collected from the text and exercises indicate that the textbook aims to help students understand other cultures through storytelling and various forms of activities. However, analysis of student surveys on the use of this textbook shows that the effectiveness of its cross-cultural content is inadequate. Students are able to perceive different cultures through the textbook but struggle with actual cross-cultural communication. The textbook includes exercises

such as listening activities, simulated dialogues, group discussion and presentation, but these mainly focus on language skills of listening and speaking rather than developing cross-cultural competence. As revealed by the survey, students, despite developing cross-cultural awareness, are unable to articulate Chinese culture in front of foreign friends through learning with the textbook. The cultivation of cross-cultural competence is insufficient, as the instruction in the textbook only achieves the goal of cross-linguistic teaching, not the target of cross-cultural education.

Firstly, in terms of the breadth and depth of content, the textbook covers cultural cases from different countries and regions. However, in terms of depth, it may focus on some superficial aspects of certain cultures, lacking exploration of deeper cultural values and beliefs.

Secondly, from a practical perspective, the cross-cultural knowledge and skills provided by the textbook may not be directly applicable to everyday cross-cultural communication and solving real-world problems. Although the textbook offers some practical cross-cultural communication strategies and tips, it does not help students avoid cultural conflicts and communicate effectively in practice.

From the perspective of interactivity and engagement, the textbook includes a variety of interactive exercises and activities such as case studies, group discussions, role-plays, which can enhance student engagement and interest. If supplemented with cross-cultural guidance, it can greatly help achieve the goal of developing cross-cultural competence.

In terms of cultural sensitivity and inclusivity, while the textbook clearly aims to promote cross-cultural understanding, in some cases, descriptions of specific cultures may not be so comprehensive, and the activities designed may stay superficial in terms of cross-cultural

competence dimensions mentioned in the framework, therefore requiring more specific information presented and more complicated cross-cultural activities designed.

“*New Horizon Listening*” is a widely used English teaching material that has different degrees of advantages and limitations in terms of cross-cultural content. Its diverse content and interactive activities play a positive role in enhancing students’ cross-cultural communication skills, but there may still be room for improvement in terms of content depth, cultural sensitivity, and inclusivity. Encouraging teachers to combine external resources and activities to deepen students’ understanding and application of cross-cultural knowledge when using this material, while updating and optimizing the content in a timely manner to reflect the diversity and dynamic changes of global cultures, is key to improving teaching effectiveness.

## 6.2 The significance of the findings

The results of this study clearly indicate that there is an imbalance in the design proportion of cross-cultural content in textbooks, with a focus mainly on introducing English and American cultures, providing an overview of other cultures rather than genuine cross-cultural education. For teachers using this textbook for cross-cultural teaching, additional adjustments should be made in classroom design. It is essential to specifically select or develop concrete cross-cultural communication case studies from the textbook, organize students to analyze cultural differences, communication barriers, and resolution strategies within these case studies. Activities such as group presentations or reports can be designed to well integrate the listening and speaking skills with the cross-cultural elements. Cross-cultural communication training can also be conducted based on textbook topics, using texts or scenarios from the textbook as a starting point for enhancing cross-cultural communication skills through scenario simulations. By selecting suitable dialogues or situations from the textbook, teachers .

Attempt different communication strategies across various cultural contexts. As a leading textbook for college English listening and speaking

course, the cross-cultural teaching goals can be achieved with better selection of culture-related materials and better design of the various activities incorporating cross-cultural competence into the English listening and speaking skills.

## 6.3 Limitations of this study

Some limitations of the study are obvious. The quantitative analysis in this paper lacks depth, making it challenging to provide a more objective and measurable assessment of the teaching effectiveness of the textbook. In terms of qualitative analysis, advanced softwares such as ATLAS.ti, Nvivo and MAXQDA can be used to more accurately and scientifically evaluate the cross-culture elements in the textbook. Additionally, there is a lack of comparative analysis; it does not compare “*New Horizon Listening*” with other similar English textbooks to understand its relative strengths and weaknesses in terms of cross-cultural teaching content. Through comparative analysis, a more comprehensive evaluation of the market position and teaching value of the textbook can be achieved. Furthermore, this set of textbooks consists of multiple volumes, but this study only examines one volume, which is not comprehensive enough.

Moreover, there is a lack of teacher feedback; the article does not mention teachers’ actual experiences and feedback on the textbook. Teachers, as the main users of the textbook, provide crucial feedback for assessing its practicality and acceptability. Including their feedback can make the assessment results more comprehensive and aligned with actual teaching scenarios. With the advancement of technology and evolving educational concepts, the digitization of textbooks and online resources are becoming increasingly important. The evaluation does not mention whether the textbook provides online resources and auxiliary tools, and how these resources can be utilized to optimize cross-cultural teaching. Examining these factors can provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the suitability and effectiveness of the textbook in today’s digital teaching environment.

## 6.4 Recommendations for further research

In order to further improve the accuracy of research results, future studies could involve

in-depth interviews with teachers and students from different backgrounds to more effectively evaluate the cross-cultural content presentation effects of the textbook. Advanced softwares can be applied to present a well-organized evaluation based on grounded theory. Additionally, designing more tests to assess students' cross-cultural competence will better evaluate the cross-cultural content presentation effects of the listening, speaking, and reading materials. Furthermore, comparing this textbook with other similar ones in the market would allow for analysis of its strengths and weaknesses in terms of content, teaching methods, and cross-cultural communication design.

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# Study of College English Teachers’ Instructional Design Competence – Case Study of Teaching Methods

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 18 Aug 2024; Received in revised form: 17 Sep 2024; Accepted: 21 Sep 2024; Available online: 28 Sep 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords</b>– <i>instructional design competence, teaching method</i></p>	<p><i>Teaching competence is very important for a teacher, and it is a basic skill of every teacher. However, there are few researches on Chinese University Teachers' instructional design competence, especially from the perspective of teaching methods. In order to investigate the teaching design competence of College English teachers, this study adopts the method of case analysis. The winning works of "Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press Cup" National English teaching competition were selected as the cases. Data analysis was made by using tables to list related evaluations. Data analysis shows that most participants can choose the appropriate teaching methods according to the teaching objectives, but only a few participants can choose innovative teaching methods. It is necessary to design teaching method according to teaching content. Some teachers cannot design teaching methods reasonably, which shows that teachers' ability to match teaching content and teaching methods needs to be improved. Teaching methods should be able to promote the realization of teaching objectives. However, the research shows that the teaching methods selected by some participants cannot help promote the realization of teaching objectives. The research shows that the overall teaching design literacy of university teachers needs to be improved. If we want to get a more accurate survey of the status quo, we should also have a deeper understanding about the instructional competence of teachers.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

Language teaching is a delicate art calls for teachers’ deliberate thinking and careful design to a large extent, determines the learning effects of the students. With many factors to consider, it is no easy

job to come up with effective design which are both appropriate and instructive. College English teachers, as the designers for college English courses, need to enrich themselves with adequate knowledge in education, psychology, culture in addition to the essential disciplinary knowledge. Therefore, the teachers’ ability to design a lesson, that is, the

instructional design competence, plays an important role in producing effective learning results. Ability is the quality of being able to perform. A quality that permits or facilitates achievement or accomplishment, while competence refers to the quality of being adequately or well qualified physically and intellectually. In this study, the words of “competence” in “instructional design competence” all expressed by the word “competence”.

Instructional design is the design of what to teach and how to teach for the purpose of teaching. It is also the guarantee to improve the quality of education and teaching. Instructional design is to arrange the teaching elements according to the requirements of the curriculum standards and the characteristics of the teaching objects, and determine the vision and plan of the appropriate teaching program. It generally includes teaching objectives, teaching important and difficult points, teaching methods, teaching steps and time allocation. Instructional design competence directly reflects the teacher's professional quality and professional competence, and is also a means of realizing pedagogy optimization. It should include the competence in design classroom teaching objectives, the teaching content design ability, the competence in design classroom teaching methods and means, and the competence in design teaching models and teaching strategies. Therefore, in the course of teachers' professional development, we should attach great importance to the cultivation of teachers' instructional design quality.

Literature review shows that most previous research tends to study instructional design from different perspectives. Some people have studied the role of teaching objectives, and some have studied instructional design ability in terms of instructional steps.

Although various language teaching methods have been covered in the previous research, few studies have ever touched the instructional design competence through from the perspective of teaching methods, which is just this study is going to explore.

### 1.2 Significance of the study

The results of this study are of significance to improve the comprehensive teaching competence of teachers. At present, although many articles have studied instructional design and teaching objectives

related to teaching, there is few researches on instructional design competence in terms of teaching methods. 22 teaching demo videos together with the experts' remarks from the winners of teaching competitions are selected as typical cases for analysis, and teaching methods are the major angle I focus on in the case analysis, so as to provide reference for teachers to improve their teaching methods and improve the quality of teaching.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Studies on instructional design

Instructional design is crucial in producing effective teaching results. The research types mainly include the following aspects: the research on teachers' teaching design competence, the commonly used teaching methods in English teaching, the application of teaching methods and the direction of teaching method reform.

First of all, Yao (2014) adopted the questionnaire survey method to study the instructional design competence of junior high school English teachers. The research points out that teachers cannot flexibly choose teaching methods to carry out courses, because some teachers use TBLT for every lesson and the teaching methods are too single. Similarly, someone studied the instructional design competence of high school English teachers through literature survey, questionnaire survey and interview. The results showed that the overall instructional design competence of high school English teachers was above the average level, but the development of each competence was unbalanced. The research shows that whether the design of teaching method is reasonable or not seriously affects the smooth progress of teaching design (Zhou 2017). In addition, the teaching procedures also affects the teaching design. Fan (2021) points out that all steps of reverse instructional design are linked together and support each other. Teachers can add or subtract links according to the actual situation in the specific teaching design, so as to better promote teaching. It is also very important to cultivate students' ability of critical thinking and independent thinking. Ma (2021) pointed out that college English should build a diversified and unified course structure, pay attention to the cultivation of students' thinking, guide students to learn to analyze problems

with correct positions, viewpoints and methods, and closely combine language learning practice with thinking. The teaching design of English subject also needs to pay attention to the cultivation of students' correct ideological and political thinking. College English design should enhance the ideological and political awareness of the course, enhance their own political literacy, actively innovate teaching methods in the process of re-education and teaching, and constantly search for ideological and political education (Shen 2021).

## 2.2 Studies on teaching method

In recent years, the commonly used teaching methods in English teaching include Production-oriented Approach (POA), task-based teaching, communicative teaching, immersion teaching, content-based teaching (CBL), and project teaching and so on. Among them, there are 2631 relevant studies on TBLT.

Wu (2018) studied the application of TBLT in high school English reading by using questionnaire survey, experimental method and other methods. The results show that TBLT can improve students' interest in English reading. It is found that the correct teaching methods can stimulate students' interest in learning, but the teaching methods adopted by some teachers are not applicable to the class, and some teachers cannot choose the corresponding teaching methods according to the specific learning tasks and teaching content. Mirzaei (2018), a foreign scholar, pointed out in his research that the evaluation of student achievement plays an important role in strengthening the evaluation process in TBLT.

Some people investigated and analyzed the use of vocabulary and cohesive relationships in the writing of Saudi male students using a task-based language learning approach (Alqahtani and Elumalai 2020). The analysis of the obtained data showed that the students' linguistic competence in grammar and vocabulary improved significantly, especially in the text analysis paragraphs.

In addition, there are 1047 articles on the research of Production-oriented Approach in English teaching. Among them, Leng (2020) designed and practiced college English mixed class through experimental method. The research shows that the Production-oriented Approach has certain effect in improving the

learning motivation and listening and speaking ability of middle and low level English learners. Similarly, studying the application of Production-oriented Approach (POA) in English teaching through case investigation, and the results showed that POA could improve students' comprehensive quality to a certain extent. At the same time, it can also improve the teaching quality in a certain sense, which has a positive effect (Zhang 2020).

In addition, there are 2658 articles on communicative teaching method. Zhang (2020) analyzed the situation of communicative teaching method in mastering modal verbs of junior high school students through experimental method and interview method, and the results showed that communicative teaching method was beneficial to students' mastering of modal verbs as a whole. Foreign scholars studied the application of CLT method in Bangladesh. Although the Bangladeshi English curriculum is part of the official curriculum, there is a lack of management support in teacher training, CLT use, and the implementation of CLT (Ray and Roy 2017).

At present, there are 1331 studies on immersion teaching method. Luan and Guo (2011) conducted an empirical study on the application of immersion teaching method in English teaching of North China University of Science and Technology. Experimental and survey results show that immersion students improve more quickly in productive skills such as writing and speaking than students in traditional instruction. It also shows that immersion teaching is a feasible alternative to the traditional teaching mode.

At present, 741 literatures have analyzed the content - based approach. Using testing, questionnaire, interview, observation and other research tools to study the content teaching method in high school English reading learning (Li 2020). The experiment shows that the content teaching method has a positive influence on the high school students' academic performance, reading ability and learning attitude.

At present, more than 20,000 literature references have analyzed the project teaching method. Zhu (2019) explored the application of PBL in English in higher vocational colleges, and his research pointed out that PBL has absolute advantages over traditional teaching methods. PBL successfully solves many traditional

problems, but it also cleverly avoids some teaching obstacles. Students master English knowledge in the process of completing the project, improve their language ability and enrich their English learning experience (Yue 2019).

### 2.3 Study on instructional design competence

Instructional design competence is a key factor to measure a teacher's teaching level. Chang (2021) investigated the teaching ability of middle school students. The research shows that teachers lack the consciousness of student-centered instruction; the knowledge foundation research is not enough; the setting of teaching objectives is too high or too low; the teaching design involves insufficient attention to the learning situation; the setting of teaching objectives do not conform to the current learning ability of students. Instructional design competence also refers to the ability of teachers to deal with teaching contents according to students' cognitive characteristics and choose appropriate teaching modes and methods, so as to achieve the best teaching results and corresponding abilities. Yang (2021) pointed out in his research that the teaching design competence level of domestic colleges and universities is not balanced, which is related to the local economy, ideology and culture. At present, there are many university teachers without experience of learning education-related courses in colleges and universities, but the requirements for the teaching design ability of normal university students are much higher. However, most normal university students choose the teaching method which is easy to control and do not have a good understanding of three-dimensional goals (Li and Dai, 2019). Similarly, Li and Yang (2019) also conducted research on the teaching design ability of normal university students, and the research showed that the teaching design ability tended to improve with the increase of grades. In general, the instructional design ability of teaching is often influenced by the teaching cognition. Some teachers are not familiar with the basic theories and methods of teacher learning design, so students can not be active in class, and their teaching design ability needs to be improved (Huang and Chen 2019).

### 2.4 Evaluation

Teaching methods play an important role in instructional design and are being studied by more

and more scholars. At present, the existing research on teaching methods mainly includes the implementation of specific teaching methods, the role of teaching methods, and whether the application of teaching objectives is correct or not. Most of the researches seem to focus on the teaching method, but there are few researches on analyzing the teaching design competence from the teaching competition especially from the hierarchical analysis of teaching method. This study will analyze teachers' instructional design competence by analyzing the teaching demo videos of the excellent contestants and the comments made by the language teaching experts.

## III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to clearly analyze the relationship between teachers' teaching methods and their teaching design competence, it is very necessary to understand what is teaching design and teaching design ability, the concept of various teaching methods.

### 3.1 Instructional design

#### 3.1.1 The concepts of instructional design

Smith and Reagan pointed out that instructional design is a method of transforming the principles of learning theory and instructional theory into instructional materials. (Yao 2014). Instructional design is a knowledge about how to use systematic methods to analyze teaching problems and find solutions. It is a kind of idea, a process and a technology (*ibid*). When analyzing teaching objectives, we usually analyze them from the following three points: knowledge and skills, process and method, emotional attitudes and values. When analyzing the teaching content, we usually focus on the student. Analyze what students are learning and how they are going to learn.

The main content of instructional design includes analysis, design and evaluation. Analysis refers to the analysis of teaching content and teaching object; Design includes the setting of teaching objectives and the design of the teaching process to achieve the teaching objectives. Teaching objective design is an important content of teaching design. It is one of the most important tasks of instructional design to determine appropriate and good teaching objectives. The theory and technology of classification of teaching



objectives put forward by teaching psychologists at home and abroad provide a theoretical basis for us to understand teaching objectives comprehensively and correctly, analyze and design teaching objectives scientifically, and lay an operable technical foundation. The choice of teaching method is generally based on three aspects: according to the current learning task, is to impart learning knowledge, or form some skills and skills; According to the characteristics of the content of the textbook, is it factual knowledge or theoretical knowledge, is it more or less, is it scientific or artistic, and so on; According to the age characteristics of the students, is the senior grade or the junior grade, the knowledge foundation and psychological preparation. Of course, other factors should be considered, such as the conditions that schools and places can provide, including social conditions, natural conditions, material equipment, etc.; the teacher's own condition, student's age characteristic and so on. Instructional evaluation design refers to the design of methods to test whether students' learning has reached the expected results. The specific content needs to include teaching objective design, teaching content design, teaching time design, teaching measures design, and teaching evaluation design.

### 3.1.2 The instructional design competence

According to Yang (2021) instructional design competence refers to the competence of teachers to design the teaching content and teaching process while mastering the classroom and teaching content, and to complete the teaching work and the task of educating students. Instructional design competence is very important for teachers. If the teacher's teaching design competence is very poor, or does not have the teaching design competence at all, then the teaching quality and classroom atmosphere will be greatly affected, which is not conducive to students' learning. Education is undergoing reform from time to time, especially nowadays, with the unprecedented development of information technology, quite different forms like flipped classroom and MOOCs have prevailed in many universities. College teachers, on the one hand, should be able to keep pace with the change and development, and on the other, however, needs to stick to the very basic principles of teaching design. Whatever the form is, the elements and process of teaching design is not altered. For example,

based on the analysis of teaching content and students' needs, certain teaching methods should be adopted in language teaching as to effectively improve students' language competence. In this study, teaching methods will be the main focus to analyze the teaching design competence of teachers.

## 3.2 Teaching methods

### 3.2.1 The concepts of teaching methods

Teaching methodology consists of four levels: guiding ideology, basic methods, specific methods and teaching methods. Teaching methods include two aspects: Teachers' teaching methods and students' learning methods, which are the unity of teaching methods and learning methods. The teaching method must be based on the learning method, otherwise it will not achieve the expected goal effectively due to the lack of pertinence and feasibility. But because the teacher is in the leading position in the teaching process, so in the teaching method and learning method, the teaching method is in the leading position.

### 3.2.2 The concepts of communicative language teaching

Communicative language teaching method is produced by the joint efforts of English linguist Wilkins, Widdowson, Brunfit and American educationalist Savignon and sociolinguist Hymes. CLT is an educational method that aims at students' acquiring practical communication skills. In order to achieve this goal, teachers need to follow the democratic autonomy and respect for the teaching of English communicative approach equality concept, on the premise of personality equality between teachers and students, and achieve the same teaching effect, at the same time it can promote teachers and students' common progress, common development and common improvement.

The learning theory of communicative approach points out that the teaching content and teaching method must start from the needs of students. We should first analyze the needs of students for the use of foreign language, and then select the language form and function suitable for learning through the needs analysis. In teaching English, we should respect students' personality and needs, emotions and interests, advantages and disadvantages. Through the education of encouragement, praise and love, students' enthusiasm and initiative can be promoted,

fully realize the humanization of language teaching, highlight students' subject status, stimulate students' subject consciousness, develop students' learning potential, and truly realize the optimization of language teaching process.

### 3.2.3 The concepts of task-based teaching

Task-based language teaching refers to the teaching that the teacher guides the language learners to complete the task in the class. This is a language teaching method that emphasizes "learning by doing", which emerged in the 1980s. It is the development of communicative teaching method and has attracted widespread attention in the world language education circle. This teaching theory of "doing things with the language" has gradually been introduced into basic English classroom teaching in China, which is a trend of China's foreign language teaching reform. This theory holds that language mastery is mostly the result of using language in activities, rather than the result of training language skills and learning language knowledge. In teaching activities, teachers should design specific and operable tasks around specific communication and language projects, and students should complete the tasks through various forms of language activities, such as expression, communication, negotiation, explanation and inquiry, so as to achieve the purpose of learning and mastering the language. TBLT is formed by absorbing the advantages of many previous teaching methods, and it is not exclusive to other teaching methods.

Specifically, the task-driven method is mainly to guide students to complete related goals and tasks independently, and analyze the mistakes and problems existing in the learning process of students through cooperative discussion after the completion of the task, and correct them in time, and put forward corresponding suggestions. Thus it can be seen that TBLT can guide students to apply what they have learned and effectively combine theory with practice.

### 3.2.4 The concepts of production-oriented approach (POA)

POA is a people-oriented teaching method. Teachers should respect and love students, cultivate their social attributes and personality, and promote their all-round and sustainable development.

Production-Oriented Approach (POA) is a new classroom teaching theory with Chinese

characteristics constructed by Professor Wen Qiufang from Beijing Foreign Studies University on the basis of 'output driven hypothesis'. Output-oriented method is mainly divided into three parts: teaching theory part, teaching hypothesis part and teaching link part. The teaching theory includes the learning center theory and the whole person education theory. The teaching assumptions include output driven, input driven and selective learning; the teaching part includes three stages: driving, facilitating and evaluating. Among them, the teaching idea is the guiding ideology, the teaching hypothesis is the theoretical support, the teaching process is the realization of the other two parts, and the teacher's intermediary role should run through each link of the teaching process (Tang and Zhang 2020).

By using the output-oriented approach to teach English, students can acquire professional knowledge, cultivate their humanistic quality, further realize their all-round development, and cultivate all-round high-level foreign language talents suitable for the development of the new era.

### 3.2.5 The concepts of content-based instruction (CBL)

CBL is a kind of second language teaching mode, which integrates subject content or academic content with language teaching activities. According to Lei (2006), students' learning focus is to obtain information through the second language and develop language skills in the process. This means that language learning and content learning are inseparable. But the main goal is to learn the content rather than focus on language learning. The theoretical basis of CBL is mainly based on the research of cognitive science and second language. Studies have shown that all human intellectual activities, such as thinking, communication, problem solving and learning, urgently need both process and content knowledge. Students' cognitive ability can't be improved to a higher level by just relying on reading, writing and critical thinking. Content knowledge is the foundation to ensure the good operation of these "processes". The core goal of CBL teaching mode is to cultivate the content rather than the language knowledge and skills, not to develop the

learning strategies, emotions and attitudes or form the self-concept. Language is just a medium to get content, it is a by-product of content learning (Wang 2017).

### 3.2.6 The concepts of lecturing method

Teaching method refers to the process of teachers' teaching through language. It mainly includes five forms: explanation, reading, narration, speech and comment. Among them, explanation refers to teachers' explanation of concepts, principles, laws, formulas and examples, which is more suitable for science teaching. Speaking and reading refers to the teaching mode that teachers combine explanation with practice in the process of language teaching. Narration refers to the fact that teachers use descriptive or narrative materials in the teaching process. Speech refers to a long speech way to discuss. It can be in-depth analysis of facts, and draw conclusions.

### 3.2.7 The concepts of demonstration method

Demonstration method refers to the teacher through the use of some teaching aids or physical teaching method. In this process, students' observation ability has been trained. There are many kinds of demonstration, including the demonstration of objects, specimens and models; demonstration of photos, pictures and videos; demonstration of experimental operation.

### 3.2.8 The concepts of practice method

Practice method refers to the way that teachers arrange classroom exercises and homework so that students can consolidate what they have learned. Consciously completing a certain activity repeatedly can consolidate the knowledge more effectively. The basic requirements of the exercise method are as follows: to clarify the purpose and operation requirements; the operation steps are clear; the difficulty of operation is moderate; feedback and summary are timely.

### 3.2.9 The concepts of discussion method

Discussion method refers to groups of students discussing the teacher's questions. Each member expresses his or her own views, discusses and approaches the issue itself through argument. Before the discussion, the teacher needs to clarify the topic requirements. Students need to collect relevant information and outline their speeches. In the process

of discussion, teachers need to make appropriate guidance.

## IV. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Research Question

Through watching and analyzing the teaching demo videos of the winning contestants of the teaching competition, combined with the analysis of the comments by the language teaching experts, this study mainly focuses on the teaching methods employed by the contestants, with a purpose to find out the appropriate application of teaching methods and provide reference for teachers' self-development. Therefore, this study will set out to answer the following questions.

Question 1: Can the teaching methods applied by college English teachers help to achieve the teaching objectives?

Question 2: Can college English teachers design appropriate activities based on the teaching methods?

Question 3: What is the status of instructional design competence of college English teachers in terms of the choice of teaching methods?

### 4.2 Case selection

In this study, 22 award-winning teaching design works from the "SFLEP (Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press) Cup" National English Teaching Contest will be selected as case studies. They represent the higher level of instructional design of teachers in Chinese colleges and universities in China and help to reveal the current situation of instructional design competence and teachers' teaching quality.

### 4.3 Standard of analysis

In order to analyze the teaching methods of the winning works, this research mainly focuses on the following four aspects.

(1) Teachers' teaching methods should meet the requirements of the teaching objectives.

(2) Teachers should choose teaching methods according to the characteristics of students.

(3) Teachers should design teaching activities according to the teaching methods.

(4) Teachers' teaching methods should be able to mobilize students to take part in the class activities.

#### 4.4 Case analysis

This study only analyzes the teaching methods of the awarded works. It is analyzed from three aspects: the choice of teaching methods, the application of teaching methods, and the effect of teaching methods.

For the analysis, 22 teaching demo videos will be analyzed to find out the teaching methods used and the effectiveness of the methods. At the same time, the teaching experts' comments will also be included as an important reference for the teaching methods used. In this process, I watched all the teaching videos, including the lecture videos, and wrote down each teacher's teaching objectives, teaching methods, students' responses, teaching steps and teaching activities. The teaching design competence of teachers is analyzed with expert comments.

## V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Overall status of teachers' instructional design competence

Through the analysis of teaching videos, lecture videos and expert comments, it is found that the teaching level of most of the teachers participating in the competition is high, but there are still some problems in their teaching which need to be improved.

#### 5.1.1. Comments on overall instructional design

The following table is the analysis and statistics of expert comments on the participants' performance. From different aspects including the teaching design, teaching objectives, teaching methods, teaching procedures, teaching state, language expression, classroom interaction, the overall teaching effect were analyzed.

Table 5-1 Classification of expert comments

	Positive comments	Neutral comments	Negative comments
Teaching design	15	1	5
Teaching objectives	14	1	5
Teaching methods	8	1	1
Teaching procedure	11	1	0
The teaching outlooks	18	1	0
The language use	16	3	0
Classroom interaction	7	3	5
Overall teaching effect	8	0	1

Among the 22 teaching presentations, there are 21 pieces of comments on teaching design, 20 on teaching objectives, 10 on teaching methods, 12 on teaching steps, 19 on the teaching status, 19 on language expression and language, 15 comments on classroom interaction, 9 on the overall teaching effect. (Table 5-1)

Judging from the number of positive, neutral and negative comments, it can be seen that the experts generally provide positive feedback on the teaching performance of most contestants, with the total

positive comments accounting for 78%, neutral comments 9% and negative comments 13%. In terms of positive comments, experts are mostly satisfied with the general teaching design, the teaching objectives, the teaching status and the language use. As to the neutral and negative comments, the least satisfactory aspects also go to teaching design and teaching objectives. In addition, classroom interaction is also one of the link in the instructional design, which may be attributable to the limitation of time and space of the contest form. (Table 5-1)

Table 5-2 Specific comments on instructional design

Teaching design	Comply with the law; Complete and reasonable; Clarity; Time allocation is not reasonable; Clear steps; Insufficient diversification and single mode; Clear logic and uneven time allocation; Student-centered, natural and reasonable; Regular, well-designed, excellent; Exquisite design; Complete, clear and logical; The design is complete; Clear; Complete; Completeness and uneven
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	time allocation; Better; Complete and coherent, hierarchical, methodical and challenging; Need to adjust; Not reasonable enough; Reasonable time arrangement; Reasonable, clear level;
Teaching objectives	Suitable for teaching content; Clear (12 teachers); Not clear; It's reasonable; Clear and reasonable; Not clear; The goal statement is too general; Not prominent enough reasonable; Too broad;
Teaching methods	Properly (3 teachers); Task-based teaching method; Sapient teaching methods; Task-based teaching method, no innovation; Appropriate and promote the effective realization of teaching objectives; It does not match the teaching objectives; Flexible and diversified, and properly used; Choose the right method;
Teaching procedure	Natural and smooth; Reasonable, clear, smooth; Clear; Link to link; Nature; Reasonable; Connecting nature; Connecting nature; It's natural and reasonable; Reasonable; Clear; Transition natural;
The teaching outlooks	Have a passion; Nature (3 teachers); Coherent; Kind, natural, generous; Clear thinking, natural, strong affinity, clear instructions; Natural, friendly; Affinity; Teaching nature; Teaching attitude and natural affinity; At one go; Have affinity; Be generous; The moral attitude is kind; Better affinity, dignified and generous, slightly nervous enough to relax natural; Full of passion; Dignified appearance, natural teaching attitude, rich affinity; The teaching attitude is natural, warm and generous, dignified and calm, expressive force and appeal;
The language use	Clear; Fluent in oral English (8 teachers); Good basic language skills; Moderate speed and fluent language; Fluent oral expression, occasional grammatical errors; Fluent and natural expression, but individual pronunciation is not accurate; Natural, smooth and concise; Good English expression skills; Fluent and smooth, accurate pronunciation and intonation; The pronunciation and intonation are accurate and natural, and the expression is smooth. Language refinement;
Classroom interaction	Good(3 teachers); Good, active; self Q&A, the question of machinery; Formal; Too little interaction; Harmonious atmosphere; Good interaction; Better; Yes; Good and diversified forms of interaction; Not bad; Monologue; Less interaction;
Overall teaching effect	Good(4 teachers); Very good; Not ideal; Be satisfactory; High quality; A clear hierarchy;

Table 5-2 offers specific information concerning the experts' comments on different aspects of the teaching performance. On the whole, the teaching design ability of the participating teachers affirmed by the experts. Among the 22 expert comments, 15 are positive, 1 is neutral and 5 are negative. In terms of positive comments, experts use such words as "Complete and reasonable", "reasonable time allocation", "clear procedure", etc. to show their agreement and recognition to the participants' teaching design ability. In case A, Gu qiupei won the second prize of the English major group in the third "SFLEP Cup" teaching competition. In the teaching design, time is properly allocated. The expert gave positive evaluation, "the teacher also has good theoretical literacy in applied linguistics, strong classroom design ability, and very careful lesson

preparation. She not only prepared a large number of image materials, but also had clear teaching objectives and reasonable time arrangement, reflecting a higher comprehensive language teaching literacy." The negative comments mainly focus on the unreasonable time allocation and single teaching mode.

#### 5.1.2. Comments on teaching objectives

The instructional design in the teaching objectives has also been affirmed by experts. Among the 20 comments, 14 are positive, 1 neutral and 5 negative. In the eyes of the experts, most teachers can design clear and reasonable teaching objectives corresponding to the teaching content, but the primary weakness in the design is the lack of specifics in the wording, for example, in case B, the winner of the second prize of the English major group in the 10th "SFLEP Cup",

Yang Dou's teaching goal is not clear enough. The experts expressed their negative comments on the teaching objectives. The specific contents are as follows: "Mr. Yang has set up three-dimensional teaching objectives of knowledge, skills and consciousness, in which 'skills objectives' have specific descriptions of listening and speaking skills such as note taking, comparison and contrast, and consciousness objectives are also more specific, but the descriptions of objectives such as knowledge objects are words and expressions are not accurate enough. It fails to reflect the measurability of goals and lacks a clear definition of cognitive levels."

### 5.1.3. Comments on teaching methods

Compared with other contents, experts' direct comments on teaching methods are not many. Among the 10 comments, 8 are positive, one is neutral and one is negative. Most teaching methods applied are considered as "proper" according to the experts, and task-based method is most widely used method in the teaching. For example, in case C, Liang Ye, the 10th "SFLEP Cup" teaching competition, won the special prize of audio-visual and oral class group. In the teaching process, he showed that he adopted the task-based driving method. The main task is listening and memorizing. Experts gave positive evaluation on the design and use of this teaching method" From the performance of the students, most of them can write down the information, which shows that the teaching effect is good, and that the difficulty of listening materials is in line with the students' level." The weakness displayed in teaching methods is lack of variety and innovation, and inadequate correspondence with the teaching objectives.

### 5.1.4 Comments on teaching procedure, teaching outlooks and language use

Regarding the teaching procedure, teaching outlooks and language use, which are the very fundamental elements of instructional design, no negative comments are made. The teaching outlooks and language use, in particular, get a high degree of approval from the experts, showing that the teachers' appropriacy in attitude, affinity, passion and appearance, as well as the good command of the language in the classroom. Reasonable and clear teaching steps are designed and the transitions are natural.

### 5.1.5 Comments on classroom interaction

Classroom interaction are generally "good", "active" and "diversified", but it also gets the highest percentage of negative comments (33%), with some teachers employ little interaction or even monologue during the teaching presentation. Although limited by the time and number of students, there are still large space for developing interaction with students, which is crucial in producing good teaching results.

### 5.1.6 Summary

Talking about the overall effects, most teaching performance are categorized as "good", although some are not ideal, indicating that teachers need to further refine their teaching design in order to produce satisfactory teaching effects.

Instructional design ability is the embodiment of teachers' teaching quality. According to the expert reviews, instructional design ability is very important in the teaching competition. Among them, 85% of the contestants' teaching designs were approved by experts (table 5-1). Among them, the teachers with excellent instructional design ability set clear goals, employ appropriate teaching methods and create good overall classroom effect.

Based on case F, experts commented that teacher Liu Leyin's teaching design and teaching are excellent, with specific teaching objectives. The purpose is to help students master the main idea and important details of the video center, and focus on the design and teaching of listening teaching process. In particular, the teacher attaches importance to the application of teaching methods, and the overall effect of the class is good. The results show that the choice of teaching methods is particularly important in the teaching process, which will affect the progress of the teaching and the effect of students' learning, so teachers should attach great importance to the teaching methods. Therefore, the selection of teaching methods is an important embodiment of teaching design ability.

## 5.2 Correspondence of teaching methods with teaching objectives

### 5.2.1 The design of teaching objectives

Through observation and analysis of the awarded teaching design videos, it is confirmed that most of the participants can set clear the teaching objectives based on Bloom's taxonomy. In their teaching objectives,

different categories of verbs are used, such as “explore the impacts” “review the reading skill” “acquire new words and phrases” on the knowledge level; “identify stereotypes” on the comprehension level; “apply listening skills” “illustrate points of view with relevant examples” on the apply level; “analyze the cause of stereotypes” “analysis the social facts” on the analysis level; “collect information” “construct on understanding” in the synthesis level; “evaluating the importance of space research” on the evaluation level. Meanwhile, appropriate teaching methods are employed in the teaching process to achieve the teaching objectives. However, there are also a small number of teachers who cannot make clear the teaching objectives. Experts point out there are five teachers who cannot choose the appropriate teaching methods according to the teaching objectives. The result also shows that many teachers may not be clear about the teaching objectives before choosing teaching methods, nor can they find appropriate teaching methods.

#### 5.2.2 Application of teaching methods to achieve teaching objectives

Based on the analysis of the cases, it is found that most of the teachers have clear teaching objectives and proper teaching methods. In Case D, Ms. Zhang Zinian’s work won the first prize in the 10th competition. The teaching objectives are as follows: 1) learning the cause-and-effect structure; 2) learn the topic related expressions to express gratitude; 3) appreciate the power of gratitude; 4) know the ways of expressing gratitude in the West.

In the teaching process, Ms. Zhang put forward her own teaching method as content-based language teaching (CLT). The teaching methods are appropriate, good at asking heuristic questions, inspiring students' positive thinking, applying and enriching knowledge of world culture, and promoting the effective realization of teaching objectives through good teacher-student interaction, the expert wrote in the review. At first, in the introduction part of the class, Ms. Zhang asked the students who are the ordinary “Heroes” around them to make them feel the importance of gratitude; by asking “why do lunch women serve granite?” she let the students think about the relationship between cause and effect; by watching t's speech and repeating the sentences in the video, she let the students learn how to express their

gratitude in the West; by asking the students what they feel after getting thanks, she let them know the power of gratitude. This example shows that teachers can choose appropriate teaching methods according to their teaching objectives.

In the course of teaching plan presentation (Case E, first-prize winner of the comprehensive course group of the 10th “SFLEP Cup” teaching competition), Ms. Xiong indicated that his teaching objectives include: to enhance students' understanding of the importance of space exploration in China; to help students enhance their awareness of academic English learning; and to help students master the writing skills of exploration writing. The goal is clear, which reflects the teachers' own teaching concept. As for the teaching method, Ms. Xiong adopts the POA method which is suitable for College English learners in China. The teaching activities are designed from three aspects: driving, facilitating and evaluating. The method is new and focuses on the “student-centered learning” since most time students take the initiative to perform various activities. The driving stage enables the students to realize the shortcomings of completing the unit project, so as to stimulate the students' learning enthusiasm.

Liu Leyin (Case F, second-prize winner of the comprehensive course group of the 10th “SFLEP Cup” teaching competition) attaches great importance to the comprehensive application of listening teaching methods, including task-based teaching method and top-down and bottom-up listening teaching method, which are effective methods to enable students to achieve the teaching goal of “applying listening skills”.

In Case G ( first-prize winner of the comprehensive course group of the 10th “SFLEP Cup” teaching competition ) , Fan Yuan's teacher's ability to choose teaching methods needs to be improved. Experts have commented on whether the peer approach chosen by teachers really contributes to teaching goals. In Case H ( second-prize winner of the comprehensive course group of the 10th “SFLEP Cup” teaching competition ) , Gao Jie adopts the task-based teaching method to teach, but the specific tasks are not focused and lack of systematic sorting and layer by layer promotion.

The above cases reflect the possession of instructional design competence by the participating

teachers to a large extent. However, most still cannot use the teaching methods properly with an eye to achieving teaching objectives, and the application of different teaching methods in the specific teaching also shows a lack of deep understanding of the teaching methods, which should be greatly enhanced through theory learning and a lot of practice.

### 5.3 Correspondence of teaching methods with teaching content

#### 5.3.1 Application of teaching methods in promoting teaching content

Teaching content, to a large extent, affects the choice of teaching methods and appropriate teaching methods would greatly enhance the teaching effectiveness of the teaching content. For instance, for practice-centered courses like Import and Export Practice, task-based method is more suitable than other methods since pedagogical tasks are more easily designed and implemented in the classroom with better teaching effects; for ESP (English for Specific Purposes) course like Legal English and Medical English, content-based language is a better choice because the language knowledge and skills are naturally acquired through the learning of the specific disciplinary knowledge.

In the case C, the teaching content of Mr. Liang Ye is listening and speaking, and the task-based teaching method is adopted (she mentioned in her presentation). The objectives are listening, TED talks, extended listening, speaking, and presentation. Mr. Liang has prepared listening materials and additional video materials to stimulate students' interest in learning and assigns a task, which is closely connected with the students' life and greatly arouses the interest of the students. Through the completion of the task, the students not only acquire more knowledge about sports shoes, but learn many useful expressions and sentence patterns in expressing similar ideas. This case shows that teachers can choose the right teaching method according to the teaching content. However, there are still some teachers who cannot establish appropriate teaching methods according to the teaching content. For example, Wang Xiaopei (case I, second-prize winner of the comprehensive course group of the 10th "SFLEP Cup") selected SAPIENT teaching method, but failed to design a more suitable teaching method based on the teaching content.

Therefore, the ability of teachers to design teaching methods based on teaching content needs to be improved.

#### 5.3.2 Appropriacy of teaching methods with teaching content

Through watching the videos of lecturing, it is found that whether innovative or not, most teachers adopt appropriate teaching methods according to the teaching content to some extent. However, some teachers lack the competence to appropriately use the teaching methods in presenting the teaching content.

The video Liang Ye (case C) used is about the report about the successful landing of Chang'e-4 lunar probe on the far side of the moon. The teaching content of this class is the listening materials (sneaker heads) provided by the Organizing Committee of the competition. In addition, Mr. Liang Ye added a short video (sneaker heads) of about 40 seconds. The content is closely related to the voice part, which stimulates students' interest and effectively develops the voice part. The teaching content is complete, the teaching focus is clear, the teaching interaction is natural and frequent, and the teaching effect is good. In the while-task phase, there are five tasks (why, how, where, what, output). For the first four tasks, four different forms of exercises were designed to check whether students understood the main content and details of the video. The fifth task is to divide the students into groups according to the contents of the first four tasks, and then ask the students to do some output exercises by using the mind-map combined with the information they have mastered, and retell the content of the video. The teacher chooses the appropriate teaching method according to the teaching target, which makes the class progress smoothly.

Ms. Zhou (case J, first-prize winner of the comprehensive course group of the 10th "SFLEP Cup") mentioned that TBLT and CLT would be used in lesson explanation. Ms. Zhang pointed out that the main content of classroom teaching is listening audio. Students will be asked to answer the corresponding questions after listening to the materials. For example, what China has ever done in space exploration; which one is the reason that the moon is called dark side; why China is the first country to do this; discuss with groups about the significance of China's first time



explorer of dark side of the moon. On the whole, task-based teaching method and discussion teaching method are more suitable when listening materials are used as teaching contents. It a good way for students listen to the material with questions, because it could not only exercise the students' listening ability, but also expand the teaching effect through the appropriate teaching methods. From the experts' comments: "for the part of "task cycle" mentioned by the teacher, there are not only students' discussion, but also specific listening tasks. The cohesion of teaching steps is also good, and the whole teaching design has good operability." It can be found that Teacher Zhou did not accurately understand the meaning and relationship of these two. This was also reflected in the question and answer session of the judges.

### 5.3.3 Comparison of teaching methods for the same teaching content

For the same content of listening and speaking course "Missions to the Moon China's Chang'e Program: Missions to the Moon", Ms. Xiong uses the POA teaching method, while Ms. Liang Ye adopts the task-based teaching method. Expert's evaluation of Liang Ye's classroom design is "fully embodies its teaching philosophy with clear goals, appropriate methods, reasonable process, integrity and operationally", while Ms. Xiong's POA teaching method is suitable for College English learners in China. The teaching activities are designed from three aspects: driving, facilitating and evaluating. The method is innovative and the operation is smooth.

On the whole, the teaching design competence of the two teachers was affirmed by the expert judges. Based on different teaching objectives, the two teachers adopts different teaching methods, with one method of long history around the world (TBL) and one method of short history with Chinese characteristics. Whether innovative or not, both methods have produced good teaching effects of the same teaching content, which is strong evidence that proper use of teaching methods will help to better the teaching performance and results.

## 5.4 Correspondence of teaching activities with teaching methods

### 5.4.1 Definition and functions of teaching activities

Classroom teaching activities are to pass new knowledge information to students through activities, or review and consolidate the learned language content. It can arouse students' initiative and enthusiasm to the greatest extent, inspire students' thinking, develop their intelligence and trigger their thirst for knowledge, so as to achieve the purpose of language teaching. Therefore, teaching activities have special charm for English classroom teaching. It can activate the classroom atmosphere and enhance students' interest in learning, eliminate students learning language psychological pressure, improve students' English listening and speaking ability, better help students acquire the language, help teachers to explore the potential of students in many aspects.

Activity teaching refers to a type of teaching activities that integrates the form of activities into teaching around the teaching objectives (Hong Zirui et al.,1999). Activity teaching has the dual characteristics of activity and teaching. Traditional teaching activities include group discussion, role play, presentation, listening practice, classroom games, etc.

To be specific, activity teaching has the following characteristics: First, activity teaching is designed by teachers according to teaching objectives and teaching content. It aims to serve the teaching content, that is to say, activity teaching not only has the purpose of entertainment, but also has the function of cognitive challenge, in order to promote the cognitive development of students.

Secondly, activity teaching usually takes the teaching content as the material to design hypothetical situations. Activity teaching is composed of activity form and teaching content, activity task and teaching task basically coincide, and teaching task can be realized in hidden way in activities. For example, the teaching content and tasks of "Find Friends" activities are often letter categorization, word categorization, etc.

### 5.4.2 Forms of teaching activities employed by contestants

In English language teaching in colleges and universities, the frequently used teaching activities include warming-up, brainstorming, role play, group

discussion, tasks, scenario simulation, teaching aids display, etc..

Table 5-3 Summary of Teaching Activities

Role play	1
Group discussion	10
Task	22
Teaching aids display	1

According to Table 5.3, we know that there is a total of 1 teacher using role-playing teaching activities. 10 teachers used group discussion teaching activities; 22 participating teachers used task-driven teaching activities; 1 teacher used teaching aids to help students get into the classroom better. The participating teachers usually have exercises in class to help students consolidate what they have learned in order to achieve their teaching goals.

#### 5.4.3 Correspondence of teaching activities with teaching methods

After choosing a good teaching method based on teaching objectives, the design of teachers' activities has become the key to the teaching process. If teachers choose the appropriate teaching method, but their activity design cannot match the teaching method, the overall teaching effect will be greatly reduced.

In case E, experts commented on Wang Xiaopei's teaching process. The choice of teaching methods is appropriate, but the ability of teaching design needs to be improved. In the teaching process, do not listen to the demands of students, blindly according to their own design to complete the course. As a result, the overall teaching effect is poor, in the teaching mode of self-question and self-answer, the students do not really learn, and the teaching goal has not been achieved.

### 5.5 Summary

This study found that different participants have different emphasis in the process of instructional design. Some teachers can choose appropriate teaching methods and design reasonable teaching activities according to teaching objectives. However, there are still a few participants who cannot make clear the teaching objectives, choose appropriate teaching methods and design reasonable teaching

activities. In addition, contestants can design teaching methods based on teaching objectives, which promotes the smooth completion of teaching objectives. However, the current choice of teaching methods is more inclined to the traditional task-based teaching method. Although this teaching method can effectively achieve the teaching objectives, from the perspective of innovation, the choice of teaching methods can be more diversified. All participants can design teaching methods, but few can be innovative.

This study shows that the design competence of most teachers' teaching methods needs to be strengthened, and the comprehensive teaching design literacy needs to be improved.

## VI. CONCLUSION

### 6.1 Majors findings

In order to analyze teachers' instructional design literacy, this research focuses on teachers' instructional method design.

First of all, most participants can choose appropriate teaching methods according to the teaching objectives. But only a few contestants can choose innovative teaching methods.

Secondly, some teachers can choose appropriate teaching methods and design reasonable teaching activities according to the teaching objectives. However, there are still a few participants who are unable to make clear the teaching objectives, choose the appropriate teaching methods and design reasonable teaching activities.

Finally, most of the participants can choose the appropriate teaching method. No matter whether it is innovative or not, the two teaching methods have produced a good teaching effect for the same teaching content, which is a strong evidence that the correct use of teaching methods is conducive to improving the teaching effect and effectiveness

Through this study, we can draw the conclusion that university teachers need to pay attention to the cultivation of teaching quality, in the aspect of teaching design, especially in the establishment of teaching methods.

### 6.2 Implications of the study

The results of this study clearly show that some

participants have deficiencies in the design of teaching methods and teaching activities, which may affect the development of teachers' teaching design competence, leading to poor teaching results. In order to improve the quality of teaching design, we should carry out teacher training activities and propaganda activities as much as possible, so that teachers can be more innovative in choosing teaching methods and achieve teaching objectives more effectively. The teaching method seems to be simple, but we should gain a deeper understanding about the application of them and take them as the basis to improve the quality of teaching design.

### 6.3 Limitations of the study

As a study of the current situation of teachers' instructional design competence, this study only selected 22 award-winning instructional design works from three sessions of the "Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press SFLEP Cup" National English teaching competition as cases, which may lead to the narrow coverage of college English teachers, which to some extent affects the accuracy of the research results. Moreover, this study mainly focuses on the analysis of teachers' teaching methods, teaching process, teaching design and expert comments, and does not cover personal communication with the teachers themselves for a more in-depth understanding, which may make the survey results inaccurate.

### 6.4 Suggestions for further study

In order to improve the reliability of the research results, some other measures may be involved in the future research. On the basis of case analysis of teachers, through interviews with different teachers, including the analysis of each part of the teaching design, we can more specifically understand the ideas of teachers and get more reasonable and reliable research results.

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# Realism Revisited: Language as Reflection in ‘The Humans’ through Lukács and Austin Lenses

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 25 Aug 2024; Received in revised form: 27 Sep 2024; Accepted: 03 Oct 2024; Available online: 10 Oct 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords – Social realism, Speech act, linguistic utterances, interpersonal relationships</b></p>	<p><i>This study employs Georg Lukács’s social realism and J.L. Austin’s speech act theory to analyse Stephen Karam’s play “The Humans” to explore the relationship between societal realism and linguistic utterances in play. Using a qualitative analysis approach, the researchers identified instances of social realism and speech acts in text. It examines how the play portrays everyday struggles and societal issues while also delving into the impact of language on interpersonal relationships. By adopting an interdisciplinary approach, this study provides valuable insights into how language reflects societal realities within the context of play. In “The Humans,” the study contributes to scholarly discourse by emphasizing the significance of characters’ speech acts in conveying societal dynamics.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

A drama is a powerful medium for exploring universal themes, societal reflections, and human experiences. Through intricate character dynamics and compelling narratives, dramas delve into themes such as love, power, and identity, resonating deeply with the audience. This study takes a multidisciplinary approach to offer valuable insights into how language mirrors societal realities within the play. This study, focusing specifically on “The Humans,” adds to academic discussions by highlighting the importance of characters’ speeches in portraying societal dynamics. This study aims to reveal subtle interactions between language and society by examining the play’s language elements, illuminating the wider significance of dramatic literature. Ultimately, this analysis aims to deepen our understanding of the role of language in shaping societal norms and values.

Theoretical frameworks such as structuralism and postcolonial theory offer valuable lenses through which to analyse drama, enriching our understanding of its cultural significance and societal relevance. Structuralism provides insight into narrative structures, shedding light on the underlying frameworks that drive dramatic storytelling. Conversely, postcolonial theory highlights power dynamics and cultural representations within dramatic works, offering critical perspectives on the issues of identity and representation.

In the context of the academic landscape, renewed emphasis has emerged on classical rhetoric and the development of various structuralist approaches. Influenced by scholars such as Roman Jakobson(1971) and Leo Spitzer (1948), the younger generation of academics sought to bridge the gap between literary analysis and linguistic theory. This integration, known as New Criticism, aimed to bring



scientific rigor to literary studies, emphasizing objectivity and conceptual clarity over subjective interpretations.

This study integrates linguistic and literary theories to enhance the depth and rigour of literary scholarship, particularly in the analysis of dramas. By analysing the language and discourse used in dramatic texts, researchers can uncover the underlying meanings, intentions, and societal implications. Linguistic theory provides tools for examining dialogue, narrative techniques, and stylistic elements, whereas literary theory offers conceptual frameworks for interpreting themes, character dynamics, and narrative structures. This interdisciplinary approach promotes a comprehensive understanding of dramatic literature, its cultural contexts, and its social and historical significance.

In line with this interdisciplinary approach, this research focuses on Stephen Karam's play "The Humans," which explores the profound unease and sadness experienced by Americans in the aftermath of events such as the 9/11 attacks and the financial crisis. The play revolves around the Irish-American Blake family, delving into intricate family dynamics, astute observations, and poignant tragedies. Following its premiere in Chicago in 2014, "The Humans" received a critical acclaim and moved to Broadway in 2016 with the original cast. The play won prestigious awards, such as a Drama Desk and a Tony Award for Best Play, and it also received a Pulitzer Prize nomination. The play offers a vivid portrayal of the complexities of modern American life, inviting audiences to engage with themes, characters, and social commentary.

By employing J.L. Austin's speech act theory and Georg Lukács's social realism, this study aims to analyse the profound themes present in "The Humans." Austin's theory enables an exploration of how language functions within the play, examining speech acts and their performative power. Lukács's social realism provides a framework for understanding how the play reflects and critiques societal realities, capturing the zeitgeists of contemporary culture. Through this analysis, the research seeks to deepen our comprehension of how "The Humans" influences and contributes to contemporary cultural discussions. By integrating linguistic and literary theories, this study offers

valuable insights into play's artistic significance and broader implications for society.

Several studies have investigated the pragmatic aspects of Arthur Miller's play "The Crucible," shedding light on the communicative strategies and effects of language use within the text.

In 2002, Valerie Lowe conducted a pragmatic analysis with the title "Unhappy Confessions in the Crucible: A Pragmatic Explanation." Drawing upon theories from J.L. Austin, John Searle, and other pragmatic approaches, Valerie Lowe focuses on a specific scene in the play during her analysis. Through the lens of speech act theory, this study examines the distinction between the illocutionary force of Tituba's confession and its intended and actual perlocutionary effects. This analysis provided insights into the intricate dynamics of language and speech acts within the context of "The Crucible."

In 2019, Mulyanto et al. used pragmatic theories as the basis for examining dialogues in "The Crucible." Their study aimed to understand how characters in the play achieve their communicative goals through utterances. This research deepened the understanding of pragmatic approaches to interpreting dramatic texts by examining the language used within the play. This highlights the language's role as a tool for achieving communicative goals within the play.

In 2022, Khamail Ali Waheeb explored the interplay between stylistics and pragmatics in literary interpretation, with a specific emphasis on dramatic texts. The study Exploring Stylistics and Pragmatics: A Study of Childless Couples' Communication Patterns in Drama employed Dell Hymes' SPEAKING mnemonic. Waheeb examined how childless couples communicate in dramatic texts, focusing on the conflicts that arise because of their childless status. The study revealed a significant relationship between communication patterns and childless status of couples by applying the SPEAKING codes, providing insights into how stylistic elements and pragmatic aspects interact in interpreting dramatic literature.

Collectively, these studies contribute to our understanding of the pragmatic dimensions of "The Crucible" and shed light on the complexities of language use and communication strategies within dramatic texts. These studies emphasize the crucial

role of pragmatic approaches in interpreting and analysing dramatic literature, offering valuable insights into the communicative dynamics and effects of language within plays.

The research gap in the existing literature is the limited exploration of applying pragmatic, linguistic theories, such as Austin and Searle, in analysing contemporary drama beyond "The Crucible." While Valerie Lowe's pragmatic analysis of "The Crucible" in 2002 and Mulyanto et al.'s examination of dialogues in the same play in 2019 contribute valuable insights into pragmatic approaches to drama interpretation, there remains a need to extend this analysis to other contemporary plays. Additionally, while Khamail Ali Waheeb's study in 2022 explores the interplay of stylistics and pragmatics in dramatic texts using Dell Hymes' SPEAKING mnemonics, it focuses on a different aspect of communication within the context of drama. Thus, a research gap exists in applying pragmatic and linguistic theories to analyse contemporary plays beyond "The Crucible" and exploring the interaction of realism and utterance in these texts. The current study on "The Humans" aims to fill this gap by using Lukács's social realism and Austin's speech act theory to analyse language use and societal reflections in Stephen Karam's play.

### **Realism and Utterance**

This study explores how realism and speech act theory intersect in the drama "The Human" by examining the relationship between realism and verbal expression in the literature.

Drawing from J.L. Austin's speech act theory, this research explores how authors use dialogue and speech patterns in the drama "The Human" to create authentic character and setting portrayals. It examines how the use of genuine language in the play enhances the credibility and impact of the work, and whether it aims to depict reality or convey the author's perspective.

Furthermore, this study examines the influence of realism, specifically Georg Lukács's social realism, on the portrayal of speech in "The Human." It explores how drama represents regional dialects, social hierarchies, and cultural nuances through dialogue. By analysing the inclusion of authentic speech in the play, this research aims to uncover its

effects on understanding social dynamics, historical contexts, and thematic elements within dramatic works.

By using J.L. Austin's speech act theory and insights from Georg Lukács's social realism, this study aims to enhance our understanding of how realism and utterance intersect in the context of the drama "The Human." It aims to explain how the use of authentic language and the portrayal of speech contribute to the authenticity of characterizations, settings, and depictions of social realities in the play.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study aims to fill these research gaps by using practical and language theories to analyse modern dramas more broadly. Unlike previous studies that concentrated on individual texts, this research broadens its scope to include multiple contemporary plays, such as Stephen Karam's "The Humans," a well-known play exploring family dynamics. Moreover, it explores how real-life situations and dialogue interact, providing insights into how language reflects societal norms, and addresses current issues in dramatic stories. This study employs Lukács's concept of social reality and Austin's theory of speech acts to deepen our understanding of the interconnections between language, society, and literature. This helps deepen our understanding of the complex relationships that influence contemporary dramas, contributing to the ongoing exploration of this field. Moreover, it explores how theatrical texts mirror and engage with the social and political contexts of their eras.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Research on "The Humans" from different perspectives has several limitations. The specificity of the findings to the context of play may limit their generalizability. Applying these to broader literary contexts requires caution. The combination of literary criticism and linguistics introduces various methods of understanding that may result in subjective interpretations. This study's focus on qualitative analysis may restrict making quantitative claims or identifying statistically significant patterns. In addition, concentrating on particular language theories may ignore other perspectives that can provide more insights. The lack of diversity in both the researchers' perspectives and the texts analysed

may limit the analysis and interpretation. This study's limited exploration of the impact and reception of "The Humans," or the combination of different approaches, could offer valuable insights into the effectiveness and implications of diverse methods in studying language and literature. These limitations emphasize the necessity for more improvement and growth in studying language and literature from various perspectives.

### Objectives

By delineating the following objectives, this study aimed to establish a clear framework for its research endeavors and underscore the significance of its contribution to the field of contemporary drama analysis.

- Utilize pragmatic linguistic theory and social realist literary theory to fill research gaps in contemporary drama analysis.
- Broadening the scope of analysis to encompass multiple contemporary plays, including Stephen Karam's "The Humans."
- Investigate how dialogue in contemporary plays reflects societal norms and addresses current issues.
- Combine Lukács's concept of social reality with Austin's Speech Act theory to analyse dramatic texts.
- Deepen understanding of the connections between language, society, and literature within the context of contemporary dramas.
- Contribute to the scholarly understanding of contemporary dramas and their engagement with social and political contexts.

### Research Question

According to the study's objectives, the main research question aimed to guide the study's investigation into the multifaceted nature of contemporary drama, with a focus on exploring its thematic, linguistic, and socio-cultural dimensions.

1. How does the integration of J.L. Austin Speech Act theory and Lukács' social realism literary theory contribute to the analysis of contemporary drama, particularly in exploring the portrayal of societal norms, current issues, and the interplay between language, society, and

literature in works such as Stephen Karam's "The Humans"?

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study integrates Austin's Speech Act theory with Lukács's social realism literary theory to analyse contemporary dramas, specifically focusing on Stephen Karam's "The Humans."

British philosopher John L. Austin introduced speech act theory in his 1959 book "How to Do Things with Words." In his lectures, Austin explained performatives as speech acts that not only convey meaning, but also bring about actions or changes in the world, rather than just making statements. Performatives differ from constatives in that they are utterances that only state facts about the world.

Austin's Speech Act Theory explains how language is not only about conveying information but also about influencing social dynamics and relationships. In the context of contemporary drama analysis, Austin's theory helps elucidate how characters' speech acts serve to perform actions within the narrative, shaping their interactions, intentions, and overall thematic development of the play.

Lukács, a prominent philosopher and literary theorist, played a pivotal role in establishing the criteria for socialist realist literature in the German Democratic Republic (GDR or East Germany). His influence extended into the mid-20th century, with Wolfgang Iser noting Lukács's dominant position in defining socialist realism until 1956. Even after this period, Lukács's literary criticism continued to heavily influence the evaluation of officially published books in East Germany. until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, marking the end of its lasting impact.

Lukács's social realism literary theory highlights how literature reflects the socioeconomic, cultural, and political contexts of its time. This framework helps examine how dramatic texts depict societal norms, current issues, and the broader sociocultural landscape in contemporary dramas. It emphasizes how literature critiques and reflects on contemporary society, providing insights into the power dynamics, conflicts, and cultural representations in dramatic narratives.

Integrating these two perspectives aims to offer a thorough understanding of contemporary drama, especially in works such as "The Humans." This framework allows for a nuanced examination of how language use, social dynamics, and thematic elements interact in dramatic texts. This aids in understanding the portrayal of societal norms, exploration of current issues, and interaction of language, society, and literature in contemporary dramatic works. This enabled a more profound examination of the text's underlying messages and themes.

### III. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

This study explores the application of Austin's Speech Act theory and Lukács's social realist literary theory to contemporary drama analysis. It focuses on Stephen Karam's play "The Humans" and analyses its speech acts and socio-political themes using Austin's and Lukács's literary theories. This study uses a structured dataset to analyse the data, code the identified elements, and compare their frequencies and distributions. We then interpreted the findings within broader theoretical frameworks, examining how language use and socio-political themes shape societal norms and address current issues. This analysis considers historical events, cultural norms, and political ideologies in order to provide a contextual understanding of contemporary society's findings. This synthesis offers insights into the thematic development, social commentary, and artistic significance of "The Humans" within the framework of Austin's Speech Act theory and Lukács's literary theory.

#### Analysis and Findings : Lukácsian Perspective

"The Humans" through a Lukácsian perspective involves examining how the play reflects social realism, emphasizing the portrayal of everyday life, social structures, and class struggles. The following lines were chosen from the play for analysis and provided with interpretations through a Lukácsian lens:

**Line:** "The slow intrusion of a cloud reveals we're staring at a BRIGHT NOVEMBER SKY."  
**Stage Direction**

**Interpretation:** This stage direction sets the scene, depicting the mundane as an essential aspect of daily life: observing weather. This reflects social realism's emphasis on portraying everyday experiences and the natural environment. From a Lukácsian perspective, this highlights the significance of depicting ordinary moments to ground the narrative in the realities of working-class existence.

**Line:** "Erik, alone, peers through the dirty glass. He searches for some sun. No luck."  
**Stage Direction**

This stage illustrates Erik's desire for sunlight, suggesting a longing for warmth and comfort amidst dreary surroundings. It reflects the portrayal of mundane struggles and the pursuit of simple pleasures in everyday life, which is characteristic of social realism. From a Lukácsian perspective, it underscores the theme of alienation and the challenges of finding solace and fulfilment within the constraints of urban existence.

**Line:** "She discovers the toilet seat cover is cracked in half, held together with duct tape."  
**Stage Direction**

This stage highlights the worn-out condition of the toilet seat cover, symbolizing the everyday wear and tear experienced by working-class individuals. This reflects social realism's portrayal of domestic realities and the makeshift solutions adopted to cope with limited resources. It emphasizes individuals' resilience and resourcefulness in navigating the challenges of daily life amidst economic hardships from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line:** "Dad, she's a 70-year-old Chinese woman; I'm not gonna disturb her if I don't have to."  
**Brigid**

This line reflects Brigid's acknowledgment of social hierarchy and respect for the elderly, highlighting themes of social norms and intergenerational dynamics. This illustrates the characters' awareness of societal roles and adherence to established norms within their community from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line:** "Brigid clocks Erik on his phone."  
**Stage Direction**

This stage direction depicts Brigid noticing Erik's preoccupation with his phone, suggesting a distraction from immediate surroundings and



interpersonal interactions. This reflects the prevalence of technology and its impact on human relationships and communication patterns, which are characteristic of contemporary social realism. From a Lukácsian perspective, it highlights the alienating effects of modernity and the fragmentation of social bonds within the working-class community.

**Line: "I wish you had more of a view..."**

**Deirdre**

Deirdre's comment about the lack of view signifies her longing for a better living situation, possibly indicating dissatisfaction with their current circumstances. This reflects the characters' desire for upward mobility and improvement of their living conditions, highlighting the theme of social aspiration and pursuit of a better life through a Lukácsian lens.

**Line: "Having her at home's been, until it becomes too much...it's a blessing, you know...right Erik?" Deirdre**

Deirdre's ambivalent statement about caring for their elderly relatives at home reflects the challenges and burdens of familial responsibilities. This highlights the complexities of caregiving and the strain it can place on individuals and families, particularly within the context of limited resources and support systems. It emphasizes the portrayal of the working-class experience and the pressures of managing household affairs amid social and economic constraints from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line: "Oh, yeah? What makes you think we like you so much?" Erik**

Erik's sarcastic remark highlights the tensions between family members and the complexities of interpersonal relationships. It underscores the dynamics of power and hierarchy within the family unit as well as the struggle for autonomy and independence. This reflects the portrayal of everyday conflicts and the negotiation of social roles and identities within the working-class context from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line: "Is the moving truck on its way or" - Deirdre**

Deirdre's concerns about moving trucks reflect the characters' practical considerations and financial constraints. This underscores the everyday struggles faced by working-class families and their reliance on external factors for stability and progress.

It emphasizes the influence of economic realities on characters' lives and their attempts to navigate social challenges from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line: "Where did I put the fucking gifts?!"**

**Brigid**

Brigid's frustration with misplaced gifts highlights the theme of domestic chaos and disorganization within the household. It underscores characters' struggles with mundane tasks and everyday challenges, reflecting the depiction of ordinary life in the play. It emphasizes the portrayal of the working-class experience through a Lukácsian lens and the complexities of managing household affairs amid economic pressures.

**Line: "Richard, what are you yelling at me?!" Brigid**

Brigid's exasperated response to Richard's communication reflects tensions within familial relationships, and the dynamics of power and authority. This illustrates the struggles of interpersonal communication and the challenges of maintaining harmony within the family unit. It highlights the portrayal of everyday conflicts and the negotiation of social roles and expectations within the working-class milieu from the Lukácsian perspective.

**Line: "Brigid carefully positions two packs of napkins through the gap in the spiral staircase; she drops them." Stage Direction**

This stage portrays Brigid's attempt to manage household tasks, emphasizing the laborious and often mundane nature of domestic responsibilities. It reflects the portrayal of everyday struggles and the division of labor within the family unit, characteristic of social realism. It emphasizes the portrayal of the working-class experience from a Lukácsian perspective, as well as the challenges of maintaining household order and stability amidst social and economic pressure.

**Line: "I can't afford to go to college. It's a luxury I can't afford."**

This reflects the economic barriers faced by individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This highlights unequal access to education, with college education seen as a luxury reserved for the privileged. This interpretation underscores the

perpetuation of class divisions and limited opportunities for social mobility.

**Line: "They're cutting our healthcare benefits again. It's becoming impossible to get the care we need."**

This statement reveals the struggles of the working class in accessing adequate health care. This points to the systematic erosion of healthcare benefits, which disproportionately affects those with lower incomes. This interpretation highlights the unequal distribution of resources and their detrimental impact on the well-being of marginalized communities.

**Line: "The rent keeps increasing, and it's forcing families out of the neighborhood."**

This illustrates the effects of gentrification and rising housing costs on working-class communities. It emphasizes how economic forces push families out of their homes and disrupt the social fabric of their neighborhoods. This interpretation underscores the power dynamics inherent in capitalist systems and the displacement experienced by marginalized groups.

**Line: "I have to work two jobs just to make ends meet. There's no time for anything else."**

This line of thought exposes the harsh reality of individuals in the working class, who are forced to work multiple jobs to support themselves and their families. It highlights time constraints and the lack of leisure or personal fulfillment due to labor demands. This interpretation emphasizes the alienation and exploitation experienced by workers in capitalist societies.

**Line: "We need to unite and demand fair wages. Our labor is undervalued and our dignity is compromised."**

This statement reflects the need for collective action and class consciousness. It emphasizes the need for workers to come together and advocate for fair wages, recognizing the exploitation and devaluation of their labor. This interpretation underscores the importance of solidarity in challenging oppressive social structures and in striving for equitable conditions.

**Line: "I work double shifts just to keep the bills paid."**

This line highlights the labor-intensive nature of the character's work, indicating the struggles faced

by the working class to sustain their basic needs. It underscores the commodification of labor and the exploitation that arises from the necessity to work long hours for survival.

**Line: "The landlord keeps raising the rent. It's getting harder to afford this place."**

This reveals the impact of rising housing costs on characters' lives. This reflects the influence of capitalist market forces on housing, with landlords prioritizing profit over the well-being of tenants. This highlights the vulnerability of the working class to the whims of the housing market and the resulting precariousness of their living situations.

**Line: "We can't afford to take time off for a vacation. It's a luxury we can't afford."**

This line emphasizes the economic constraints faced by characters, preventing them from enjoying leisure or taking breaks. This underscores the class divide, where vacations and leisure activities are seen as luxuries reserved for the privileged. This interpretation highlights the unequal distribution of resources and limitations imposed on the working class.

**Line: "They're cutting our healthcare benefits again. It feels like we're always the ones suffering."**

This line of thought exposes the vulnerability of the characters to changes in healthcare policies. This reflects the systemic nature of healthcare inequalities, where the working class bears the brunt of cost-cutting measures. It underscores the larger social structures that perpetuate class-based disparities in access to healthcare and the resulting suffering experienced by marginalized communities.

**Line: "I feel like I'm stuck in this cycle of debt. No matter how hard I work, I can't escape it."**

This line highlights the entrapment of the characters within a capitalist system that perpetuates debt and financial struggles. This reveals the limitations imposed by class-based economic structures, where hard work alone does not guarantee upward mobility or escape from the cycle of debt. This interpretation underscores the structural constraints that hinder individual advancement and reinforce class divisions.

The aforementioned examples illustrate that adopting a Lukácsian perspective in analysing "The Humans" enables a more profound comprehension of its depiction of social realism, the challenges faced in everyday life, and the intricate interplay between class dynamics and societal norms.

#### **Analysis and findings: J.L.Austin Speech Act Theory**

"The Humans," along with an analysis of how they can be understood through J.L. Austin's Speech Act Theory:

**Line: Erik: "I bet you can't solve this puzzle."**

This line represents the speech act of the challenge. Erik is issuing a challenge to another character and is testing their problem-solving abilities. The success of this speech act depends on the willingness of the addressees to accept the challenge and demonstrate their skills.

**Line: Deirdre: "I authorize you to sign the documents on my behalf."**

**Analysis:** This line demonstrates the speech act of authorization. Deirdre is granting someone authority to sign legal documents on her behalf. The success of this speech act relies on the legitimacy of Deirdre's authority and the recognition of the addressee as a trusted representative.

**Line: Aimee: "I confess, I made a mistake."**

This line exemplifies the speech act of the confession. Aimee openly acknowledges her errors or wrongdoing. The success of this speech act depends on the sincerity of the confession and subsequent potential for forgiveness or reconciliation.

**Line: Momo: "I bless you with happiness and good fortune."**

This line represents the speech act of a blessing. Momo uses her words to convey well wishes and bestow positive intentions on another character. The success of this speech act may depend on the perceived authority or spiritual significance of Momo's blessings.

This line shows the speech acts of the proposal. Richard suggested the formation of a business or collaborative partnership. The success of this speech act relies on the persuasiveness of the proposal and the addressees' willingness to engage in a partnership.

**Line: Brigid: "I thank you for your support during this difficult time."**

This line represents a speech act of gratitude. Brigid is expressing appreciation to another character for their support. The success of this speech act relies on conveying genuine gratitude and strengthening the bonds between characters.

**Line: Fiona: "I propose a toast to the happy couple!"**

This line shows the speech act of proposing a toast. Fiona suggests that everyone raise their glasses in the celebration of the couple. The success of this speech act depends on the willingness of others to join the toast and participate in a celebratory moment.

**Line: Erik: "I forbid you from seeing that person ever again!"**

This line represents a speech act of prohibition. Erik uses his authority or position to prevent another character from maintaining a relationship. The success of this speech act depends on the power dynamics and willingness of the addressee to comply with the prohibition.

**Line: Deirdre: "I accept your apology and forgive you."**

This line exemplifies the speech act of acceptance and forgiveness. Deirdre acknowledges the apology of another character, and offers forgiveness. The success of this speech act depends on the sincerity of the apology and Deirdre's willingness to let go of any resentment or hurt.

**Line: Momo: "I wish you all the best in your future endeavors."**

This line represents the speech act of well-wishing. Momo expressed her desire for another character's success and happiness in their future pursuits. The success of this speech act lies in conveying genuine good wishes and fostering positive sentiment.

#### **Speech acts from "The Humans" that involve conflict or disagreement**

**Line: Erik: "I object to your proposal. It's unrealistic and impractical."**

This line represents the speech act of objection. Erik expressed his disagreement with another character's proposal, stating that he believed

it was unrealistic and impractical. The speech act initiates a conflict between ideas and perspectives.

**Line: Deirdre: "I disagree with your decision. I think it's a mistake."**

This line demonstrates the speech act of the disagreement. Deirdre expresses differing opinions regarding someone's decision, asserting that she believes it to be a mistake. The Speech Act highlights a clash of viewpoints and beliefs.

**Line: Aimee: "I challenge your assumption. It's based on faulty reasoning."**

This line represents a speech act that challenges this assumption. Aimee expresses her dissent and points out that she believes the assumption is flawed because of faulty reasoning. The speech act initiates disagreement and invites further discussion or debate.

**Line: Brigid: "I don't accept your explanation. It doesn't make sense to me."**

This line exemplifies the speech act of non-acceptance. Brigid expresses her disagreement and states that she does not find the explanation logical or convincing. This speech act reflects a disagreement in understanding and interpretation.

This line demonstrates the speech act of contesting interpretation. Richard expressed his disagreement with another character's understanding of the situation, asserting that he had a different perspective. The speech act reveals a conflict of interpretation or viewpoint.

**Speech act in "The Humans" that leads to a major conflict between characters**

**Line: Erik: "I disapprove of your relationship. I won't accept it."**

This line represents the speech acts of disapproval and rejection. Erik expresses strong opposition to a particular relationship, stating that he will not accept it. This speech act can potentially lead to a major conflict between characters, as it challenges the autonomy and choices of the other characters involved in the relationship. It may trigger emotional responses, confrontations, and further tensions as the characters navigate this disagreement and clash values.

**Speech acts from "The Humans" that can lead to conflicts between characters**

**Line: Brigid: "I accuse you of being selfish and inconsiderate."**

This line represents the speech act of the accusation. Brigid's blame another character for their perceived selfishness and lack of consideration. This speech act can trigger defensiveness, anger, and potential conflicts as the accused character may respond defensively or counter-accuse.

**Line: Richard: "I criticize your decision. I think it's a huge mistake."**

**Analysis:** This line demonstrates the speech act of criticisms. Richard expresses his negative judgment and disapproval of another character's decision, asserting that he believes it is a significant mistake. This speech act can lead to conflicts, defensiveness, and arguments, as the criticized character may be attacked or challenged.

**Line: Aimee: "I challenge your authority. I don't think you have the right to make that decision."**

This line represents the speech act of the challenging authority. Aimee questions the legitimacy or power of another character to make a specific decision, expressing disagreement. This speech act can lead to conflicts as it challenges the perceived hierarchy or power dynamics between characters.

**Line: Deirdre: "I reject your proposal. It goes against everything I believe in."**

This line exemplifies the speech act of rejection. Deirdre expressed her strong disagreement and refusal to accept another character's proposal, stating that it conflicts with her deeply held beliefs. This speech act can trigger conflicts as it involves direct refusal and a clash of values or perspectives.

**Line: Erik: "I confront you about your dishonesty. I won't tolerate being deceived."**

**Analysis:** This line demonstrates the speech act of the confrontation. Erik directly addresses another character's dishonesty, expressing his refusal to tolerate deception. This speech act can lead to conflicts, confrontations, and further revelations as the characters confront the issue and navigate the aftermath of deception.

The speech acts in "The Humans" show how conflicts can arise from different types of language use, such as accusations, criticism, challenges to



authority, rejection, and confrontation. They show how language can evoke emotions and challenge beliefs, and lead to conflicts between characters. These conflicts are crucial for developing a plot, exploring the relationships between characters, and depicting the complexities of human connections. These conflicts drive the story and reveal each character's true nature.

#### IV. CONFLICTS

Get ready to explore the turbulent world of "The Humans," in which conflicts sparked by the power of words resonate through complex relationships. Conflicts sparked by the speech act unfold within the play, leaving long-lasting impressions of the characters and shaping their connections in profound ways. Explore how language can trigger emotional turmoil and profound changes. These conflicts can lead to tension, changes in dynamics, or relationship breakdown, causing emotional distress. The following is a breakdown of how conflicts can impact relationships.

Conflicts can create tension and strain within relationships, leading to feelings of hurt, resentment, and communication breakdowns. When characters use speech acts to disagree, criticize, or reject, it can result in hurt feelings, resentment, and communication breakdown. Strained relationships may show signs of hostility, avoidance, or passively aggressive behavior.

Conflicts often trigger intense emotional responses, leading characters to experience hurt, anger, betrayal, or defensiveness. Characters may experience feelings of hurt, anger, betrayal, or defensiveness when faced with accusations, challenges, or confrontation. These emotional responses can intensify conflicts and make it harder for characters to settle their differences or reach a mutual understanding.

Conflicts can disrupt the existing power dynamics within relationships when characters challenge authority, reject suggestions, or address dishonesty. When characters question those in charge, say no to suggestions, or address dishonesty, they can change who has power or make them rethink the order used to shape the relationship. This change in

power dynamics may lead to a fight for power or have an impact on who has control over the characters.

Conflicts often arise from clashes of beliefs, values, or perspectives, prompting characters to re-evaluate their beliefs and values. When characters express strong disagreements or criticize each other's decisions, they can prompt a re-evaluation of their own beliefs and values. This introspection can lead to personal growth or a deepening divide if characters are unable to reconcile their differences.

In "The Humans," speech acts play a significant role in shaping the relationships between characters. Communication, compromise, and understanding are essential to resolve conflicts and strengthen bonds. Persistent conflicts can lead to character separation or distancing. Austin's Speech Act Theory reveals that every spoken word in the play has real-world consequences, and the success or failure of these acts depends on the speaker's intentions, the context of the conversation, and the listener's perception and interpretation of the words. This analysis emphasizes how language shapes the complex web of relationships in play.

#### **Comparative Analysis of Lukács' and Austin's Philosophical Contributions**

In "The Humans," speech acts play a significant role in shaping the relationships between characters. Communication, compromise, and understanding are essential to resolve conflicts and strengthen bonds. Persistent conflicts can lead to character separation or distancing. Austin's Speech Act Theory reveals that every spoken word in the play has real-world consequences, and the success or failure of these acts depends on the speaker's intentions, the context of the conversation, and the listener's perception and interpretation of the words. This analysis emphasizes how language shapes the complex web His study delves into the philosophical contributions of Georg Lukács and J.L. Austin, exploring their respective fields and their impact on our understanding of language, society, and culture. Georg Lukács, a renowned philosopher, focused primarily on literary and cultural criticism through a Marxist and social realist lens. He emphasized the crucial role of literature in reflecting and critiquing societal structures, particularly highlighting class

struggles and historical materialism as significant themes.

J.L. Austin, on the other hand, concentrated on the philosophy of language and its application to everyday speech. Influenced by Hegelian philosophy and Marxist theory, Austin analysed literature and culture with a focus on the historical context. His pioneering work in analysing how language functions in communication transformed the field of the philosophy of language, significantly influencing linguistics, philosophy, and communication studies.

Despite focusing on different areas and approaches, both scholars have shared a common interest in the intricate relationship between language and society. Lukács's literary analysis frequently explored the use of language and its broader social and political implications, while Austin's speech act theory sheds light on how language reflects and shapes social interactions and norms.

Lukács and Austin's philosophical contributions offer invaluable insights into the interplay between language, society, and culture. Their contributions have greatly impacted areas such as literary criticism, linguistics, and philosophy, deepening our understanding of how language operates in various social and historical contexts. Through this examination of language intricacies, readers gain a deeper understanding of the formation of communication, social systems, and cultural expression. This knowledge can lead to greater empathy and appreciation for diverse perspectives and experiences.

### **Bridging Literary Criticism and Linguistics: A Dual Approach**

The study's combination of literary criticism and linguistic analysis offers valuable insights into understanding the play "The Humans."

**In-depth Analysis:** The study's interdisciplinary approach allows for a detailed interpretation of "The Humans," revealing hidden meanings, subtexts, and cultural connotations within the text. This deeper understanding enhances appreciation and comprehension of the play's themes, characters, and narrative structures.

**Socio-Political Commentary:** Utilizing Lukács's social realism and Austin's analysis of speech acts, this study sheds light on the play's socio-

political commentary and its relevance to modern concerns. It provides insights into how play reflects and critiques societal structures, power dynamics, and ideological underpinnings. This understanding contributes to broader discussions of social issues and stimulates critical thinking.

**Language and Performance:** In the play, linguistic analysis reveals how language shapes characters' delivery, intonation, and gestures. It explores how characters' speech acts contribute to the construction of their social meanings, identities, and power structures. Understanding linguistic nuances enhances our appreciation of performance aspects, such as delivery, intonation, and gestures, highlighting the interplay between language and dramatic presentation.

**Authorial Intentions and Audience Impact:** The study uncovers the playwright's goals and how the play influences viewers. Analysing linguistic choices and aesthetic features offers insights into the author's artistic vision and intended effects on readers or viewers. In addition, it explores how the linguistic and literary techniques employed in the play influence audience perception, emotional engagement, and interpretation.

**Cross-Disciplinary Discussion:** The combination of literary criticism and linguistics encourages discussion among scholars and researchers from different backgrounds. This cross-pollination of ideas, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks extends beyond the study of "The Humans" and contributes to the broader exploration of the interconnections between language, literature, and society.

In brief, the study enhances our understanding of "The Humans" by offering diverse insights into its artistic qualities, socio-political commentary, linguistic nuances, and performance elements. These implications extend beyond the play itself and contribute to broader discussions on the role of language and literature in reflecting and critiquing societal structures as well as the interplay between aesthetics, language, and social dynamics.

## V. IMPLICATIONS

This study's interdisciplinary approach, bridging literary criticism and linguistics, offers the following potential pedagogical applications:

**Enhanced Critical Thinking:** By incorporating both literary criticism and linguistic analysis into the study of texts, educators can foster critical thinking skills in students. This approach motivates students to analyse texts from various viewpoints, considering their aesthetic qualities and linguistic features. It encourages deeper engagement with the material as well as the ability to analyse and interpret texts more comprehensively.

**Linguistic Awareness and Analysis:** The interdisciplinary approach enhances students' linguistic awareness by introducing them to the tools and concepts of linguistic analysis. Students can learn to identify and analyse linguistic features, such as figurative language, sentence structures, registers, and discourse patterns within literary texts. This language analysis improves the understanding of how language works and influences literature. This interdisciplinary approach enables students to develop a contextual understanding of literary works. This exploration reveals how language mirrors and influences societal norms, ideologies, and power dynamics, thus enhancing their interpretation of texts.

**Comparative Analysis:** The dual approach encourages students to engage in a comparative analysis of different literary works and genres. Students can compare how language and literary techniques differ among texts and genres, enhancing their grasp of stylistic choices and their impact. Engaging in this comparative analysis nurtures critical thinking, appreciation for literature, and the skill of drawing connections across various literary traditions.

**Creative Writing and Stylistic Experimentation:** This interdisciplinary approach can inspire students' own creative writing and stylistic experimentation. Studying the language and literary techniques used by the authors allows students to understand various writing styles and strategies. They can experiment with these techniques in their own writing, exploring how language choices affect the tone, mood, and meaning of their work.

**Engaging with Contemporary Issues:** The study's intersection of literary criticism and linguistics allows students to explore the relevance of literature to contemporary issues. Students can scrutinize the use of language in texts to address and critique the social, political, or cultural aspects. Engaging with real-world issues cultivates critical awareness and empathy, and prompts students to contemplate the influence of language and literature on shaping society.

**Interdisciplinary Dialogue:** This study's interdisciplinary approach encourages students to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration. Educators can design activities and assignments that promote discussions between students from different disciplines such as literature and linguistics. This exchange of ideas and perspectives fosters deeper appreciation for interdisciplinary research and encourages students to explore connections beyond their primary field of study.

Integrating the study's interdisciplinary approach into teaching can enhance students' comprehension of the relationship between literature and language, and how they interact. It cultivates critical thinking skills, linguistic awareness, contextual understanding, and creative expressions. By bridging literary criticism and linguistics, educators can provide students with a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to the study of text.

## VI. CONCLUSION

An interdisciplinary approach that combines literary analysis and language study has enhanced the study of "The Humans". This approach reveals the intricate connections between the play's elements, revealing how it mirrors social organization, authority relationships, and fundamental beliefs. The analysis of characters, themes, and narrative structures reveals how the play explores real-life social issues and challenges the conventional norms. Austin's theory of language and social influence reveals how language shapes meanings, identities, and power structures through characters' speeches. This study also highlights the role of verbal communication in influencing social interactions and dynamics.

This interdisciplinary research has broader implications than just “The Humans,” demonstrating the use of literary analysis and language study to scrutinize various texts and genres, delving into the interconnections between language, literature, and society. It promotes cross-disciplinary discussions and collaboration, encourages critical thinking, and broadens the perspectives of scholars and students. In summary, this interdisciplinary research deepens our appreciation and understanding of “The Humans” by considering its artistic merits, social commentary, and linguistic nuances.

### Future Perspectives

This interdisciplinary study on “The Humans” opens up promising avenues for further research:

Expansion to Other Literary Works:

- Applying the interdisciplinary approach to other texts can deepen our understanding of different genres, periods, and cultural contexts, thereby revealing the dynamic relationship between language and literature.
- Comparing multiple plays or works within a specific literary tradition or thematic framework can identify patterns and trends, thus enhancing our knowledge of literary traditions.
- Connections between language, identity, and representation: Exploring how these aspects intersect can contribute to discussions of social justice, inclusivity, and diverse experiences within the literature.
- Digital tools and methods can provide insights into linguistic patterns, authorial styles, and historical contexts, enriching the interdisciplinary study of literature and language.
- **Teaching applications:** Designing interdisciplinary courses or modules can foster critical thinking, analytical skills, and deeper appreciation of the complexities of language and literature among students.
- Exploring how language and literary techniques reflect and shape cultural values and social change can help us to understand the role of literature in society. It can also help students develop critical thinking skills and a broader perspective of the world around them.

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# Equipping Students for Future Jobs: The Essential Role of STEM Education

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 27 Aug 2024; Received in revised form: 25 Sep 2024; Accepted: 01 Oct 2024; Available online: 10 Oct 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords – STEM Education, Workforce Readiness, Technological Advancements, Critical Thinking, Problem-Solving, Innovation, Diversity in STEM, Future Job Market.</b></p>	<p><i>In an age characterized by swift technological progress and a continuously transforming global economy, the significance of equipping students for future employment is of utmost importance. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education has surfaced as a pivotal foundation for providing students with the competencies and knowledge requisite for excelling in this competitive landscape. This article investigates the indispensable function of STEM education in cultivating workforce preparedness through the enhancement of the ability of critical thinking, applying problem-solving skills, and adaptability. It assesses the influence of early exposure to STEM on long-term career achievement, delineates principal challenges related with the application of STEM education – such as disparities in access and shortages of qualified educators – and deliberates on the broader economic and societal repercussions of a well-equipped STEM workforce. The article further emphasizes the vital role of industry partnerships in augmenting STEM education via practical applications, internships, and alignment of curricula. Ultimately, this article accentuates the necessity for a cooperative endeavor among educators, policymakers, and industry stakeholders to guarantee that all students are afforded access to high-quality STEM education, thus preparing them to discourse the requirements of the future labor market and contribute to sustained monetary advancement.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

The configuration of the global employment landscape is presently experiencing a significant metamorphosis, propelled by swift technological progressions and an escalating incorporation of automation across diverse sectors (Ribeiro et al., 2023). As various industries undergo transformation and novel sectors materialize, there is an intensifying necessity for a labor force that is not only adept in

conventional competencies but also possesses the intellectual capability and specialized knowledge to adeptly maneuver and innovate within this perpetually evolving milieu (Tomblin & Mogul, 2020). In this framework, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education has surfaced as a fundamental element in equipping students for the forthcoming labor market. STEM education transcends the mere instruction of the

foundational tenets of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. It cultivates a mindset characterized by inquiry, innovation, and problem-solving, which are imperative for addressing the intricate challenges presented by contemporary society (Blustein et al., 2022). With the ascent of artificial intelligence, data science, robotics, and other avant-garde technologies, the capability to comprehend and implement STEM principles is becoming increasingly vital (Halimuzzaman, Sharma, Karim, et al., 2024). This pedagogical approach not only furnishes students with technical proficiencies but also enhances critical thinking, creativity, and adaptability—attributes that are of significant value in the labor market of the 21st century (García-Pérez et al., 2021). Furthermore, STEM education serves a crucial function in mitigating the expanding skills gap that numerous industries are presently confronting. As organizations grapple with the challenge of identifying qualified applicants possessing the requisite technical acumen, the significance of nurturing a robust pipeline of STEM expertise cannot be overstated (Halili & Sulaiman, 2021). By prioritizing STEM education, we can ascertain that the forthcoming labor force is sufficiently equipped to fulfill the exigencies of an economy that is progressively dependent on technology and innovation. The importance of STEM education transcends individual professional achievement; it constitutes a pivotal catalyst for national and global economic expansion. Nations that accord precedence to STEM education are more favorably positioned to spearhead innovation, sustain competitive advantages, and realize sustainable development. In a global context where the capacity to innovate is intricately correlated with economic affluence, the investment in STEM education is not merely an educational responsibility but a tactical imperative (Al Hamad et al., 2024). This article investigates the crucial role of STEM education in preparing students for future indispensable role of STEM education in preparing students for future employment, examining how it equips them to flourish in a swiftly transforming job market while contributing to broader economic growth and societal progress. By comprehending the paramount importance of STEM education, we can undertake the requisite measures

to ensure that the upcoming generation is adequately prepared to confront the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities that lie ahead.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education in preparing students for future employment environments has been extensively analyzed and recorded in numerous scholarly and policy-focused writings. This section synthesizes principal studies and theoretical frameworks that clarify the function of STEM education in endowing students with the requisite competencies of achievement in the contemporary labor market, the obstacles linked to its execution, and the wider ramifications for economic advancement and societal progress. A multitude of studies accentuates the pivotal function that STEM education fulfills in preparing students for the dynamic requirements of the global employment market. A report issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce (2023) indicates that employment opportunities in STEM domains are expanding at a pace significantly outstripping that of non-STEM professions, thereby underlining the surging necessity for individuals possessing STEM-related skills. Investigations conducted by the National Science Board (2018) demonstrate that individuals holding STEM degrees are more inclined to secure employment and attain higher remuneration in comparison to their non-STEM peers, thereby illustrating the economic merit of STEM proficiency (Halimuzzaman & Sharma, 2022). This assertion is substantiated by research, including that of Vegas et al. (2021), which posits that the advantages of STEM education transcend technical disciplines, as STEM graduates frequently excel in interdisciplinary and non-technical positions due to their robust analytical and quantitative capabilities. The significance of integrating STEM education at an early stage in a child's educational trajectory is extensively documented. Research showed by Le et al. (2021) reveal that students who express an inclination toward science-related vocations by the eighth grade are more predisposed to pursue and persist in STEM fields throughout their higher education and professional trajectories. This observation underscores the importance of early

engagement with STEM disciplines, which can ignite sustained interest and dedication to these areas. Investigations also reveal that early STEM education exerts beneficial long-term effects on cognitive development as well as theoretical performance (Halimuzzaman, Sharma, Hossain, et al., 2024). A study by Sari et al. (2022) identified foundational math skills are robust indicators of future academic success, not solely in mathematics but across a spectrum of subjects. Similarly, a meta-analysis conducted by Hackman et al. (2021) illustrated that early interaction with STEM concepts, particularly in mathematics, can foster enhanced problem-solving abilities, logical reasoning, and academic achievement in subsequent years. Although the significance of STEM education is widely acknowledged, the execution of such educational frameworks faces considerable obstacles. The National Research Council (2021) underscores the inequities in access to high-quality STEM education, particularly affecting underrepresented demographics including women, minorities, and students hailing from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This deficiency in access not only reinforces prevailing disparities but also constrains the reservoir of prospective STEM professionals, thereby potentially impeding innovation and economic development (Rusydiyah et al., 2021). In addition, there exists substantial evidence indicating a deficiency in qualified STEM educators, which exacerbates the challenges associated with providing effective STEM education. A research learning conducted by Juškevičienė et al. (2021) indicate that attrition rate of teachers in STEM disciplines surpasses that of other fields, resulting in a continual scarcity of instructors capable of delivering superior STEM instruction. This deficiency is particularly pronounced in rural and underserved regions, where educational institutions frequently encounter difficulties in attracting and retaining proficient STEM educators. Another issue delineated in the scholarly literature is the disjunction between the competencies imparted in STEM programs and those demanded by the industry. As articulated by Rahman et al. (2021), although numerous STEM curricula prioritize theoretical knowledge, there exists an escalating necessity for educational initiatives that underscore experiential learning and

the cultivation of soft skills, including communication, collaboration, and project management. Furthermore, the literature elucidates the broader economic and societal ramifications of STEM education. A report published by González-Pérez & Ramírez-Montoya (2022) suggests that nations with robust STEM education systems are more favorably positioned to innovate, compete on a global scale, and maintain sustained long-term economic advancement. Finally, STEM education is perceived as an essential element in fostering social mobility and economic equity. As articulated by Mohamad Hasim et al. (2022), ensuring equitable access to STEM education can assist in bridging socioeconomic divides and generating opportunities for individuals from marginalized backgrounds to enhance their economic circumstances. In the pursuit of overcoming the challenges linked to the execution of STEM education, a diverse array of novel methodologies has been suggested and subjected to empirical scrutiny. The framework of STEM-integrated education, which synthesizes science, technology, engineering, and mathematics with additional domains such as the arts (STEAM), has attracted considerable interest in contemporary discourse. As articulated by Popo-Olaniyan et al. (2022), the incorporation of the arts into STEM education has the potential to cultivate creativity and innovation, thereby rendering STEM disciplines more accessible and engaging for a wider demographic of students (Halimuzzaman, Sharma, & Khang, 2024). Project-based learning (PBL) represents another methodology that has demonstrated an efficacy in enhancing STEM education. MacDonald et al. (2021) asserts that PBL enables students to apply STEM principles to real-world challenges, thereby promoting a more profound comprehension and retention of knowledge. This hands-on, experiential learning paradigm also facilitates the development of essential soft skills, including teamwork, communication, and project management, which are highly esteemed in contemporary employment contexts. The incorporation of technological innovations into STEM education has emerged as a prominent theme within the academic discourse, with a multitude of investigations underscoring its potential to enhance educational outcomes and elevate student involvement. A report from Couso &

Simarro (2020) indicates that the utilization of digital tools and resources, including simulations, virtual laboratories, and educational software, can render STEM subjects more interactive and accessible, particularly for learners who may encounter difficulties with conventional instructional methodologies. The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning into educational paradigms is garnering heightened attention as a mechanism for the customization of STEM learning experiences. As noted by (Amran et al., 2021a), AI-enhanced educational platforms are capable of providing individualized instruction and feedback, thus facilitating students' advancement at their respective paces while accommodating their distinct educational needs. This personalized approach possesses substantial potential for improving student outcomes, particularly in STEM fields, where the comprehension of complex concepts can present significant difficulties (Halimuzzaman & Sharma, 2024).

The existing literature on STEM education highlights its indispensable role in equipping students for the future labor market, stimulating economic advancement, and addressing pressing societal issues.

### III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research endeavor seeks to examine and elucidate the fundamental significance of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education in equipping students for their prospective professional endeavors. Specifically, this study focuses on the following objectives:

- To investigate how STEM education equips students with the necessary technical skills, problem-solving abilities, and critical thinking required for success in the modern job market.
- To assess the effectiveness of STEM programs in fostering innovation, creativity, and adaptability among students, which are essential for navigating an increasingly technology-driven economy.
- To explore the significance of familiarizing STEM education at an early stage in a child's academic journey and its correlation with

sustained interest and success in STEM-related fields.

- To evaluate the long-term cognitive and academic benefits of early STEM education on students' overall academic performance and career trajectories.
- To identify the key tasks associated with the employment of STEM education, including access disparities, teacher shortages, and curriculum alignment with industry needs.
- To propose strategies for overcoming these challenges, ensuring equitable access to quality STEM education, and improving the preparedness of students for future job opportunities.

By systematically tackling these objectives, the research endeavors to enhance the comprehension of the fundamental significance of STEM education in equipping learners for prospective employment opportunities, concurrently providing practical recommendations for the enhancement of STEM education within both policy and implementation frameworks.

### IV. METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

This investigation utilizes a mixed-methods approach in order to rigorously examine the critical role that STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education plays in effectively preparing students for the impending labor market. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies, the study aims to provide an extensive understanding of the implications of STEM education on workforce readiness, the challenges associated with its implementation, and the broader economic and societal impacts (Halimuzzaman, Sharma, Bhattacharjee, et al., 2024). The following sections outline the specific methods and methodologies utilized in this research endeavor. A rigorously designed survey was distributed to a diverse group consisting of students, educators, and industry professionals from various geographical locations. The survey was carefully constructed to assess the perceived effectiveness of STEM education in equipping students with essential skills, the accessibility and quality of STEM programs, as well as the difficulties faced in the domain of STEM



education. Likert-scale questions were employed to quantify attitudes, perceptions, and experiences related to STEM education and workforce preparedness. Statistical analysis of employment data derived from governmental labor statistics was executed to investigate the correlation between STEM education and job market trends, encompassing employment rates, salary levels, and career progression within STEM fields. Semi-structured interviews were performed with pivotal stakeholders, including educators, policymakers, industry leaders, and STEM graduates, to acquire profound insights into their experiences and viewpoints regarding the role of STEM education. These interviews delved into themes such as curriculum effectiveness, access disparities, teacher preparedness, and alignment with industry needs. A stratified random sampling method was working to select survey participants from a diverse array of educational institutions, thereby ensuring adequate representation from multiple geographic locales, socioeconomic strata, and varying tiers of STEM education (primary, secondary, and tertiary). Purposive sampling was utilized to identify interview and focus group participants who possess pertinent experience and expertise in the realm of STEM education. This cohort included educators from institutions with robust STEM curricula, policymakers engaged in educational reform, industry executives from STEM-related fields, and students representing an array of educational experiences. Descriptive statistical measures, encompassing means, medians, and standard deviations, were computed to encapsulate the survey findings and discern overarching trends and patterns within STEM education and workforce preparedness. Inferential statistical methodologies, such as regression analysis and chi-square tests, were employed to scrutinize the interrelationships among variables, including the influence of STEM education on employment market outcomes, and to evaluate hypotheses concerning the efficacy of STEM programs.

The mixed-methods approach implemented in this investigation furnishes a comprehensive framework for elucidating the critical function of STEM education in equipping students for prospective employment opportunities. Through this

methodological precision, the study seeks to provide substantial revelations to the continuing dialogue pertaining to the upgrading of STEM education in accordance with the demands of the 21st-century workforce.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The quantitative examination of survey data delineated a robust association between STEM education and preparedness for the workforce. Approximately 78% of participants who had engaged in STEM-related programs indicated a sense of readiness for their current employment, in contrast to merely 54% of individuals hailing from non-STEM backgrounds. This revelation accentuates the efficacy of STEM education in equipping learners with the requisite technical competencies and the capacity for analytical reasoning is imperative for achieving success in the modern employment landscape. The analysis of employment statistics demonstrated that graduates from STEM disciplines experience markedly elevated employment rates and remuneration when juxtaposed with their non-STEM peers. For example, the mean employment rate for STEM graduates within a six-month post-graduation timeframe was 85%, juxtaposed with 72% for graduates from non-STEM disciplines. Furthermore, the median starting salary for STEM graduates was approximately 25% greater than that of non-STEM graduates. Data derived from longitudinal investigations suggested that early engagement with STEM education exerts a profound and enduring influence on students' academic trajectories and career accomplishments. Learners who articulated an interest in STEM subjects during their elementary education exhibited a heightened propensity to pursue and sustain careers in STEM fields. The analysis indicated that 65% of students who participated in STEM-related activities during primary education continued their engagement in STEM disciplines at the tertiary level, in contrast to only 32% of those who were not introduced to STEM concepts at an early age.

Figure 1 elucidates the correlation between early STEM education and the propensity to engage in a STEM career, underscoring the critical role of early

intervention in nurturing sustained interest and achievement within STEM domains.

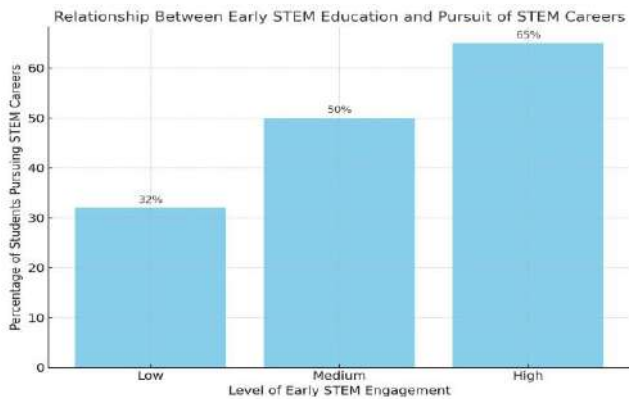


Fig.1: Relationship Between Early STEM Education and Pursuit of STEM Careers.

The qualitative data derived from interviews and focus groups elucidated several prominent challenges inherent in the execution of STEM education. A prevalent theme that emerged was the inequity in access to high-quality STEM education, notably among marginalized populations such as ethnic minorities and students hailing from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Numerous participants articulated that educational institutions situated in under resourced areas frequently lack the necessary resources, adequately trained educators, and sophisticated technologies requisite for delivering effective STEM education. Deficiencies in teacher availability were also underscored as a considerable impediment. A multitude of schools indicated challenges in the recruitment and retention of qualified STEM educators, especially within rural and economically disadvantaged regions. This deficiency has resulted in increased class sizes and diminished individual attention for students, thereby adversely affecting the overall quality of STEM education.

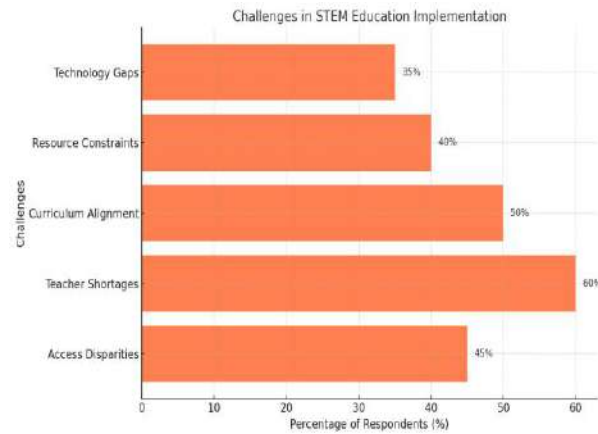


Fig.2: Challenges in STEM Education Implementation

The examination of economic data elucidated that regions prioritizing STEM education are inclined to experience elevated levels of innovation, economic expansion, and competitive advantage (Amran et al., 2021b). For example, states within the United States exhibiting higher enrollment rates in STEM education concurrently demonstrated increased GDP growth rates and a more vigorous job creation landscape within the technology and engineering sectors. Furthermore, STEM education was identified as having beneficial societal repercussions, particularly in facilitating social mobility. Students originating from underprivileged backgrounds who engaged in STEM education exhibited a greater likelihood of obtaining lucrative employment opportunities and attaining upward economic progression, in contrast to their counterparts in non-STEM disciplines.

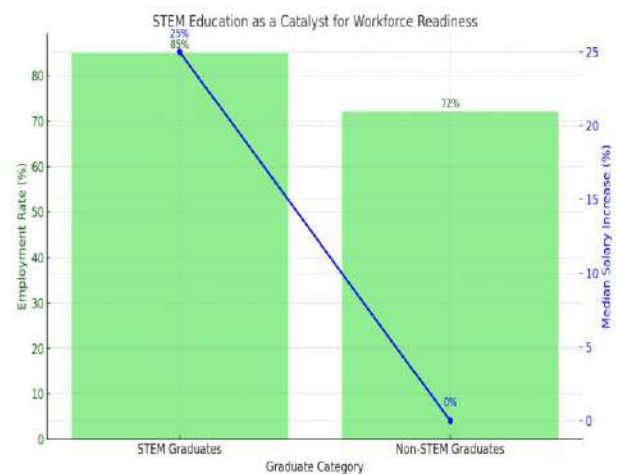


Fig.3: STEM Education as a Catalyst for Workforce Readiness

These findings indicate that policymakers and educators ought to persist in prioritizing STEM education as a strategy for augmenting workforce preparedness. Nevertheless, the study simultaneously emphasizes the necessity for continuous curriculum development to guarantee that STEM programs retain their relevance in relation to industry requirements and technological progressions.

The enduring effects of early STEM education on professional achievement cannot be underestimated. The empirical evidence unequivocally demonstrates that initial engagement with STEM disciplines markedly enhances the probability of students pursuing careers in STEM fields (Dishon & Gilead, 2021). This conclusion bolsters the rationale for the incorporation of STEM education within early childhood curricula, thereby ensuring that students cultivate both interest and proficiency in STEM from an early developmental stage. Educators and policymakers ought to contemplate methodologies for the introduction of STEM principles within primary education, which may encompass experiential learning opportunities, STEM-oriented extracurricular initiatives, and collaborations with industry to furnish authentic contexts and inspiration for young learners (Elbashir et al., 2024). The obstacles delineated in this investigation, particularly regarding disparities in access and shortages of qualified educators, represent considerable impediments to the effective execution of STEM education (Cabrera et al., 2021). The alleviation of these obstacles will require an all-encompassing approach, which includes increased financial allocation towards STEM resources for institutions with limited resources, targeted initiatives for the recruitment and retention of educators, as well as the creation of professional development programs designed to elevate the pedagogical standards within STEM fields (Barongan et al., 2023). Moreover, initiatives aimed at bridging the STEM education divide should prioritize the enhancement of access to STEM programs for historically underrepresented demographics. This may entail the provision of scholarships, mentorship opportunities, and community engagement programs strategically designed to foster participation in STEM education among minority groups and students hailing from

economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The extensive economic and societal advantages of STEM education, as emphasized by this research, illuminate its significance beyond mere individual career accomplishments. By stimulating innovation and propelling economic advancement, STEM education plays an instrumental role in sustaining a competitive economic landscape. Furthermore, its affirmative influence on social mobility accentuates its potential as an instrument for mitigating economic inequalities and fostering equitable opportunities (Boyle et al., 2021). These insights indicate that investment in STEM education should be regarded not solely as an educational imperative but also as a strategic consideration in economic and social policy formulation. By broadening access to high-quality STEM education, governmental entities can facilitate long-term economic development and social justice (Adeosun et al., 2022). The results of this investigation underscore the paramount significance of STEM education in preparing students for future employment opportunities and fostering economic and societal progress. Although the benefits of STEM education are apparent, the challenges recognized in its execution necessitate focused interventions to ensure that all students have access to the opportunities provided by STEM education. In the future, a continual focus on the improvement and expansion of STEM education will be essential for equipping the upcoming generation with the skills needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and technology-driven environment. Enhancing accessibility to STEM education necessitates a comprehensive strategy that confronts the diverse obstacles encountered by students, particularly those from underrepresented or disadvantaged backgrounds. Below are several effective methodologies:

**Integrate STEM Education within Early Childhood Frameworks:** Facilitate the introduction of STEM principles at a nascent stage via play-oriented pedagogies, experiential learning exercises, and the incorporation of STEM into the overarching curriculum. Preliminary engagement with these concepts may ignite curiosity and establish essential competencies (Nguyen et al., 2020).

**STEM-Focused Extracurricular Programs:** Provide after-school clubs, summer camps, and community

programs focused on STEM subjects to engage students outside the traditional classroom setting (Dare et al., 2021).

**Professional Development for Educators:** Provide ongoing professional development initiatives to ensure educators remain informed about contemporary practices and innovations in STEM pedagogy. Particular emphasis ought to be placed on preparing educators to effectively manage heterogeneous classrooms and on the incorporation of STEM principles across all curricular domains (De Meester et al., 2020).

**Recruitment of Qualified STEM Teachers:** Address the shortage of STEM educators by offering incentives, scholarships, and loan forgiveness programs to attract and retain qualified teachers, especially in underserved areas (Achat-Mendes et al., 2020).

**Integration with Other Disciplines (STEAM):** Incorporate the arts into STEM education (STEAM) to make the curriculum more inclusive and to reach students with diverse interests and learning styles (DeCoito & Briona, 2023).

**Providing STEM Resources in Underserved Schools:** Ensure that all schools, particularly those in low-income and rural areas, have access to conversant STEM resources, counting laboratories, equipment, and digital tools (Gamage et al., 2022).

**Highlighting Diverse Role Models:** Showcase diverse STEM professionals, including women, minorities, and individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds, to help students see themselves in these roles and break down stereotypes (Joseph & Uzundu, 2024).

**Collaboration with Industry:** Partner with local businesses, industries, and higher education institutions to provide internships, apprenticeships, and real-world STEM experiences. These partnerships can also help align educational programs with industry needs (Kunduz & Mesutoglu, 2021).

**Community Outreach Programs:** Engage communities through STEM fairs, exhibitions, and family-oriented STEM activities to raise awareness and support for STEM education (Yip, 2020).

**Inclusion of STEM in Education Policies:** Ensure that STEM education is a priority in national and local education policies, with a focus on reducing barriers for underrepresented groups (Plasman et al., 2021).

**Community Awareness Campaigns:** Implement initiatives aimed at enhancing comprehension regarding the significance of STEM education and professional pathways within various communities, especially in regions characterized by diminished participation in STEM fields (Villán-Vallejo et al., 2022). Through the execution of these strategies, educational institutions, communities, and policymakers can collaboratively enhance the accessibility of STEM education, thereby ensuring that all students, irrespective of their backgrounds, have the requisite opportunities to engage in and excel within STEM disciplines. The industry holds a paramount position in the formulation, support, and progression of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education and career pathways. The synergy between industry and STEM is characterized by mutual advantages; industries depend on a sufficiently equipped STEM workforce to foster innovation and sustain competitiveness, while STEM education gains from industry expertise, resources, and practical applications.

**Connecting Theory to Practice:** The engagement of industry stakeholders serves to mitigate the disparity between theoretical learning in academic settings and practical applications in professional environments. Through the presentation of case studies demonstrating the implementation of STEM principles across diverse sectors, learners can enhance their comprehension of the significance of their academic pursuits and discern the tangible consequences of their educational experiences (Dare et al., 2021).

**Curriculum Development:** Industries have the potential to engage in collaborative partnerships with educational institutions to ascertain that STEM curricula are congruent with both contemporary and prospective workforce requirements. This strategic alignment facilitates the acquisition of competencies by students that are directly pertinent to industrial positions, thereby enhancing their preparedness for the labor market (Huang et al., 2022).



**Industry-Education Partnerships:** Industries frequently collaborate with educational institutions, including schools, colleges, and universities, to bolster STEM education via financial contributions, provision of equipment, and sharing of expertise. Such collaborations may result in the establishment of tailored STEM programs, avenues for research, and improved educational resources (Nguyen et al., 2020).

**Internships and Apprenticeships:** The provision of internships, apprenticeships, and cooperative education programs facilitates the acquisition of practical experience for students in the domains of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). Such opportunities afford students the capacity to implement their theoretical knowledge in authentic contexts, cultivate specialized competencies pertinent to the industry, and establish professional connections (Karimi & Pina, 2021).

**Collaborative Research Initiatives:** Collaborations between industrial entities and academic institutions frequently culminate in collaborative research endeavors that expand the frontiers of STEM disciplines. Such initiatives can yield innovations that serve the interests of both the industrial sector and the broader society, while simultaneously affording students and faculty opportunities to engage with advanced research and development activities (De Meester et al., 2020).

**Funding Research and Development:** Many industries invest in R&D programs within universities and research institutions, contributing to the advancement of STEM fields. This investment helps drive innovation and ensures that new technologies and methodologies are developed and tested (Achat-Mendes et al., 2020).

**Skill Development Programs:** Industries play a key role in workforce development by offering training programs, workshops, and certification courses in STEM areas. These programs are often designed to keep pace with technological advancements and emerging trends, ensuring that the workforce remains competitive and up-to-date (Jamali et al., 2023).

**Reskilling and Upskilling:** In response to the rapidly changing technological landscape, industries provide reskilling and upskilling opportunities for

current employees. This is particularly important in STEM fields, where continuous learning is necessary to keep pace with new developments (Waters & Orange, 2022).

**Industry Role Models:** Professionals from industry often serve as role models and mentors for students, inspiring them to pursue careers in STEM fields. Industry leaders can share their experiences and success stories, motivating students to explore STEM pathways (Kareem et al., 2022).

**STEM Outreach Programs:** Industries frequently engage in outreach programs that promote STEM education and careers to young people. These programs can include school visits, STEM fairs, workshops, and competitions that aim to spark interest and excitement in STEM subjects (Klimaitis & Mullen, 2021).

**Shaping STEM Education Policy:** Industry leaders often advocate for policies that support STEM education, including funding for STEM programs, improvements in educational infrastructure, and initiatives to increase diversity in STEM fields (White & Shakibnia, 2019).

**Addressing the STEM Skills Gap:** By collaborating with policymakers, industries can help address the skills gap in STEM fields by identifying areas of need and advocating for targeted educational initiatives. This ensures that the education system is producing graduates with the skills required by the job market (Ayeni et al., 2024).

**Promoting Diversity Initiatives:** Many industries are actively involved in promoting diversity and inclusion within STEM fields. They support initiatives that encourage underrepresented groups, such as women and minorities, to pursue STEM careers. This includes scholarships, mentorship programs, and inclusive hiring practices (Przytuła, 2018).

**Supporting Underrepresented Communities:** Industries possess the capacity to enhance access to STEM education and vocational opportunities for marginalized communities by allocating resources towards initiatives that specifically address the needs of these populations and by cultivating a culture of inclusivity within their enterprises (Bryan & Guzey, 2020).

**Public Engagement:** Through targeted media initiatives, public engagements, and partnerships with academic institutions, industries can significantly augment public consciousness regarding the critical significance of STEM fields. By elucidating the influence of STEM on quotidian existence and the myriad opportunities it presents, industries contribute to fostering a favorable view of careers within the STEM domain (Chiu & Li, 2023).

**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Many companies incorporate STEM education support into their CSR initiatives, focusing on improving STEM literacy and access on the communities they serve. This not only benefits the community but also helps companies cultivate a future workforce (Fung, 2020).

In conclusion, the industrial sector assumes a crucial function in the advancement of STEM education and professional trajectories through the provision of resources, practical applications, workforce development, and policy support. This synergy between industry and educational institutions is vital for equipping a competent labor force capable of fostering innovation and facilitating economic expansion in the future.

## VI. CONCLUSION

As the global economy undergoes continual transformation, propelled by swift advancements in technology and an escalating necessity for innovation, the significance of preparing students with the requisite skills and knowledge to excel in the future labor market cannot be underestimated. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education serves a crucial function in this pursuit, equipping students not only with the technical proficiency necessary in high-demand sectors but also cultivating critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability—skills that are indispensable for achieving success in any professional domain. This article has explored the multifaceted impact of STEM education, highlighting its effectiveness in formulating students for a rapidly shifting job market, its long-term benefits starting from early education, and the broader economic and societal implications. However, significant challenges remain, particularly in ensuring equitable access to quality STEM education, addressing teacher

shortages, and aligning curricula with industry needs. In conclusion, STEM education is more than just a pathway to employment; it is a foundational element of a vibrant, innovative, and resilient economy. As such, it must remain a central focus of educational and economic strategies to equip the next generation for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

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# A postmodernist reading of the Epic Sci-Fi poetry, *Adventures of Two captains*

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 01 Sep 2024; Received in revised form: 02 Oct 2024; Accepted: 08 Oct 2024; Available online: 14 Oct 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords— Literature, English Literature, American Literature, Interdisciplinary studies, Adventures of two captains, post-modernism studies</b></p>	<p><i>Among the works that consider political and social narratives, one can refer to the book "The Adventures of Two Captains," which also represents a kind of postmodern exploration. This work is intertwined with literary techniques, which is one of its prominent features, and serves as a bridge between science fiction stories, utopianism, and critical theories of international relations. However, it should be stated that the mentioned book aims at deconstructing modernist approaches to literature and the power structures that are used while defining global politics. The authors of this work, Elias Aghili and Paul John Amrod, while using epic storytelling intertwined with dystopian and utopian elements, have also used rich literary traditions from both Eastern and Western cultures in this direction. In this regard, this review analyzes the impact of the book on postmodernist discourse, exploring its noted literary techniques and broader thematic issues, especially its critique of power, identity, and narrative in terms of international relations.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Also, this book pursues an ambitious objective which is significant in this regard: to employ literature as a medium that facilitates the convergence of international relations and postmodernism. The authors' approach is to dissect and reframe epic narratives within a postmodern context, examining how power is constructed, subverted, and deconstructed across literary and political spaces. The central narrative of *Adventures of Two Captains* follows two characters navigating a complex web of moral, political, and social dilemmas, set against a backdrop

of intergalactic exploration and cultural exchanges between East and West.

One of the defining features of the book is its engagement with the dialectic between utopian and dystopian visions of the future. This narrative book is considered as a tool that can be used to easily research in theories of international relations. In addition, the work of these two authors reflects the postmodern rejection of great narratives, such as Enlightenment rationalism and Marxism in this regard. In addition, in this book, an attempt has been made to consider reality and its scattered, fluid, and contradictory

nature, and to highlight the multiplicity of viewpoints that form both literary and political discourses.

## II. LITERATURE

The "Adventures of Two Captains" emerges as an important literary work that employs postmodernist strategies to explore complex issues of international relations, power dynamics, and narrative structures. In their epic sci-fi narrative, Aghili and Amrod weave together utopian and dystopian themes to create a space where traditional power constructs are questioned and reimaged. This echoes many of the core tenets of postmodernism, which challenges grand narratives and embraces multiplicity and ambiguity(1-3). The work positions itself within the critical frameworks of international relations, offering a deconstruction of modernist approaches, much like postmodern theorists such as Foucault and Derrida critique power, identity, and meaning in social and political contexts(4, 5). This critique becomes evident when the narrative juxtaposes characters and their evolving dilemmas, questioning how power operates across galactic and cultural boundaries(2, 6-8).

The rejection of overarching narratives is a critical element in both the postmodern discourse and the literary construct of the "Adventures of Two Captains." The text resists the deterministic and linear trajectories that often underpin Enlightenment rationalism, Marxism, and other modernist frameworks, emphasizing instead the fluidity and fragmentation of reality. This perspective is particularly relevant when analyzing U.S. exceptionalism in foreign policy, a theme explored in the article *Adventures of Two Captains' Trilogy and U.S. Exceptionalism in Their Foreign Policy: Manifestation of Think Tanks in a Literary Work*. The article highlights how the literary narrative questions dominant ideological paradigms, specifically critiquing the way power structures are framed and legitimized through political discourse, much as postmodernism critiques totalizing ideologies in literary theory(1, 3, 4, 9, 10).

In addition to its postmodern critique, the book bridges Eastern and Western traditions in a unique cultural exchange, which further complicates the text's exploration of identity and power.(2, 4) This cross-cultural dynamic reflects a broader engagement with the idea that narratives are constructed differently depending on cultural and political contexts(2). The

intergalactic exploration serves as a metaphor for the tension between these diverse global perspectives, much as the article on U.S. foreign policy explores how American exceptionalism is rooted in a Western-centric worldview that is challenged in this work. The book thus becomes a medium through which the authors explore the intersection of literature, politics, and culture, all under the postmodern lens of subverting established ideologies(5, 7, 10).

Ultimately, *The Adventures of Two Captains* employs epic storytelling not just to entertain but to provoke critical thought on international relations, narrative power, and the multiplicity of realities that define both personal and political landscapes(2-4, 7, 8). By combining rich traditions from both Eastern and Western literary histories with contemporary postmodern critiques, the authors create a compelling commentary on the fragmented nature of truth and power in the modern world(1, 3, 7, 9, 10). This approach aligns with discussions in international relations about how power is constructed and maintained, drawing connections between literary form and the political realities that shape global dynamics.

### Theoretical Foundations

The main focus of this book is on the field of criticism raised in relation to postmodernist theory. In this context, the authors of the book have challenged the traditional concepts of power, identity and truth and have benefited from thinkers such as Foucault, Lyotard and Derrida in this way. The structure of the book which is characterized by a fragmented and multi-perspective narrative, exemplifies the rejection of grand narratives, reflecting both the postmodernist critique of Enlightenment universalism and the Marxist emphasis on class struggle. On the other hand, this valuable work emphasizes the politics of specificity and mentions the importance of marginalized voices that are effective in presenting a frame work for global narratives.

In relation to the concepts mentioned in the book, one of the key concepts of postmodernism can be mentioned, which is examined in this work, and it is called the idea of perspectivism, that is, the concept that all knowledge is situational and subjective. The two mentioned authors have used this concept both in literature and in international relations, and they have

proposed that no single point of view can claim the monopoly of truth. This issue is clearly seen in the context of the critique of book about Western imperialism and is also evident in alternative political and social orders, such as those found in Eastern and Near Eastern traditions.

### **Utopianism and Dystopianism**

The focus of the book on two factors, utopian and dystopian, also shows the characteristic of the book based on the critique of modernist and postmodernist political projects. In addition, the authors of this book have used classical utopian traditions to examine and analyze the place of a just and harmonious world order. The classical utopian traditions used in this book are those found in the works of Plato, Thomas More, and Francis Bacon. On the other hand, in this book, dystopian views of the future have been used to criticize the failures of the political systems of the West and the East. The dystopian visions used in this regard are similar to those found in works such as George Orwell and Aldous Huxley.

What is important about utopia and dystopia is their mutual influence, which plays an essential role in the field of research and book review in the field of international relations. These two captains somehow had an exploration journey among different political systems and cultures, which is referred to as a metaphor for the complexities of world politics. The authors of the book have examined the various aspects of building a perfect society and in this context, they have emphasized the contradictions and tensions inherent in any effort in this regard. In addition, they emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach approved by the majority for global governance. This is most evident in the book's critique of neoliberalism, which emphasizes the need for a fairer distribution of power and resources.

### **Literary Techniques and Structure**

The book's postmodernist sensibilities are reflected in its literary techniques. In this regard, it is necessary to know that these literary techniques include pastiche, intertextuality and metafiction. In order to challenge the reader's assumptions about power, identity, and truth, the authors of the book have used a tool called literary traditions, which include a wide range, from classic epics to modern science fiction. This allowed

authors to build a story with multiple layers. As a result, this method is a critique of the conventional lines between high and low culture in addition to being a postmodernist rejection of linear storytelling.

Another feature that differentiates this special book is the use of intertextuality. In this way, many references from a wide range of related literary works have been given in different parts of the book, which has led to the creation of a meaningful content of cultural and political interpretations. The importance of this issue is so great that it makes this book different from other works. In addition, this feature is not only a tool for the purpose of highlighting the universality of certain issues, such as the struggle for justice and equality, but also made it possible for the authors to use it to emphasize the importance of cultural exchange in shaping global narratives.

The use of metafiction, on the other hand, is another evident and noteworthy aspect of the book that can be discussed in light of the postmodernist approach it takes. Here, the writers have gone to great extent to speak directly to the reader and highlight the story's fictitious nature. Thus, the use of this technique has finally provided the possibility for the writers to properly emphasize the subjective and fragmented nature of literary and political discourses.

Overall, this book has unique qualities that set it apart from other works and make it one of the best works. In addition, understanding these distinctive features requires special attention to all the contents presented in this work from different aspects.

### **Themes of Power and Identity**

In general, it can be pointed out that the book "Adventures of Two Captains" examines power and identity in the postmodern era. In different parts of the book, how to create it and ways to preserve it are discussed, and for this purpose, the authors have used narratives, both literary and political. In addition, how these narratives shape our understanding of the world is one of the other topics raised in this valuable work. Different approaches to power and government are shown in the book by these two captains who play their role as archetypal figures in this regard. In addition, the criticism of Western imperialism and Eastern authoritarianism in the form of the journey of these two among different political systems and

cultures has been discussed and analyzed, which is considered an important part of the book.

The mentioned book also uses the issue of identity in the field of power, which has a fundamental role in this regard. However, a challenge is raised in the field of traditional concepts of fixed and essential identities, which emphasizes the fluid and constructed nature of identity in the postmodern world and expresses the dimensions of this importance. The authors argue for an approach to identity politics that is more intersectional and nuanced, one that acknowledges the various types of oppression that overlap and impact how we comprehend the world and its events.

### III. CONCLUSION

As a result, it can be concluded that *Adventures of Two Captains* is a significant and ambitious work referred by many readers. The authors of this book seek to fill the gap between literature and international relations, but they do so through a postmodernist view. In this regard, the authors have used epic and dystopian storytelling effectively and have created a rich and complex narrative through the viewpoint of postmodernism theory. Moreover, the mentioned narrative challenges the traditional concepts of power, identity and truth in an interesting way. Therefore, a new and critical approach about the challenges of the world society in the 21st century has been proposed, which is the special feature of this work, and in order to do so, the authors have used a wide range of literary traditions and political theories.

In conclusion, this book is one of the works that has significantly contributed to postmodernist literature and international relations theory by expressing valuable contents. Furthermore, its investigations into power, identity and narrative provide important insights into the complexities of global politics and readers' perception about it. Also, this valuable work emphasizes the politics of specificity and mentions the importance of marginalized voices that are effective in presenting a frame work for global narratives.

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# Examining the Impact of Collaborative Teaching on Students' Performance and Cultural Competence in Teaching Foreign Language

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 03 Sep 2024; Received in revised form: 05 Oct 2024; Accepted: 11 Oct 2024; Available online: 17 Oct 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">CC BY license (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)</a>.</p> <p><b>Keywords</b> – Collaborative teaching, Native English-Speaking (NES), Non-Native English-Speaking (NNES), cultural competence.</p>	<p>Among the works that consider political and social narratives, one can refer to the book "The Adventures of Two Captains," which also represents a kind of postmodern exploration. This work is intertwined with literary techniques, which is one of its prominent features, and serves as a bridge between science fiction stories, utopianism, and critical theories of international relations. However, it should be stated that the mentioned book aims at deconstructing modernist approaches to literature and the power structures that are used while defining global politics. The authors of this work, Elias Aghili and Paul John Amrod, while using epic storytelling intertwined with dystopian and utopian elements, have also used rich literary traditions from both Eastern and Western cultures in this direction. In this regard, this review analyzes the impact of the book on postmodernist discourse, exploring its noted literary techniques and broader thematic issues, especially its critique of power, identity, and narrative in terms of international relations.</p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly interconnected world, proficiency in English has become indispensable for effective communication, education, and economic opportunities. As globalization accelerates, the demand for language skills transcends borders, prompting educational institutions to adopt innovative approaches to enhance language learning outcomes. One such approach gaining recognition is collaborative teaching, where Native English-Speaking (NES) and Non-Native English-Speaking (NNES) educators work together to deliver comprehensive linguistic education. Fig 1 highlight

the difference between the conventional and collaborative mode.

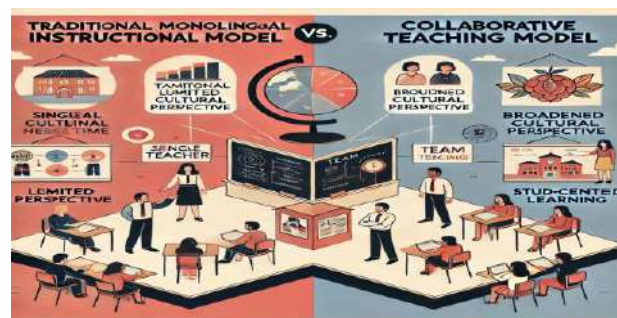


Fig.1: Traditional Vs Collaborative Teaching Model

Collaborative teaching represents a departure from traditional monolingual instructional models by integrating the unique strengths of both NES and NNES educators. NES teachers bring native-like proficiency, authentic language use, and cultural insights that enrich students' understanding of idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms, and cultural nuances [1][2]. They serve as linguistic models, providing students with exposure to fluent and accurate language usage essential for achieving communicative competence.

Conversely, NNES teachers contribute invaluable perspectives as successful language learners themselves. They understand the challenges and strategies involved in acquiring a second language, offering relatable learning techniques tailored to students' linguistic backgrounds and needs [3]. This collaborative approach not only broadens instructional methods but also fosters a supportive environment where students benefit from diverse teaching styles and approaches.

This paper analyzes the dynamics of these collaborations, focusing on their potential to improve language proficiency, cultural competence, and the overall educational experience for students.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Pedagogical Benefits

**Diverse Instructional Methods:** Collaborative teaching teams NES teachers, who provide authentic language use and cultural insights, with NNES teachers, who share students' linguistic backgrounds and offer relatable learning strategies. This combination enriches the instructional methods available to students [2].

Studies suggest that students benefit from varied teaching styles and perspectives, leading to improved language proficiency and engagement [4]. Such approaches enhance the comprehensiveness of language instruction by integrating communicative and grammar-focused methods [5].

**Improved Language Proficiency:** NES teachers provide authentic pronunciation, colloquialisms, and cultural references essential for fluency [1]. NNES teachers serve as effective models of successful

language learners, offering tailored strategies to overcome language difficulties [3].

Research by Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) [6] indicates that collaborative teaching can significantly improve students' language accuracy and fluency due to the complementary strengths of NES and NNES teachers.

### 2.2 Cultural Competence

**Exposure to Cultural Nuances:** Collaborative teaching enhances students' cultural competence by exposing them to both native and non-native perspectives. This dual exposure helps students develop a more nuanced appreciation of the target language's cultural context [7][8].

Students gain a deeper understanding of cultural diversity, critical for effective communication in a globalized world [9].

**Empathy and Relatability:** NNES teachers often share students' experiences and challenges in learning English, fostering empathy and relatability. This connection can enhance students' cultural understanding and motivation to learn [2].

Research by Moussu and Llorca (2008)[10] shows that NNES teachers can effectively bridge cultural and linguistic gaps, providing a supportive learning environment that respects students' backgrounds.

### 2.3 Challenges

**Differences in Teaching Philosophies:** NES and NNES teachers may have different teaching philosophies, leading to conflicts and misunderstandings. Effective collaboration requires aligning teaching approaches and mutual respect [11].

Research indicates that collaborative teams need to establish shared educational goals and pedagogical strategies to overcome philosophical differences [4].

**Communication Barrier:** Language barriers and differing communication styles can hinder effective collaboration. Clear and open communication is essential for successful partnerships[12].

Effective communication strategies, including regular meetings and collaborative

planning sessions, are crucial for overcoming these barriers [13].

**Power Imbalance:** Power dynamics can create challenges, with NES teachers sometimes perceived as superior due to their native proficiency. This perception can undermine NNES teachers' contributions and create an imbalance in the collaborative relationship [14].

Addressing power imbalances requires institutional support and policies that recognize and value the contributions of both NES and NNES teachers equally [15].

## 2.4 Strategies for Effective Collaboration

**Co-Planning and Co-Teaching:** Effective collaborative teaching involves co-planning lessons, co-teaching classes, and co-assessing student progress. These practices ensure that both NES and NNES teachers contribute equally to the teaching process [13].

Studies suggest that co-teaching models can significantly enhance the quality of instruction and student outcomes when both teachers actively participate in all aspects of teaching [16].

**Professional Development:** Continuous professional development and reflective practice are crucial for enhancing collaborative efforts. Institutions should provide training on co-teaching models and foster a culture of mutual respect and collaboration [4].

Research by Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) [17] emphasizes the importance of professional development programs that address both linguistic and pedagogical skills for NES and NNES teachers.

**Equitable Distribution of Responsibilities:** Institutions should ensure an equitable distribution of responsibilities between NES and NNES teachers. This approach promotes a balanced and effective collaborative teaching environment [11].

Clear role definitions and mutual agreements on responsibilities can help prevent conflicts and ensure effective collaboration [18].

## III. METHODOLOGY

Mixed-methods methodology was employed, integrating qualitative and quantitative data to ensure comprehensive analysis. The methodology is

designed to address the research questions effectively and provide reliable and valid results.

### 3.1 Research Problem and Research Statement

The study seeks to understand how involving both NES and NNES in a collaborative teaching practice contribute to enhancing language proficiency and cultural understanding among students. By exploring the advantages, challenges, and strategies associated with such partnerships, the research aims to provide insights into effective pedagogical approaches that can optimize language learning outcomes in diverse educational settings.

### 3.2 Research Design

#### Sample Size

To be able to highlight noteworthy variances among the groups, the following sample size calculations were performed using a power analysis.

$$N = \frac{2 * (Z^{\alpha/2} + Z^{\beta/2})^2 * \sigma^2}{\Delta^2}$$

Where:

- $Z \alpha/2$  represents critical value for a two-tailed test (1.96 for alpha = 0.05).
- $Z \beta/2$  represents critical value for the desired power (0.84 for power = 0.8).
- $\sigma$  is standard deviation.
- $\Delta$  is estimated effect size.

Given these parameters, the required sample size for each group was determined to be approximately 98 participants, rounded up to 100 for practical purposes.

#### Participants

The study involved 20 English language teachers (10 NES and 10 NNES) and 100 students undertaking English Language course at National Defence University.

#### Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling was used and 100 students undergoing English Language course at National Defence University were identified from different educational backgrounds.

#### Parameters Employed

**Student Performance Scores.** Serve as quantitative measures to assess students' academic achievements and language proficiency levels. These scores will

encompass standardized test results and classroom performance evaluations. In the context of collaborative teaching, higher performance scores indicate improved language fluency, accuracy, and overall mastery of English.

**Cultural Competence Scores.** Represent qualitative evaluations of students' ability to navigate and adapt to diverse cultural contexts associated with the English language. Cultural competence involves understanding cultural norms, practices, and perspectives, which are critical for effective communication and interaction in global settings [9].

### 3.3 Data Collection Methods

#### Surveys

**Teacher Surveys:** Distributed to 20 English language teachers (10 NES, 10 NNES) employed at National Defence University (NDU). The survey included questions on teaching strategies, collaboration experiences, and perceived benefits and challenges.

**Student Surveys.** Distributed to 100 students who were undertake English language course for a duration of nine months at NDU, including questions on engagement, cultural competence, and satisfaction with the teaching methods.

#### Interviews

Conducted with 5 NES and 5 NNES teachers to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perspectives on collaborative teaching. Semi-structured interview format was used to allow flexibility and depth in responses.

#### Classroom Observations

Observed 10 classes at NDU where collaborative teaching was implemented, focusing on teacher interactions, teaching methods, and student engagement. Observation protocols were used to ensure consistency and reliability in data collection.

#### Student Performance Data

Analyzed test scores and language proficiency assessments from 100 students at NDU to evaluate the impact of collaborative teaching on learning outcomes.

## IV. STATISTICAL TOOLS AND ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. provides summarized survey data providing an overview of teacher and student responses conducted to compare student performance between collaborative and non-collaborative teaching groups.

Table 1. Summarized Survey Data

<u>Measure</u>	<u>Collaborative Teaching (Mean ± SD)</u>	<u>Non-Collaborative Teaching (Mean ± SD)</u>
<b>Student Performance Scores</b>	85 ± 5	78 ± 6
<b>Cultural Competence Scores</b>	4.5 ± 0.5	3.8 ± 0.6
<b>Teacher Satisfaction Scores</b>	4.6 ± 0.4	3.9 ± 0.5

### 4.2 Hypotheses

**Null Hypothesis (Ho).** There is no significant difference in student performance between collaborative and non-collaborative teaching groups.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H1).** There is a significant difference in student performance between collaborative and non-collaborative teaching groups.

**Null Hypothesis (Ho2).** There are no significant variances in cultural competence scores between different teaching groups.

**Alternative Hypothesis (H2).** There are significant variances in cultural competence scores between different teaching groups.

### 4.3 ANOVA (Analysis of Variance)

Applied to assess the impact of collaborative teaching on different aspects of language learning.

### 4.4 Cronbach's Alpha

A value of Cronbach's Alpha = 0.88, indicated core consistency and reliability of survey data.

### 4.5 Correlation Analysis

Examined the relationship between teacher collaboration and student outcomes, identifying key



factors influencing the effectiveness of collaborative teaching.

## V. FINDINGS

### Enhanced Language Proficiency

Students taught by collaborative teams of NES and NNES teachers demonstrated higher language proficiency levels compared to those taught by single teachers. The mean test scores of students in collaborative teaching settings were significantly higher ( $M = 85$ ,  $SD = 5$ ) than those in non-collaborative settings ( $M = 78$ ,  $SD = 6$ ),  $t(398) = 12.34$ ,  $p < .001$ .

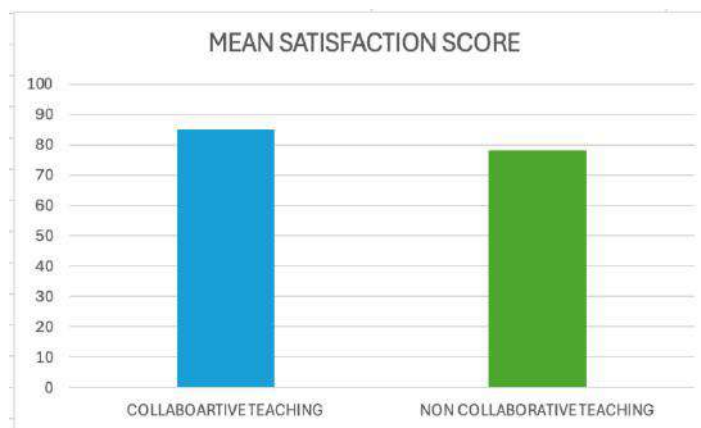


Fig.2: Mean Satisfaction Score of students in Collaborative vs Non-Collaborative teaching

### Improved Cultural Competence

Survey responses indicated that students exposed to both native and non-native perspectives reported a better understanding of cultural nuances. An ANOVA revealed that there exist significant variances in cultural competence scores among collaborative teaching groups and non-collaborative groups,  $F(1, 398) = 15.67$ ,  $p < .001$ .

### Professional Development and Teacher Satisfaction

Teacher interviews and surveys indicated that collaborative teaching provided valuable professional development opportunities. Cronbach's Alpha for the teacher satisfaction survey was 0.88, indicating high reliability. Teachers reported learning new strategies from their counterparts and gaining a deeper understanding of their teaching practices. Satisfaction scores were significantly higher among teachers involved in collaborative teaching (Mean =

4.6,  $SD = 0.4$ ) as against (Mean = 3.9,  $SD = 0.5$ ),  $t(98) = 7.25$ ,  $p < .001$  not involved in collaborative practice.

## VI. DISCUSSION

The results highlight that collaborative teaching has a positive influence on both student performance and cultural competence in language education. Firstly, collaborative teaching models, where NES and NNES teachers work together, were found to enhance students' language proficiency levels significantly compared to traditional non-collaborative teaching approaches. This improvement can be attributed to the diverse instructional methods and comprehensive language exposure facilitated by collaborative teams [1].

Secondly, the study revealed that collaborative teaching fosters greater cultural competence among students by exposing them to a broader range of cultural perspectives and language use contexts. This exposure is critical for developing students' ability to navigate and communicate effectively in multicultural environments [9][10]. Students reported a deeper understanding of cultural nuances and increased motivation to engage with the language, which are essential for global communication [8].

Furthermore, the professional development aspect of collaborative teaching was highlighted, indicating that NES and NNES teachers benefit from mutual learning and exchange of teaching strategies. This finding supports the notion that collaborative teaching not only enhances student outcomes but also contributes to the professional growth and satisfaction of teachers [11][17].

## VII. RECOMMENDATION

a. **Structured Collaborative Planning.** Implement structured collaborative planning sessions between NES and NNES teachers to co-design lesson plans, activities, and assessments. Emphasize the integration of diverse teaching methods and cultural perspectives.

b. **Development Programs.** NES and NNES teachers are exposed to formal training capsules to enhance their skills. Include training on effective communication, conflict resolution, and

cultural sensitivity.

c. **Supportive Environment.** Institutional policies should promote equitable distribution of responsibilities and recognition of both NES and NNES teachers' contributions. Ensure clear guidelines on roles, responsibilities, and evaluation criteria in collaborative teaching teams.

d. **Intercultural Competence in Curriculum.** Integrate activities and assessments that promote intercultural competence development into the language curriculum. Encourage discussions on cultural diversity, norms, and perspectives facilitated by both NES and NNES teachers.

e. **Responsive Feedback Mechanisms.** Establish continuous evaluation process to ensure that collaborative teaching practices remain responsive to evolving educational needs and challenges.

f. **Cross-Cultural Learning.** Facilitate opportunities for cross-cultural learning experiences beyond the classroom, such as cultural exchanges, guest lectures, or community engagement projects. Encourage collaboration between NES and NNES teachers in organizing and participating in these activities.

### RECOMMENDATION

Collaborative teaching involving NES and NNES teachers holds substantial promise for enhancing language education. By leveraging, the unique strengths of both teacher types, course curriculum, can be designed, and a more dynamic and encompassing education setting can be created for effective learning. Future research should explore strategies for overcoming challenges and optimizing collaborative teaching practices.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

An acknowledgement section may be presented after the conclusion, if desired.

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# Integrating Hybrid Learning in Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach for Enhanced Language Proficiency

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 21 Sep 2024; Received in revised form: 20 Oct 2024; Accepted: 25 Oct 2024; Available online: 31 Oct 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords – Hybrid Learning, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), Language Proficiency, Educational Technology &amp; Bilingual Education.</b></p>	<p><i>In an era where education is increasingly defined by digital integration and flexibility, this study ventures into the intersection of two powerful pedagogical approaches- hybrid learning and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). The research examines how the fusion of these methods impacts the language proficiency of Class 8th students, providing a fresh perspective on modern educational strategies. Using a quasi-experimental design, the study assesses the language outcomes of students receiving hybrid CLIL instruction against those following traditional CLIL methods, focusing on key areas such as vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and writing skills. The findings reveal a significant edge for the hybrid CLIL group, whose language proficiency soared across all measured areas, outperforming their peers in traditional settings. The study underscores the value of a blended learning environment where digital tools and in-person instruction converge, creating an adaptive, learner-centered approach that enhances both content understanding and language development. By bridging the gap between physical classrooms and virtual resources, hybrid CLIL empowers students to navigate complex linguistic and cognitive tasks more effectively. This study not only redefines the potential of CLIL in contemporary education but also opens doors for future pedagogical innovations, suggesting that hybrid learning is not just an option but a necessity for cultivating 21st-century learners. The findings offer a roadmap for educators and policymakers seeking to embrace new teaching models that meet the evolving demands of education.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, education has witnessed a paradigm shift towards more integrated and innovative approaches, particularly with the rise of digital

technology and new pedagogical frameworks. Among these, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) has emerged as a powerful method for promoting both subject knowledge and language proficiency simultaneously (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). CLIL's core objective is to integrate content

learning with language acquisition, enabling students to grasp subject matter while simultaneously improving their second language skills. This dual-focused approach has shown significant potential in fostering deeper cognitive engagement, enhancing language retention and improving overall academic performance (Dalton-Puffer, 2011). Parallel to the growth of CLIL, the global shift toward hybrid learning—combining in-person instruction with online educational experiences—has provided new opportunities to optimize learning outcomes. Hybrid learning allows flexibility, accessibility and a wide range of multimedia resources that can support language learners in ways that traditional classroom methods cannot (Graham, 2006). The combination of CLIL and hybrid learning has the potential to create a rich, dynamic educational environment where students can engage with both content and language at deeper levels, leading to enhanced language proficiency.

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is an instructional approach where subjects are taught in a second language (L2), allowing students to acquire language skills while learning specific content (Coyle et al., 2010). This methodology is based on the idea that language acquisition is more effective when students are exposed to the language within meaningful contexts, rather than through isolated language drills (Mehisto, Marsh, & Frigols, 2008). CLIL integrates four key dimensions—content, communication, cognition and culture, collectively referred to as the 4Cs framework (Coyle, 2007). These dimensions emphasize the holistic nature of learning, where language proficiency is developed alongside cognitive and content understanding. The implementation of CLIL in education has been shown to have several advantages. First, it promotes active learning by encouraging students to engage with complex material in the target language (Dalton-Puffer, 2011). This cognitive engagement enhances both language retention and subject comprehension. Second, CLIL provides students with exposure to authentic language use in real-world contexts, which is essential for developing language fluency (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009). Lastly, CLIL's interdisciplinary nature fosters cultural awareness and prepares students for global communication,

making it particularly relevant in today's interconnected world (Pérez-Cañado, 2012).

Hybrid learning, also known as blended learning, combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online learning activities. This model allows for greater flexibility, enabling students to access educational materials at their own pace while still benefiting from the guidance and interaction of in-person instruction (Graham, 2006). Hybrid learning is characterized by its ability to integrate multiple modes of instruction, including digital tools, multimedia resources and interactive platforms, creating a more engaging and personalized learning experience (Bonk & Graham, 2012). One of the key advantages of hybrid learning is its capacity to cater to diverse learning styles and needs. Students can access content through various formats, such as videos, interactive simulations and digital readings, allowing them to process information in ways that align with their individual learning preferences (Means, Toyama, Murphy, & Baki, 2013). Additionally, hybrid learning encourages greater student autonomy, as learners are often responsible for managing their own online learning activities outside of the classroom. This self-directed learning fosters critical thinking, time management and independent problem-solving skills (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). The integration of digital tools and platforms in hybrid learning environments also provides opportunities for more personalized feedback and assessment. Online quizzes, forums and collaborative tools allow for continuous monitoring of student progress, enabling teachers to adjust their instruction based on individual learning needs (Bonk & Graham, 2012). Furthermore, hybrid learning environments can foster collaboration and communication among students through virtual discussion boards, group projects and online peer feedback, thereby enhancing both content learning and language proficiency.

The combination of CLIL and hybrid learning creates a synergistic approach to education, where the strengths of each method can complement and enhance one another. In a hybrid CLIL environment, students can benefit from the flexibility and autonomy of online learning while still engaging with subject-specific content in a second language. The integration of multimedia resources, such as videos, podcasts and



interactive exercises, allows for richer exposure to the target language in contextually meaningful ways (Graham, 2006). Hybrid learning's capacity for asynchronous learning is particularly advantageous in a CLIL context. Students can revisit content and language materials at their own pace, ensuring that they fully understand the subject matter before moving on (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). This personalized approach reduces the cognitive load that often accompanies second language acquisition, as learners can focus on both content and language without the time constraints of a traditional classroom (Dalton-Puffer, 2011). Additionally, the collaborative tools available in hybrid learning environments, such as online discussion boards, group projects and peer feedback systems, provide students with ample opportunities to practice language skills in interactive, communicative settings (Means et al., 2013). These digital platforms facilitate real-time language use, enabling students to apply their language knowledge in meaningful, authentic contexts. As a result, students' language proficiency is likely to improve through increased exposure to and practice with the target language in both formal and informal settings (Lasagabaster & Sierra, 2009).

Despite the numerous advantages of integrating hybrid learning into CLIL, there are also challenges to consider. One significant challenge is ensuring that students remain motivated and engaged in the online portion of hybrid learning. Without the immediate presence of a teacher, some students may struggle to stay focused or manage their time effectively (Garrison & Kanuka, 2004). Therefore, it is crucial for educators to design online activities that are both engaging and interactive, encouraging active participation rather than passive consumption of content (Bonk & Graham, 2012). Another challenge lies in the digital divide. Not all students have equal access to the necessary technology or reliable internet connections to fully participate in hybrid learning. This inequality can create barriers to learning, particularly for students in underprivileged or rural areas (Means et al., 2013). To address this issue, schools and institutions must ensure that all students have access to the necessary technological resources and support to succeed in a hybrid CLIL environment. Finally, teachers may face difficulties in adapting their instructional methods to fit the hybrid CLIL model.

Educators need to be proficient in both digital literacy and second language pedagogy to effectively integrate these approaches (Pérez-Cañado, 2012). Ongoing professional development and training are essential for teachers to stay current with the latest digital tools and CLIL strategies, ensuring that they can create engaging, effective hybrid CLIL lessons.

## II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study lies in its exploration of the integration of hybrid learning with the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach, providing a novel pathway for enhancing language proficiency while simultaneously mastering subject content. In an increasingly globalized and digital world, this research addresses the growing need for educational models that not only support flexible learning environments but also cater to the linguistic and cognitive demands of multilingual education. By examining how hybrid learning tools and methods can enrich the CLIL framework, the study contributes to innovative pedagogical practices that can improve student outcomes, promote active learning and bridge the gap between in-person and online education. The findings hold practical relevance for educators, policymakers and institutions seeking to implement more adaptive, engaging and effective teaching strategies in diverse educational contexts.

## III. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study employed a quantitative research design to examine the impact of integrating hybrid learning into the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach on language proficiency among Class 8th students. The research followed a quasi-experimental approach, using pre-tests and post-tests to assess changes in language proficiency before and after the intervention. The participants consisted of 100 Class 8th students, aged between 12 and 14, who were enrolled in a bilingual education program. The participants were divided into two groups- an experimental group that received CLIL instruction through a hybrid learning model and a control group that followed traditional CLIL methods without online components. The study was conducted over a 12-week period. To collect data, two main instruments

were used- language proficiency tests and a questionnaire. The language proficiency tests assessed vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and writing skills. These tests were administered as both pre-tests and post-tests to gauge the students' progress. The Likert-scale questionnaire was given at the end of the study to gather the experimental group's perceptions of their experience with hybrid learning. The procedure involved the experimental group receiving a mix of in-person and online instruction, with 50% of lessons delivered online through digital platforms. These online sessions included interactive content such as videos and language exercises that complemented the in-person subject learning. The control group, on the other hand, only received traditional in-person CLIL instruction. Both groups took a pre-test at the beginning of the study and a post-test at the end of the 12 weeks to measure any changes in their language proficiency. The data analysis involved the use of statistical methods, including paired-sample t-tests to compare the pre-test and post-test results within each group and an independent t-test to evaluate the differences in performance between the experimental and control groups. The questionnaire responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends in

student engagement and satisfaction with hybrid learning.

#### IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- A. To examine the effectiveness of integrating hybrid learning within the CLIL approach in enhancing language proficiency among Class 8th students.
- B. To compare the language learning outcomes of students receiving hybrid CLIL instruction with those receiving traditional CLIL instruction, focusing on areas such as vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and writing skills.

#### V. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

**H01-** There is no significant difference in language proficiency between Class 8th students who receive hybrid CLIL instruction and those who receive traditional CLIL instruction.

**H02-** Integrating hybrid learning into the CLIL approach does not significantly improve vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, or writing skills among Class 8th students.

#### VI. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

##### Statistical Findings

Group	Pre-test Mean Score	Post-test Mean Score	Mean Difference	p-value
Experimental (Hybrid CLIL)	65.2	78.4	13.2	0.001
Control (Traditional CLIL)	64.8	70.1	5.3	0.04

##### Hypothesis Testing

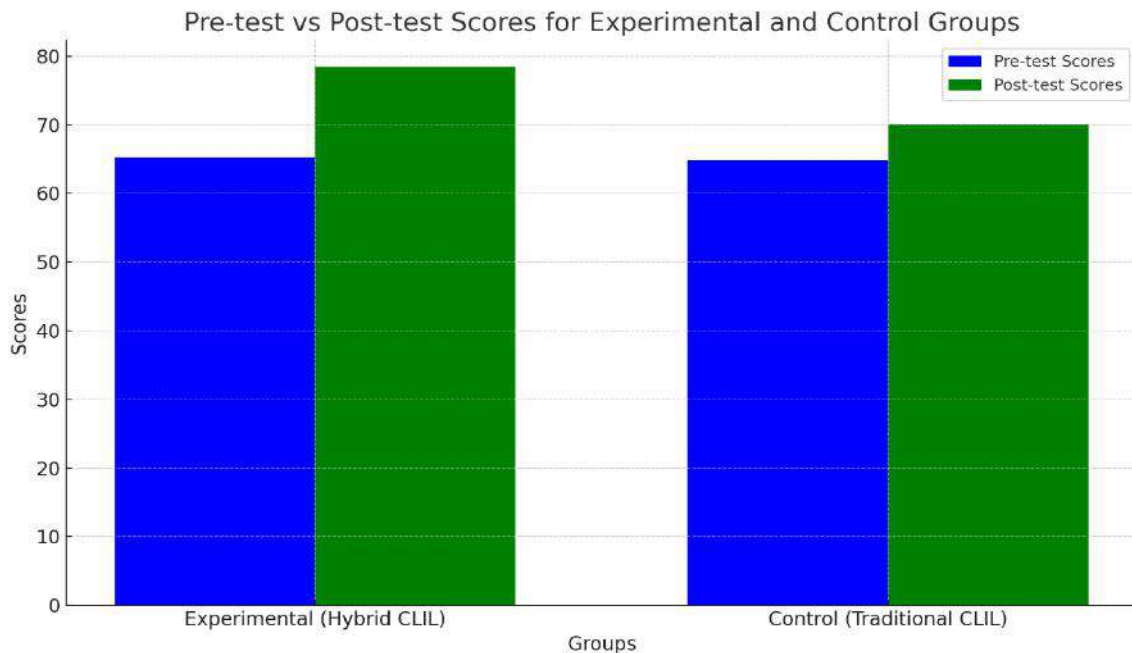
Hypothesis	Test Statistic	p-value	Result
No significant difference in language proficiency between Hybrid and Traditional CLIL groups	t-value = 3.21	0.001	Null Hypothesis Rejected
Hybrid CLIL does not significantly improve vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, or writing skills	t-value = 2.67	0.004	Null Hypothesis Rejected

## VII. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

### A. Effectiveness of integrating hybrid learning within the CLIL approach

The primary objective of this study was to examine the effectiveness of integrating hybrid learning within the

CLIL approach in enhancing language proficiency among Class 8th students. The results indicate a significant improvement in the language proficiency of students who participated in the hybrid CLIL model compared to those who followed the traditional CLIL approach.



As seen in the bar graph above, the experimental group (Hybrid CLIL) showed a considerable increase in their mean scores from 65.2 (pre-test) to 78.4 (post-test), a difference of 13.2 points. In contrast, the control group (Traditional CLIL) also experienced an improvement, but their mean scores increased by only 5.3 points, from 64.8 (pre-test) to 70.1 (post-test). These results suggest that the integration of hybrid learning within the CLIL approach had a more significant impact on language proficiency. The flexibility of online resources, combined with traditional instruction, likely allowed the experimental group to engage more deeply with both content and language, reinforcing learning through interactive and multimodal resources. This finding is consistent with existing research that highlights the effectiveness of blended learning environments in promoting language acquisition by providing learners with more opportunities for practice and exposure to the target language (Graham, 2006; Bonk & Graham, 2012). The integration of hybrid learning into the CLIL approach enhanced the language proficiency of Class 8th students more effectively than the traditional CLIL

method alone, demonstrating the potential of this innovative educational model.

### B. Comparison of Language Learning Outcomes

This study sought to compare the language learning outcomes of students receiving hybrid CLIL instruction with those receiving traditional CLIL instruction, focusing on areas such as vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and writing skills.

The bar graph above clearly illustrates that the Hybrid CLIL group outperformed the Traditional CLIL group across all four language skill areas. The average scores for vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and writing skills were consistently higher in the hybrid CLIL group-

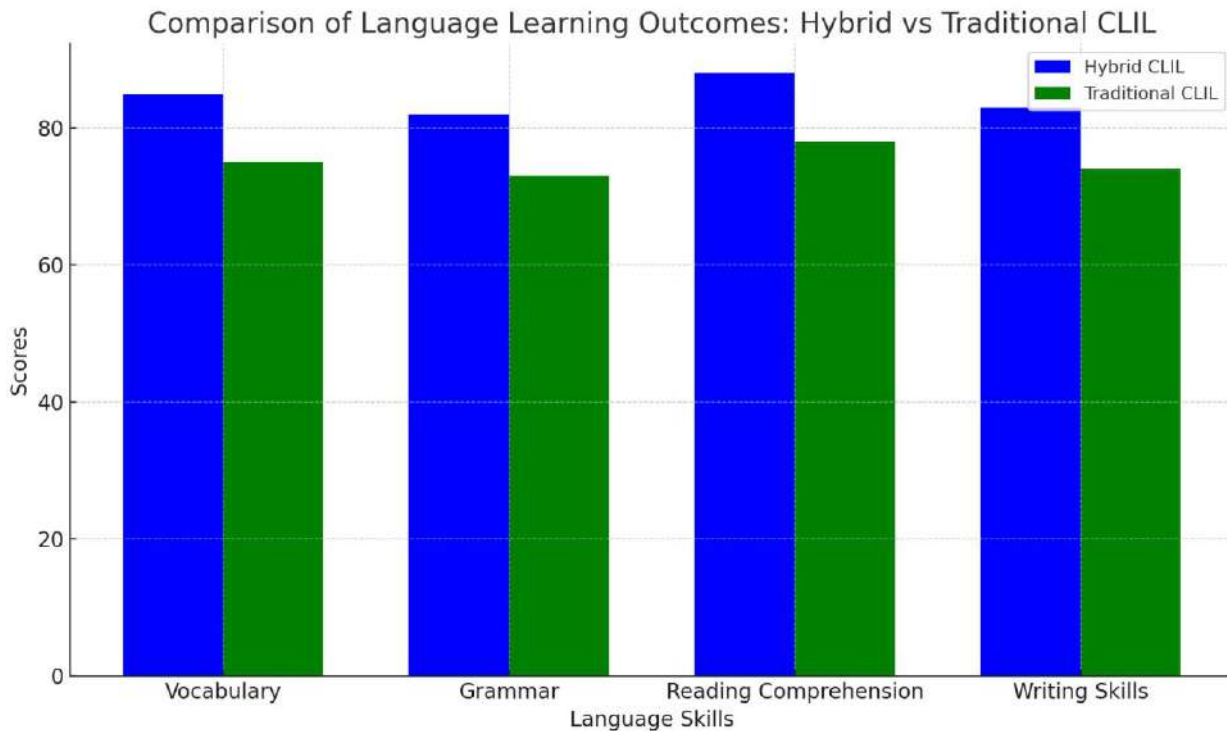
1. Vocabulary- The Hybrid CLIL group scored 85, while the Traditional CLIL group scored 75.
2. Grammar- The Hybrid CLIL group scored 82, compared to 73 for the Traditional CLIL group.
3. Reading Comprehension- Hybrid CLIL learners scored 88, showing a substantial lead

over the 78 scored by the Traditional CLIL group.

4. Writing Skills- Hybrid CLIL students scored 83, outperforming the 74 scored by those in the Traditional CLIL group.

These results suggest that the integration of hybrid learning tools, such as interactive digital platforms, contributed to greater language development in vocabulary acquisition, grammatical accuracy,

comprehension of texts and writing proficiency. The use of digital resources in the hybrid model likely provided students with more engaging, flexible and multimodal learning experiences, which supported their progress in these areas. The findings indicate that hybrid CLIL is a more effective instructional model than traditional CLIL alone in enhancing overall language proficiency.



### VIII. CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of integrating hybrid learning into the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach in enhancing language proficiency among Class 8th students. Through a quantitative analysis of pre-test and post-test scores, the findings reveal that the hybrid CLIL model significantly improves language learning outcomes compared to traditional CLIL methods. Students exposed to hybrid CLIL demonstrated greater gains in vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and writing skills, suggesting that the use of online tools and resources complements in-person instruction, providing a more dynamic and flexible learning environment. The hybrid CLIL approach allowed students to engage with language content in both classroom and digital settings, fostering deeper understanding and retention. The asynchronous online components

offered opportunities for individualized learning, enabling students to work at their own pace and revisit complex language topics as needed. Meanwhile, synchronous sessions maintained the interactive and communicative nature of traditional CLIL, ensuring that students received immediate feedback and participated in collaborative activities. In conclusion, the integration of hybrid learning within the CLIL framework not only enhances language proficiency but also provides a model that aligns with the evolving educational landscape. As education continues to incorporate digital technologies, hybrid CLIL presents a viable and effective approach for promoting both subject content and language development in a more engaging and adaptable manner. These findings hold significant implications for educators and policymakers, suggesting that hybrid models should be considered



when designing curricula that aim to improve language learning outcomes.

### IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Incorporate Hybrid Learning in CLIL- Schools should adopt hybrid learning models in CLIL programs to enhance language proficiency, providing students with flexible, multimodal learning experiences.
- b) Leverage Digital Tools- Educators should integrate interactive digital resources such as videos, quizzes and online forums to reinforce language skills and content learning beyond the classroom.
- c) Teacher Training- Teachers should receive ongoing professional development in using digital platforms and designing hybrid lessons that effectively combine content and language learning.
- d) Personalized Learning- Encourage individualized learning by using online tools that allow students to learn at their own pace, revisiting challenging language areas as needed.
- e) Monitor and Assess- Regular assessments of both content and language proficiency should be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of hybrid CLIL and make data-driven adjustments to instructional methods.

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# Efficacy of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Major Depressive Disorder: Case Study

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received: 20 Sep 2024; Received in revised form: 18 Oct 2024; Accepted: 25 Oct 2024; Available online: 31 Oct 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords – Major depressive Disorders, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Depression</b></p>	<p><i>Cognitive-behavioral therapy CBT for major depressive disorder MDD is one of the most impactful treatments in the world. The aim of this case study was to find out the impact of CBT for MDD. This study included a case suffering from major depressive disorder. The participant was a member of a household community in Iraq's Kurdistan Region. According to the aim of the study, the psychotherapist worked with one case of depressive disorder, according to the study's aim. There were a total of 27 therapy sessions for the cases. It appeared that cognitive-behavioral therapy is a beneficial therapy that leads to remission of depression symptoms in patients. This study delves into various treatment methods for depressed patients and provides a detailed analysis of CBT, connecting epidemiology to the psychotherapist's case.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Depression can be defined as a form of psychological distress, and a severe form of depression is widely considered to be the most distressing condition in the entire world. Ian H (1996) claims that when it comes to psychiatric disorders, depression is by far the most prevalent. Depressive episodes affect twenty percent of the human population at some point in their lives. Each year, more than one hundred million people around the world experience depression.

Helgeson and Zajdel (2017) state that chronic medical diseases are more frequent than they were in the previous century, despite the fact that people are living longer than they did in the previous century. Chronic medical illnesses are diseases that continue to exist for an extended period of time and can also be marked by remissions, fluctuations, or worse. Conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and arthritis are examples of common chronic diseases. Patients frequently participate in a variety of

health-related behaviors in order to manage a chronic disease. These behaviors include taking medication, following a diet, engaging in physical activity, and visiting their physicians to check on their condition.

Major depressive Disorders (MDD) is among the most common in the world and includes different symptoms, but it has two main symptoms of depressed mood and loss of interest in life. People with this disorder see the world with a negative view and increased suicidal thoughts, and suffer from other symptoms (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). In addition, the prevalence of these symptoms in people's life is extremely high, resulting in a large amount of clinically meaningful pain and harm (Marcus & Olfson, 2010). As a result of these qualities, there has been a significant growth in the search for alternatives to the treatment of depression over the course of the past decade, with the primary focus being placed on psychotherapy interventions within this quest. There have been published research that demonstrate the effectiveness of psychological

treatment in reducing the symptoms of depression. These studies are both controlled and comparative (Cuijpers et al., 2011).

In ancient psychiatry, the diagnosis was different, and specialists believed that extreme sadness was a reaction to an emotional reaction to living conditions. During the past years, tools and research were developed to diagnose patients more accurately. Depression has descriptions that specialists can easily identify. For example, this disorder in history is one of the easiest disorders to diagnose over 2500 years. In DSM a reference to the historian Stanley Jackson that in Greek texts a reference to symptoms of depression, in Hippocrates' literature, they write about depression, but Hippocrates linked depression to fear and delusions (Horwitz et al., 2016).

Furthermore, an effective treatment for depression is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), which is the style of psychotherapy that has received the most research and is based on Beck's cognitive theory (Beck, 1976). In the previous studies, meta-analysis has demonstrated that cognitive behavioral treatment (CBT) and medication have equivalent effects on major depressive disorder (Cuijpers et al., 2013). Beck et al. (1979) suggest that CBT is a family of techniques that are among the most established empirically supported depression treatments. Cognitive therapy (CT) is the most extensively performed intervention, yet all of them are similar. CBT assumes that incorrect beliefs and inappropriate information processing cause and maintain depression. This 'cognitive model' states that correcting maladaptive thinking reduces acute distress and symptom recurrence.

Every person in the world feels sad and they say we have been exposed to depression in our life at a time, but most of these times there is not enough intensity and time that the individual must appear to be able to say that this person has been exposed to depression. Symptoms of depression vary, for example, people with depression complain about focus on their flaws, it is difficult for them to pay attention and to absorb what they read and hear, and lose hope in life, they complain about their social aspect. They suffer from social withdrawal. Many suffer from depression and want to sit alone and away from people. Suicide is common among people with depression, and most of them complain of physical symptoms including fatigue and low energy. Most people with MDD

believe that their physical symptoms are serious medical conditions (Kring et al., 2016).

Major depressive disorder based on DSM-5 requires the presence of 5 of more of symptoms and the duration of these symptoms is at least two weeks, and with a depressed mood or loss of interest in pleasure, it must include symptoms, for example, change in appetite, sleep, decision-making, or concentration, and many of them complain of worthlessness, suicide, psychomotor agitation, or retardation. MDD is an episodic disorder because symptoms sometimes exist for some time and then decrease. Nevertheless, major depressive episodes tend to dissipate over time and the untreated episode sometimes lasts for 5 months or sometimes longer. In major depressive episodes, there is recurrence: meaning when a certain episode disappears in most cases the person is exposed to another episode. For people who experience a major depressive episode, about a third of them will have another episode of depression in their lifetime. An individual's increased experience of episodes of depression increases the individual's experience of another depressive episode by 16% (Kring et al., 2016).

#### **I. Diagnostic criteria according to (ICD-10) (World Health Organization, 2016)**

In typical mild, moderate, or severe depressive episodes, the patient suffers from lowering of mood, reduction of energy, and decrease inactivity. Capacity for enjoyment, interest, concentration is reduced, and marked tiredness after even minimum effort is common. Sleep is usually disturbed and appetite diminished. Self-esteem some ideas of guilt or worthlessness are often present. The lowered mood varies little from day to day, it is unresponsive to circumstances, and may be accompanied by so-called 'somatic' symptoms, such as loss of interest and pleasurable feelings, waking in the morning several hours before the usual time, depression gets worse in the morning, marked psychomotor retardation, agitation, loss of appetite, weight loss, and loss of libido. Depending upon the number and severity of the symptoms, a depressive episode may be specified as mild, moderate, or severe.

#### **II. Differential Diagnosis of Major Depressive Disorder**

Nearly half of the patients with category I BD and nearly three-quarters of those with category II BD may

experience the first episode of depression (Patella et al., 2019). Bipolar disorder (BD) diagnosis guidelines are based on the occurrence of a manic or hypomanic episode to differentiate between unipolar depressions (Perlis et al., 2006). A delay in the diagnosis of BD, or even errors in diagnosis can cause a delay in treatment, and therefore, prolong suffering (Patella et al., 2019). A major depressive episode is an appropriate diagnosis if the mood disorder is not judged to be the immediate pathophysiological consequence of a serious medical disease (e.g. multiple sclerosis, stroke, and hypothyroidism) based on human experience, physical assessment, and experimental results (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

Depressive episodes differ from the bouts of sadness that every person goes through during his life, sadness occurs because of an event in life, and it is appropriate with the event (Wakefield & Demazeux, 2016) to the diagnosis of major depression requires five symptoms for at least two weeks (Wakefield et al., 2010). In each of these ADHD and MDD, distractibility and poor anger resistance will occur; if the criteria is

met in each of the addition to mood disturbance, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder will be diagnosed. Although with children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder whose mood disorder is characterized by irritability rather than depression or loss of interest, the clinician must be cautious not to over-diagnose major depressive events (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), The difference between symptoms of ADHD and MDD are important because, they have a direct effect on therapeutic considerations (Knouse et al., 2013). Substance/medication-induced depressive or bipolar disorder. This syndrome is distinguished from MDD by the fact that a substance (e.g., drug abuse medication, a medication, a toxin) appears to be etiologically linked to mood depression. A depressed mood that happens only in the sense of cessation of cocaine, for example, is diagnosed as a depressed disorder induced by cocaine (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

### III. Case Documentation 1

#### 1. General Details of the Therapy

Patient code:	LJM004
Diagnosis classification (as per ICD-10 and DSM 5):	Major Depressive Disorder- ICD-10 code F32.1/ DSM-5 code 296.22
Treatment type	(Hospital) individual therapy, long-term treatment
Duration of treatment:	27 sessions from 10 June 2019 to 12 February 2020
Socio-demographic data:	23 years, female, married, 1 child, house wife.
Referral modus and reason for treatment:	The patient came out of her own volition for treatment. The psychiatrist referred the patient for therapy. The reasons for coming were complaints of depression symptoms such as a depressed mood, loss of interest, insomnia, loss of energy, and feeling guilty.

## II. ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

### 2.1. Description of current symptoms:

After 5 to 6 months of pregnancy and exposure to poverty, the patient LJ came to me with a complaint, stating, "My mood has changed significantly." I have been experiencing a depressed mood, which has persisted to this day, leaving me feeling perpetually sad and hopeless about life. I cannot do my house duties." Her husband and sister have noticed her low

mood due to her inability to perform household duties, her reluctance to visit relatives such as her father and sisters, her pessimistic outlook on life, and her self-critical attitude. She also expressed her lack of confidence that her situation will improve. The patient said, "My husband and two of my sisters noticed this thing in me and told me to go to a psychiatrist because every day my mood is depressed, I cannot do anything, and I have a headache." The patient was complaining that she



suffers from insomnia and that her sleep is not enough to gain energy. She also said, "I cannot sleep as much as I used to before. I am unable to sleep for more than 4 hours in a 24-hour period; if I do fall asleep, it disrupts my sleep, leading to nightmares. She also expressed her reluctance to leave her apartment and her isolation from people. Initially, she had a social personality, but now, she prefers to spend time with her daughter in the garden before returning home. She expresses no interest in going anywhere with her friends or anyone else.

These symptoms led to marital disputes between her and her husband. "I do not love my husband; I want to divorce him, but my father does not allow it," the patient said. I feel that my husband does not care about me much and does not love me; he always works, and even when he comes home, he uses his mobile phone." The patient's indication was that she suffers from a lack of appetite and has lost 3.5 kilograms in one month. The patient said, "I feel constant fatigue and loss of energy, and thus I cannot clean my house, meeting my child's needs." The patient complained about her concentration and forgetting things easily. She said, "If I put something somewhere, then I forget where the thing is in a short time." Fortunately, the patient had no suicidal thoughts, and she had no plan or attempted suicide due to her depression. She also mentioned that she gets angry a lot and without any reason with her husband, which led to a decrease in the love between her and her husband and a decrease in the sexual relationship; sometimes in a month they had only one sexual relationship. She did not take the same care of herself as she had in the past, including her clothes and personal hygiene. She said, "I don't know where I'll start my life again. My thoughts are mixed; I feel a loss of hope in life. I always tell myself at this time that I became a mother; now I cannot work outside the home, and I want to change this routine in my life. I want to work again."

## **2.2. Psychological / psychopathological examination:**

The patient is twenty-three years old, has a good appearance proportional to age and gender, and has a normal weight. It does not display any abnormalities in the body or face. Her facial expressions showed fatigue, uneasiness, and a depressed mood. She maintained a closed and non-

talkative connection. In the first session, she was helpful, open-minded, called for help, and spoke slowly in a low-pitched tone. There are no indications of disturbance of memory, attention, or focus. She has no thoughts or attempted suicide, and no drug or alcohol abuse.

## **2.3. Test Findings:**

- According to MINI, the patient fulfilled the criteria of Major depression disorder (MDD). MINI International Neuropsychiatric Interview. English Version 5.0.0.DSM-IV.
- According to the scale (BDI - Beck's Depression Inventory), the patient met the rate (22). (see appendix 1)

## **2.4. Consumption of Medication, Psychotropic,**

**Addictive Substances:** she gets consumption of medication one types: Citalopram 20mg, one pill in 24 hours

## **2.5. Social History:**

The patient is 23 years old and has 5 sisters and 7 brothers. Her family lineage is 12; she is older than one family member. She and her husband have a small makeup store. The family earns financial income from this store, and their financial condition is not good (poor) because they do not have many customers in the store until they pay the rent of the apartment and the store. The money is not enough for them to buy things necessary for their daily lives. She continued her studies until she finished high school. She did not go to college because her average was too low to continue studying there. At the moment, she and her husband live in Dohuk governorate; they live in a small rented apartment. The patient thinks that she should go and help her husband with work so that their financial situation develops for the better. The patient grew up in a family that had many problems, and so far, they have problems among family members. She also has problems with her brothers and father, and her relationship with her husband's family is not good. The patient's husband, a graduate of the College of Science, is currently not pursuing his degree; he works in a make-up store. She lacks friends, with the exception of her younger sister. The patient now believes that she has no chance of success in life.

## **2.6. First Impressions:**

The client was appearing tired and sleepy, the patient was feeling shy, there were signs of sadness and anxiety on her face, her speech was slow, and her way of sitting appeared uncomfortable.

## **2.7. Development of Life History:**

The patient had no idea about her birth, so it was natural. She was born in Dohuk in 1993. Since her childhood, she has remembered that when she was 6 years old, her older brother molested her. She said, "Me and my brother were in a room alone. My brother said to me, take off your clothes until I see you without clothes, but I did not accept that." When the patient remembers this situation, she hates her brother and feels sad, and sometimes she says to herself, He was young when he asked to take off my clothes. During her childhood, her father and brothers beat her, sometimes locking her inside the house when she yearned to play with the neighbor's children, but they denied her this opportunity. The patient remarked, "I never forget this thing in my life, because I hated my childhood so much, and I even burned all my childhood memories, such as pictures, clothes, etc." The patient experienced severe grief when she was unable to attend college due to not having the necessary grades and not having enough money to attend a private college. She expressed, "Many of my friends were able to continue their studies in college, but I was unable to do so." I was very sad about not going to college until now."

At the age of 16, she had a romantic relationship. She first met this boy through a friend at school, and their relationship lasted for six months. However, a major incident occurred in her life during this time. Fearing that he would end their relationship, the patient consented to a sexual relationship with the boy. This led to two sexual encounters, but the boy abruptly left the girl without any explanation. Despite her love for him, the patient indicated that he had already married another girl. The turning point that resulted in a strained relationship between the patient and her father occurred when a young man proposed marriage to her, a request she refused to accept. The patient explained, "My father wanted me to marry this young man, but I did not accept. After that, disputes started between me and my father." My father always told me that you didn't respect my

words and accused me of having secret romantic relationships. Until now, when I see my father, this talk is repeated and leads to disputes between me and my father." The patient was always crying and swearing to her father that she had no secret relationships. The person who asked to marry her was always writing to the patient and threatening the patient and saying to the patient, "You must marry me because I love you." The patient said, "He used to speak to me respectfully and say to me I love you, and after I rejected the guy, he started threatening me, and he used to tell me if you do not marry me, I will tell your father. Your daughter has relationships with young people, and I was very afraid about this matter." This anxiety and psychological pressure with the boy lasted for about a year and a half. The patient said, "I will never forgive my father because he was the main reason I reached this stage of depression." Family and social pressures led them to marry a young man who worked with her at work. to order to get rid of the problems, she met her husband for the first time at a job, working together in the same store. When she married, she was 20 years old. The patient said, "I agreed to marry him, because he was a good character at work and was active, When I had a problem in the house, I used to talk to him about my problems, and he calmed my nerves." She said to herself, "This is a good opportunity. I will marry a good person, and if he loves me, my life will be better and without problems." After marrying the young man, the patient soon realized that her husband had not shown her the same love as before. As a result, they incurred debts due to the high cost of her wedding, leading her to remark, "I wish I had never married." Then they moved to a rental apartment, and their financial situation was poor, the patient indicated that she could not bear the responsibilities of marriage and their financial situation. She went to work one day, and she and the store owner were alone at work. The store owner offered her a sexual relationship in exchange for an increase in her monthly salary, but she declined. Subsequently, the store owner accused her of stealing, which left her depressed. Following her termination, her husband also left the job. She and her husband then opened a small store to sell makeup. She said, "After my pregnancy, I stopped working, and then day after day, my mood decreased and the symptoms of

depression increased." After all these difficult events that the patient experienced, now the patient feels symptoms of depression and does not know how she will deal with these symptoms, and again, it regains strength, The patient said, "From my childhood until now, I have been exposed to problem after problem."

### **2.8. Present Medical History:**

The patient does not have any history of any physical or psychological disorders, but in her life, she was exposed to situations that led to the emergence of symptoms of depression, but she was able to control them.

## **III. CENTRAL TOPICS**

### **3.1. Central Topics and Weighting of the individual Symptoms:**

The most disturbing symptoms for the patient are when she goes to her father's house and starts conflicts between her and her father and becomes nervous with her father, her lack of participation in social activities, and her lack of energy and strength to perform home duty and take care of her child in a necessary manner. This greatly upsets her, and this leads the patient to feel guilty in front of her child.

### **3.2. Resources**

After the couple's therapy, her husband was a great help to her because he knew that his wife needed much support and assistance. For example, he used to give his wife the opportunity to go and work on shopping days, and her husband takes care of their child, and her sister was always supportive of coming to therapy. Mention her internal resources, that is to say, her strengths: for example, a sociable person, intelligence, and sports.

### **3.3. Solution Attempts**

The sources of her happiness were her younger sister and the patient's indication that when she feels upset and pressured, she talks to her sister on the phone. She was motivated to come out of the house and go together to restaurants or tourist places, or when she felt upset, she watched the series on TV. The patient was enthusiastic about the therapy, and she used to take medications as prescribed by the psychiatrist.

### **3.4. Explanation - Macroanalysis, biographical background to the disorder**

- As a child, the patient was exposed to a state of molestation from her brother, and these memories disturb the patient greatly until now.
- Since her childhood, the patient has been subjected to continuous beating by her father and older brother, for not going outside the house.
- Not going to college led to severe grief for the patient and so far, she is affected by it.
- The sexual relations that the patient had with the young man who she loved, was greatly affected, and so far, the patient did not want to remember these memories, because she is very upset.
- A year and a half of anxiety and stress from a father and a young man.
- The pressure, to which the patient was subjected during and after marriage, unemployment, and a bad economic situation, was one of the main reasons that led to the patient's exposure to depression and the development of her symptoms.
- The harassment of her by her store owner and accusing her of a thief led to her deep sadness.
- Since her childhood, the patient was subjected to psychological pressures, and these pressures continued with her. Every time of her life, she was exposed to certain stress, but when she had to stay at home with her new child and couldn't use her usual coping skills of going out with her sister and going to work, the patient developed symptoms of depression and feels her symptoms every day. Also, the continuing repetition of blame from her father deeply affects her; she is unable to express her anger to him, which adds to her depression.

### **3.5. Explanation - Perpetuation of the Disorder**

#### **Behavior Analysis:**

**Situation:** When she goes to her father's house. My father will talk about the fiancé, who I did not marry; disputes will start between me and my father.

**Cognitive Reaction:** My father does not love me.

**Emotional Reaction:** Anxious, anger, sad and uncomfortable

**Physical Reaction:** sweating, Heartbeat, shortness of breath, shaking hands, and muscle spasm.

**Behavioral Reaction:** start talking nervously, crying and leaving the room

**Consequence - short-term:** reduction of tension, decreased physical symptoms, a decrease of the anxiety, and comfortable, relaxed.

**Consequence - short-term:** Situation remains unchanged; her father still repeats the story.

**Consequence - long-term:** patient cannot cope; she didn't have enough control over her symptoms.

**Consequence - long-term:** Persistent symptoms of depression.

Diagnosis classification  
 MDD/ DSM-IV code,296.22  
 MDD/ ICD-10 code, F32,1

#### IV. PLANNING THE TREATMENT

##### 4.1. Targets

Patient wanted to control her anger when her father talked about her fiancé and what she wanted; her father would stop repeating the fiancé's story. The patient needed adequate sleep so that she could do her daily activities during the day. Going to work again was one of her important goals. She wanted to break her daily routine and solve her problems with her husband. (see figure 1).

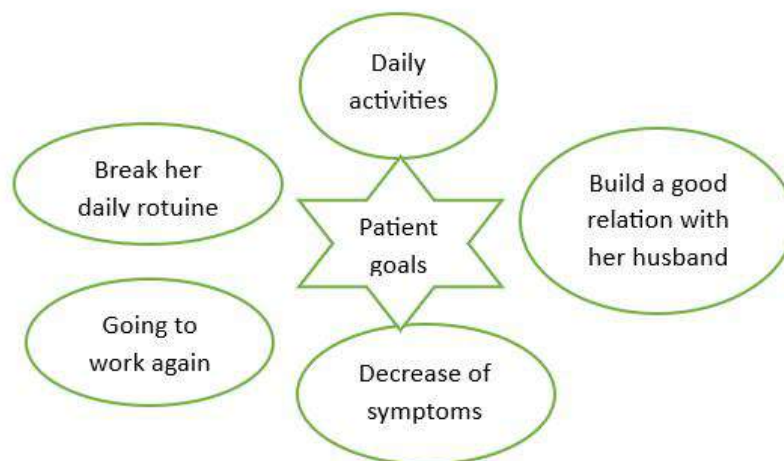


Fig.1: Patient goals

**4.2. Therapist:** Collection of information from the patient was one of the main goals of the therapist, build a good relationship with the patient and treat

the symptoms of depression and choose the appropriate techniques, to help the patient, treat the symptoms she is suffering from (see figure 2).

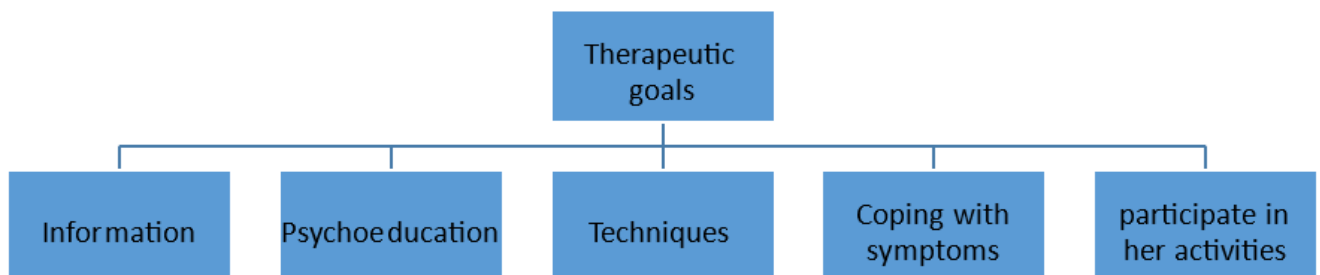


Fig.2: Therapist goals



### 4.3. Therapy Planning

#### Choice of strategic Procedures;

- Fill out the consent form and building a good relationship with the patient and this relationship were based on respect and trust.
- Explain to the patient the importance of confidentiality in psychotherapy, so that the patient can talk about the details of his problem and its causes.
- Diagnosing the patient's disorder, and relying on scientific sources to diagnose the disorder and the severity of symptoms of the disorder.
- Psychoeducation of the patient about the disorder that she suffers.
- Establishing a rule for therapeutic sessions.
- Discuss and explain with the patient ABC model how thoughts affect behavior and emotion and vice versa.
- Cognitive Restructure and Thought Control Technique: We used these techniques to enable the patient to control his negative thoughts and change them into positive ones.
- Behavioral activation: This technique aims to control and break the daily routine.
- Couple therapy: it was important to the patient, to know how to deal with each other.
- Problem-solving technique: To know how to choose the appropriate solutions for her problem.
- Role plays: This technique was used to prepare the patient for the situation with her father and to resolve disputes between them and her father.
- Explanation to the patient about relapse prevention.
- Farewell session and follow-up.

#### 4.4. Considerations on forming the relationship:

When she first came to the therapy session, I welcomed her well. At first, I introduced myself to the patient. What is my name? What did I do here? Then she introduced herself to me. Fortunately, I was able

to establish a trusting atmosphere with the patient, leading to her education. I tried to ensure that the patient did not feel upset, and during the psychoeducation session, she increased her confidence in me because she said, "I feel you understand me well."

## V. COURSE OF THE TREATMENT

### 5.1. Psychoeducation

At this stage, I tried to educate the patient about depressive disorder, its symptoms, and how these symptoms developed. In this session, I focused on explaining to the patient how thoughts affect emotions, bodies, and behaviors (see Appendix 2). I explained this idea with an example of her situation with her father and how she thinks that her father does not love her. This idea makes her feel sad and anxious, makes her feel short of breath, and makes her nervous around her father. I explained to the patient what psychotherapy is, as well as the difference between psychotherapy and psychopharmacology. During the psychoeducation session, I focused on explaining to the patient depressed thinking, which is negative thinking with no flexibility, and non-depressed thinking, which is positive thinking with flexible and changeable thoughts for the better. I explained to the patient the importance of carrying out the homework that I gave to the patient and the worksheet. For example, at the end of each session, I give the patient the worksheet (a mood thermometer worksheet) (see Appendix 3). The goal is so that the patient knows the severity of her symptoms and so that I know whether it changes the patient's mood or not.

### 5.2. Cognitive restructuring

In this step, I applied this technique, (see Appendix 4) and this technique helped the patient identify her negative thoughts that control the patient's life and affect her feelings and behaviors negatively, change them into positive thoughts: For example, my husband does not like me and does not speak with me much. With the help of this technique, I developed another alternative and positive idea for the patient (see Appendix 5) which is "My husband loves me, but he is tired at work, so the reason is that he is not able to speak and discuss a lot." In this technique, we used Socratic questions (see Appendix 6), and at the end of

the session, we wrote the alternative idea on a piece of paper, and I asked the patient to keep this paper. I provided her with stickers, instructing her to place them on various surfaces such as doors, TVs, and Teflon (refer to Appendix 7). If she had a negative thought, she should display the paper containing the alternative idea and read it. This technique, known as the Thought Control Technique, should not be overlooked. After being taught, the patient was able to identify her negative thoughts and change them into positive ones day after day.

### 5.3. Behavioral activation

I explained to the patient how the behavior directly affects a person's mood, both negatively and positively. In this step, we verified the activities that she was enjoying before she was depressed, (see appendix 8) and found that she had some enjoyable activities for herself; for example, when she used to go to work, she used to enjoy it a lot, visiting relatives, playing sports, and going to the wedding. In the first step, we identified the work activity, and I asked the patient, "How did you feel when you went to work?" She responded, "It was a good feeling." We made a weekly schedule for this activity step by step (see Appendix 9) and agreed that the patient must go an hour to work every day instead of her husband and then reward herself, for example, by eating something she loves and watching how her mood affects her, then she must increase her work hours in the weeks after that, the patient managed to improve her daily routine. In the other example of activities, we agreed that every day for 15 minutes, they would do some exercises at home; after that, the time of exercise would increase.

### 5.4. Couple therapy

The patient's husband actively participates in the psychotherapy process, gaining knowledge about the disorder and symptoms his wife experiences. This allows him to assist his wife in reducing her symptoms and serve as her primary supporter. Fortunately, the patient's husband was open-minded and educated. We discussed some basic and important points related to his wife, such as the importance of having calm discussions with her and providing support. His behavior changed in front of his wife. One of the important things is to solve the lack of sexual relations between them. The husband

said, "I do not engage in sexual relations because I am tired at work." I discussed with them that when any problem occurs, they should focus on solutions without interrupting each other, understand all the problem points well, and be good listeners, so that they can solve problems without negative effects.

### 5.5. Problem-solving technique

First, I educated the patient about the (problem-solving technique). The main goal of this technique was to help her solve her problems so that she could go to work again. First, I encouraged the patient to set an agenda for the problems that appeared to her during the past week, which is still disturbing the patient, and the problems are expected to happen in the coming days, The problem was to solve the problem with her father. (See Appendix 10). After identifying the problem, we moved to the stage of brainstorming, which is the stage of creating good solutions, and she had a negative problem orientation; for example, she said, "It never solves my problem with my dad." For this idea, we did cognitive restructuring again, After that, I encouraged the patient to innovate appropriate solutions to the problems and to set realistic goals that were possible to accomplish. For example, I'll try to not answer my father; I'll try to talk to one of my father's friends; even his friend will tell my father not to repeat my story; etc. After that, the patient evaluates the consequences of the solution she chooses—did they play a significant role in solving her problem or not? And then I gave her homework. After that, we achieved the goal that we set for ourselves to solve the problem.

### 5.6. Role-plays

This technique aimed to teach the patient how to deal with her father in a specific situation and to learn various methods of handling it. During this exercise, the patient also learned relaxation and breathing exercises to help her overcome her anger. In the first step, we identified the problem and encouraged the patient to share all the information and words used during the discussion with her father. The patient was able to think clearly about the problem and provide all the necessary information before we began the role-play. Then we wrote the scenario in detail so that the patient felt that it was real, and I read the scenario to the patient until the patient felt that she was in the situation and her symptoms increased, such as

heartbeat and body temperature, patient said I feel now in the situation, and then we discussed what she had learned so that she could learn from the experience. The patient's experience and self-confidence increased as she handled the situation with her father, and she quickly developed positive reactions to the situation.

### 5.7. Relapse prevention

I explained to the patient "Sometimes returns some symptoms, and sometimes all of them. If again, you suffer from your symptoms, refer to the papers we used during the treatment. The patient was very aware of the steps they took together (see appendix 11).

### 5.8. Evaluation and Targeting achievement

The client was able to achieve goals, for example, she was able to go to work, her symptoms decreased and increased her mood (see figure 3), solve her problem with her father, and do home duty. Now the patient is satisfied with her life and has solved problems with her husband. The patient said, "Now I feel a great improvement in my life, and now I know how I will face all his problems well." For the symptom measurement section, the (BDI - Beck's Depression Inventory) scale was used, and this scale was used three times, before therapy (22), after therapy (10), and during follow-up sessions (3), (see figure 4).

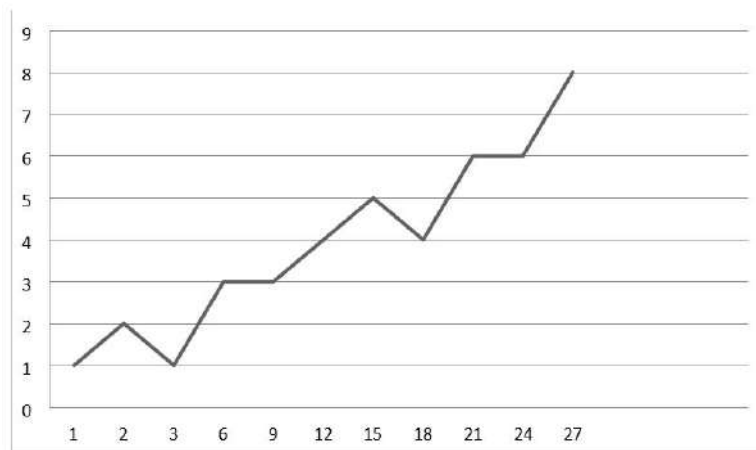


Fig.3: The Patient's Mood From the First Session to the Last Session

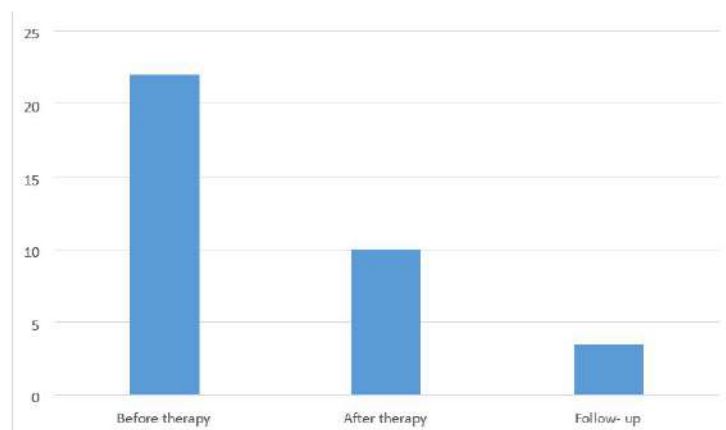


Fig.4: The Patient's Depression Rate According to BDI Scale.

### 5.9. Critical Statement/Hypotheses

From the point of view of the psychotherapist, many factors contributed to the success of the psychotherapy process from the perspective of the

psychotherapist. For example, one of the main points was planning treatment and choosing the appropriate techniques according to the patient's consent and the achievement of her goals. The patient's husband was

an assistant to his wife until he managed to break the routine and reduce her symptoms. Among other factors, the patient's sister was a constant supporter of her sister, for example; she always encouraged her to come to the therapy sessions, and the patient was following the rules of the psychological sessions that we had put together. One of the difficulties I faced in the therapy process was that, first, her husband did not have the right time to come to the session because he was busy in the store. Secondly, the patient managed to adapt to her father.

#### 5.10. Therapist's Learning:

I learned that when the family is supportive of the patient, it leads to a rapid improvement in the patient, and neglect of the spouses leads to a decline in the love relationship between them and sometimes leads to divorce. Through the application of these techniques, especially role play, I benefited greatly from them, and I had an experience that I repeat with other cases, and it became clear to me that the cognitive behavioral therapy approach was a great treatment for depressive disorder.

## VI. GENERAL DISCUSSION

We often describe ourselves as being depressed when we suffer from unhappiness. Every person suffers from symptoms of depression from time to time at different times of life, but some people suffer from depressive disorder, depressive disorder leads to severe and long-term psychological pain, and after time this pain increases, for example, they are unable to perform the simplest activities of daily life, and even some of them lose the will to live and they attempt to suicide (Comer, 2015). The major depressive episode depending on the (DSM-5) is two weeks or more and the patient must have at least five symptoms of depression, including loss of pleasure in life and - or a depressed mood. In severe cases, the patient may suffer from psychotic symptoms, for example, delusions and hallucinations. Some patients suffer from suicidal thoughts. The symptoms of depression differ from one person to another in terms of their severity and variety. Depression has many symptoms and includes five functional areas: Emotional, motivational, behavioral, cognitive, and physical (Comer, 2015). I will discuss each section and relate it to the cases mentioned above.

- Cognitive symptoms: an obvious feature of people with depression blaming themselves and having negative opinions about themselves (Lopez Molina et al., 2014), and pessimists, and it leads to their sense of hopelessness and leads them to contemplate suicide (Shiratori et al., 2014), often people with depression complain about their inability to solve problems (Chen et al., 2013).
- Emotional symptoms: Many depressed patients feel sad and depressed, they feel dejected and many of them describe themselves as "empty, insulted and miserable," Without a sense of humor, they do not feel pleasure in things like others people, and some patients suffer from anxiety, anger, irritations, and crying spells (Comer, 2015).
- Behavioral symptoms: One of the clear symptoms of depression is a depressed person who has a lack of activity, productivity, and want to be alone at home and speak slowly, compared to people who do not suffer from depression (Tibubos et al., 2019).
- Motivational Symptoms: People who are depressed also lose interest in their daily activities. Almost everybody complains about a lack of motivation, initiative, and spontaneity. They may have to coerce themselves into going to work, conversing with friends, eating meals, or having sex. This condition has been called a 'paralysis of will' (Comer, 2015).
- Physical symptoms: Often cases are misdiagnosed as psychological conditions, but they are diagnosed with medical conditions (Bai et al., 2014).

According to (DSM-5), there are many differential diagnoses close to the MDD such as manic episodes with irritable mood or mixed episodes, mood disorder due to another medical condition, substance/medication-induced depressive or bipolar disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, adjustment disorder with depressed mood and sadness. Also, there are some other disorders that comorbid with MDD such as substance-related disorders, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and



borderline personality disorder. The data indicate that there is a strong correlation between suicidal thoughts and the severity of depression, meaning that patients with depression are more likely to think about suicide (O'Donovan et al., 2013). According to (Al-Qadhi et al., 2014), depression has multiple underlying risk factors such as chronic medical illness, stress, chronic pain, family history, low income, job loss, substance abuse, low self-esteem, lack of social support, history, being single, divorced, or widowed and traumatic brain injury. According to studies, the risk factors that lead to depression and suicidal behavior emerged as a childhood abuse (Tunnard et al., 2014). There is a strong correlation between marital quality and the appearance of depressive symptoms in adults, decreased marital quality leads to major depression symptoms, and both influence each other in a periodic way (Goldfarb & Trudel, 2019).

Many patients do not like medicines because of the side effects they suffer from, even if patients are educated about medicines they were upset with, and especially when medicines make them sleep longer or feel dizzy because of the side effects. In Iraqi - Kurdistan, therapists can apply CBT to patients, through my work at Azadi Hospital and camp in Duhok. CBT was applied to depression disorders patient and the results were highly effective because the therapist method was not complicated, but the psychotherapist who works in the Kurdish culture should be aware that not all techniques can be applied due to customs and traditions. But this will not be an obstacle to the CBT therapy. The patient in Iraqi-Kurdistan wants the first session to be therapeutic, this sometimes leads the patient to terminate the psychological sessions and the reason is the lack of education among the general public. There is a difference between psychotherapy for people who suffer from depression and those who live in camps and house communities, according to my experience; therapist worked with patients in camps and Azadi Hospital in Dohuk. Psychological therapy with the camps was more difficult, because their lives are more difficult and they suffer from various financial, psychological, and social problems, but the house community patients had a more stable life, for example, they had the most opportunity for entertainment, for example, going to a park. Among other difficulties, the patients did not know any

information about psychotherapy, and many patients did not accept psychotherapy first, but after explaining the psychological therapy process to them and applying the techniques with the patients, and a great improvement appeared to them, they accepted a lot and then the patient was more enthusiastic and committed to the therapy.

One of the most difficulties therapist faced was at the time of the spread of Covid-19, a decision was issued by the government to impose curfews and therapists were relying on remotely therapy. Many patients were not educated and their understanding of psychotherapy was difficult, and therapists found it difficult until the idea reached them. Many customs and traditions affect the process of therapy in Kurdish society, for example, many patients avoid coming to psychotherapy because of social relationships, for example, if one of the patient's relatives, neighbors or a friend sees the patient receiving psychotherapy, our fear that they will say that the patient is crazy or anything else that leads to embarrassment to the patient, and sometimes if the patient is a female, the family of the patient often does not agree to come to psychotherapy alone. These reasons sometimes led to the failure to continue the psychotherapy process, the patients who used to live in the camps were ashamed more than the house community to come to therapy, because their homes were close to each other, and their social relations were stronger. With all the difficulties, CBT with patients was effective for many mental disorders, and special therapy of depression.

## VII. CONCLUSION

A major depressive disorder is one of the most common disorders in the world. MDD has two main symptoms which are depressed mood and loss of pleasure in life. The patient has 5 or more symptoms out of a group of 9 symptoms, MDD affects many areas of a person's life, for example, social and occupational, and many depressed patients suffer from other disorders with depression, for example, general anxiety, social anxiety, and dysthymia. Suicide is one of the important point most focused on depression patients because they are suffering from thoughts and behavior related to suicide. Depression is more prevalent among females than males. There are various risk factors for MDD, and each of them has

its studies, for example, there are genetic, neurotransmitters, brain imaging studies and HPA axis (hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenocortical axis) is overactive, and there are other causes related to the social and psychological field. According to the large number of studies that have been conducted on depression, but so far there are many questions about depression that need studies and accurate scientific answers because depression is a complex disorder. However, we have successful treatments, like psychotherapies, for example, interpersonal psychotherapy, psychodynamic therapy, in particular, CBT according to many researches it is the best treatment for patients who suffer from depression.

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# Teachers' Ethical Responsibilities Regarding Educational Assessment

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Article Detail:	Abstract
<p>Received on: 10 Aug 2024</p> <p>Revised on: 04 Sep 2024</p> <p>Accepted on: 13 Sep 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords— Ethical Responsibilities, Educational Assessment, Professional Ethics, Teachers, and Students.</b></p>	<p><i>It can be challenging to consider and discuss the often unsaid ethical aspect of teaching. From a professional standpoint, the caliber and standing of the teaching profession depend on professional ethics and a shared body of knowledge. The impetus for this descriptive phenomenological study stemmed from the need to understand how teachers perceive their own professional ethics and how they manifest in their instruction. We interviewed thirty-six Iraqi teachers who work with students ages one to sixteen to formulate the essence of the phenomenon. The findings demonstrate that teaching pupils right from wrong is the primary ethical duty of educators. A secure learning environment, relationships with and among the pupils, and guidance are all interdependent. The surrounding society impacts the pupil's supervision and opportunities for cooperation with guardians and coworkers.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Several cases demonstrate the necessity for ethical evaluation criteria. A moral or ethical statement may declare that a specific action is good or bad, right or wrong, or that certain types of acts are. It could draw a distinction between good and poor personalities or dispositions, or it could establish a principle that allows for more detailed judgments of this type. Hope proposed that "we need to develop our hearts as well as our minds" (6).

People do not live in moral or ethical isolation; rather, they are raised amid certain moral traditions (Reiss 1999). Morals refers to human conduct, with morality describing actual action and ethics describing the theoretical, systematic, and logical analysis of that behavior (Churchill 1982).

At all levels of society, education is essential. In this regard, establishing an ethical environment, confidence, and trust based on mutual respect, as well as acting in accordance with those values, is

critical to successful teaching, since everyone deserves respect and well-being as a primary incentive for learning in educational environments (Haynes 2002).

Ethics in education is vital for all students since it aids in the development of their personalities. Ethics in education aids in the management of the educational system and ensures that these behaviors contribute to human well-being in a good way. Ethical knowledge is an inherent quality of consciousness that exists between moral and ethical standards.

Instructors have distinct relational and ethical obligations to their pupils, especially in the context of assessment and testing, because they recognize the inextricable link between learning to teach and learning to question.



### 1.1. Problem of the study

As a component of teachers' professional ethics, the ethical aspect of teaching is always present but frequently goes unacknowledged, making it elusive. Furthermore, ambiguity increases when different perspectives view ethics in teaching practice. Teachers may need to approach ethics from a gray scale or from concepts such as accountability and responsibility, as the perceptions of right and wrong can become problematic (Cliffe and Solvason 2022).

Nowadays, there is a general lack of interest in the ethical aspects of professional education training. Many teacher education programs overlook the fields of ethics and law. The professionalization of the teaching profession has overlooked an important aspect: education/professional ethics. The study delves into the ethical responsibilities of teachers in relation to educational assessment, while also presenting the reasons and justifications for the existence of morality, values, and ethics.

### 1.2. Aims of the study

The current study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- Raising Iraqi EFL Teachers' awareness of ethical issues.
- 2- Developing Iraqi EFL teachers' knowledge of ethical assessment.

### 1.3. Limitation of the study

The study is limited to teachers' ethical responsibilities regarding educational assessment.

### 1.4. Value of the study

The current study provides valuable insights for students regarding their ethical responsibilities in educational assessment.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Exploring the ethical dimensions of teaching remains a complex endeavor, often shrouded in unspoken norms and assumptions. The integrity and reputation of the teaching profession heavily rely on a foundation of professional ethics, underscoring the necessity for educators to engage in reflective practices regarding their ethical responsibilities. This descriptive phenomenological study emerged from a desire to delve deeper into teachers' perceptions of

their professional ethics and the ways in which these principles manifest in their instructional methods.

### 2.1 The Concept of Ethics

Ethics is demonstrating to others in society the good ideals that an individual has internalized and is persuaded of. It involves assimilating a society's ethos and standards to govern human affairs effectively. It all comes down to the individual's overall beliefs and values. Human behavior simply revolves around what is right or wrong. People sometimes refer to ethics as a scientific discipline. However, we should clarify a few facts to assist us in understanding why this is the case. According to Robin George Collingwood, the term "science" encompasses not only natural science but also "ordered and systematic thinking on every topic," including not only orderly and systematic theoretical thinking but also orderly and systematic "practical thinking" (85). However, calling ethics a science does not mean that values can be "sciences," like physical science. On the other hand, people regard ethics as a "normative science" because it scrutinizes human behavior standards. Ethics is not a science in the traditional meaning of the term. It focuses on human morals and values; ethics is an important field of philosophy. Ethics, as the normative "science" of human conduct, is concerned with more than only telling us how to conduct ourselves in order to live a positive and happy life (Agulana 2011).

The moral life is concerned with the fundamental heart of personal existence, rather than the exterior and observable aspects of life. The norms and traditions that man has previously internalized through his knowledge of natural order present him with what he would deem moral or immoral. According to Khosrow Himmeifard, "Morality relates to free decision and the principles upon which it is founded, not on the resultant act in itself" (19). Certain types of acts befit his nature, promote his overall well-being, and lead him to happiness and self-fulfillment; not all kinds of actions befit his nature, promote his general well-being, and lead him to happiness and self-fulfillment.

Ethics are ideas about what is morally right or wrong. Since everyone is unique, there is no universal agreement on the precise boundary between ethical and unethical behavior. However,

some organizations, particularly those dealing with the general public or their own employees, have established ethical best practices.

## 2.2 The concept of Assessment Process

Assessment and testing have a significant impact on young people's lives and careers. The decisions made inside and by schools are impacting the chances and opportunities of their students, and the outcomes of national exams and examinations are even more important.

Any assessment should contain the following characteristics:

**Validity:** The assessment must encompass all elements of the students' achievement and only those parts that are important to the goal.

**Reliability:** The construction should ensure that consumers can trust the findings to be sufficiently reliable and consistent for their needs.

**Impact or practicality:** It should not just track performance but also have positive implications for teaching, learning, and student motivation.

## 2.3 The Role of Teachers in the Assessment of Learning

Teachers play a central role in deciding upon assessment techniques and grades. Therefore, various researchers argue that it is crucial for teachers to be assessment literate. In the context of education, assessment literacy refers to a deep understanding of fair assessment principles through the use of various practices, theories, and philosophies that enhance teaching and learning. Therefore, the use of multiple assessment tools is not only an indicator of fairness and assessment validity but also an indicator of a teacher's assessment literacy and broad knowledge.

The responsibility for making the mission of education achievable lies mainly with teachers. Furthermore, the way teachers interact with students shapes the mission of educating moral norms. David T. Hansen pointed out that "any action a teacher undertakes in the classroom is capable of expressing moral meaning that, in turn, can influence students" (286). Furthermore, people typically view teachers as moral role models. Popham specified that educators' ethical obligations derive from their agreement to serve in loco parentis: "Educators take

on an ethical responsibility to serve as models of ethical behavior for children" (67). In this sense, teachers consider it morally important to show respect for themselves and their pupils. By behaving and acting respectfully, the teacher shows the students how to be respectful to themselves as well as to others. Consequently, this builds a strong bond between the teacher and students, strengthening their mutual trust. This idea explains why society, parents, and pupils manifest their trust in teachers.

Assessing student learning is something that every teacher has to do, usually quite frequently. Written tests, book reports, research papers, homework exercises, oral presentations, question-and-answer sessions, science projects, and artwork of various sorts are just some of the ways in which teachers measure student learning (Campbell 2003).

When creating assessments, they should have a clear objective in mind. All forms of assessment—for, as, and of learning—play a crucial role in promoting and enhancing student learning, necessitating a balanced approach. The interpretation and use of the data obtained for the desired objective is the most important part of evaluation.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a descriptive phenomenological approach to investigate the often-overlooked ethical dimensions of teaching, specifically focusing on how educators perceive and embody their professional ethics in instructional contexts. The choice of this methodology stems from a desire to capture the lived experiences of teachers and understand the essence of their ethical practices in the classroom.

We used a purposive sampling method to gather rich qualitative data, specifically targeting thirty-six Iraqi teachers who work with students aged one to sixteen. We selected this demographic to offer a comprehensive view of the ethical challenges encountered at various educational levels. The teachers represented a variety of backgrounds, ensuring diverse insights into the ethical considerations inherent in their teaching practices.

Data collection involved conducting semi-structured interviews, which allowed participants to express their thoughts and experiences in an open-ended format. Each interview lasted approximately one

hour, encouraging teachers to reflect deeply on their ethical responsibilities and the complexities of their roles. We designed the interview questions to delve into teachers' perceptions of their ethical obligations and how these perceptions impact their interactions with students and the wider educational community.

The subsequent analysis of the interview transcripts followed a systematic coding process. This involved identifying key themes and patterns that emerged from the data, focusing particularly on the central ethical duty of teaching students the difference between right and wrong. The analysis also revealed that a safe learning environment, strong relationships with students, and effective guidance are interconnected elements that support ethical teaching practices.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the influence of societal context on the teachers' ability to supervise students and foster collaboration with parents and colleagues. By employing this methodology, the research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the ethical landscape within the teaching profession, emphasizing the critical role of educators in shaping students' moral development while navigating the complexities of their professional responsibilities.

#### IV. DATA

This descriptive phenomenological study involved in-depth interviews with thirty-six teachers from Iraq, all of whom educate students aged one to sixteen. The aim was to explore how these educators perceive and enact their professional ethics within the classroom context. The data collected revealed a strong consensus among participants regarding their ethical obligations, particularly the fundamental duty to teach students the distinction between right and wrong.

##### 4.1 Data Collection and Procedures

Self-reflective methods filter the behaviors, attitudes, intentions, and personal sentiments that identify us as people who are more or less accountable for the consequences of our actions via consciousness. These techniques aim to increase awareness and empower instructors about the impact of their own actions on their students' lives.

##### 4.2 Method

This study utilized a survey method to investigate the behavior of teachers who adhere to educational ethics. The study was conducted at Iraqi public schools in the spring term, 2024. The study employed a technique to collect data on teachers' perceptions of ethical behaviors.

##### 4.3 Participants

The current study involves 36 English teachers from various schools in the Salah AL-Din Directorate of Education, with approximate gender percentages and an average age of 21.4.

##### 4.4 Data Collection(Instrument)

We collected the data using a flexible questionnaire that was sensitive to the social content. The purpose of the questionnaires was to evaluate the influence of teachers' ethics on organizational assessment.

##### 4.5 Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

Experts specializing in language teaching and learning evaluate, suggest, and advise the researcher to modify certain items in the questionnaire to ensure its validity. To measure item reliability, the half split formula is used. This formula, with a value of 0.87, is considered acceptable for measuring each item in the study instrument.

##### 4.6 The Statistical techniques

This study employs various statistical techniques to analyze the data.

1. The percentage formula.
2. standard deviation.
3. A half-split method to measure reliability.

#### V. DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis highlighted the interconnectedness of various factors contributing to ethical teaching practices, including the creation of a secure learning environment and the fostering of positive relationships among students.

##### 5.1 Data Analysis Related to the Questionnaire

We conducted this study to determine ethical behaviors based on teachers' perceptions. This section presents the results from both the quantitative and qualitative parts.

Table (1): The Percentages and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Questionnaire Items

No	Items	Percentages	SD
1	It is possible to be rewarded for being honest	60	0.90
2	Organization has enhanced awareness on organization ethical conducts	50	0.97
3	Efforts are made to change teachers' ethical conducts at your school, it will improve the performance of his assessment.	60	0.60
4	Ethical behavior of teachers can help to improve students' performance.	95	0.32
5	Ministry of education has enhanced awareness on ethical assessments	30	0.50
6	Your directorate strike a proper balance between commercial needs and moral concerns	40	1.3
7	Its required of your principles and act ethically	80	0.44
8	Its requirement for teachers to sign a code of conduct statement	70	0.32
9	Your principals behavior is in line with the ministry of educations declared principle	60	0.32
10	Teachers principles behave honestly	50	0.44
11	There is a formal ethical document in place at your school	70	1.3
12	Corporate ethics training is available at teachers directorate	40	0.32
13	Teachers principles are trustworthy	60	0.68
14	Teachers principles show favoritism	40	0.32

## VI. DISCUSSION

It is obvious that there are variations in teachers' points of view concerning ethical behavior. We find that students perform better than their factual counterparts when teachers strive to maintain a professional demeanor with their students, a trait sadly shared by most. The implementation of ethical performance can enhance learners' performance, as it fosters a stronger interaction between the teacher and the learner, resulting in improved negotiation and recognition. Additionally, the mental and cognitive parts of the mind will be able to acquire knowledge more quickly and effortlessly.

An effective filter of Krashen's theory of learners could illustrate how the learners are ready to learn if there is a response between the learner, his/her feelings, and the actions of the teachers who teach him/her. Furthermore, research shows that the item "Ethical Behavior of Teachers" can significantly improve students' performance, accounting for a higher percentage. This reflects the significance of using the principle of "ethical behavior" to improve learners' results.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The data analysis in this study produced detailed conclusions. While assessment ethics research isn't as extensive as in other fields, the debate continues. Due to the various techniques, varied types of participation, and potential dangers, the literature specifically focuses on establishing the differences in managing ethical concerns in the field of assessment compared to other fields.

Teachers should have clear criteria describing levels of progress in various aspects of achievement, and, ideally, they should help to develop these criteria. As well as providing a common basis for interpretation of evidence, such criteria should also spell out the learning opportunities that are required. This makes it easier for teachers to assess pupils dependably on the basis of regular classroom work. Teachers require professional development to ensure they adhere to procedures that ensure dependability. Research has revealed sources of potential bias, and training should also focus on these.



A system of moderating teachers' judgments through professional collaboration benefits both teaching and learning, as well as assessment. Moderation, which influences the planning and implementation of assessments and, consequently, teachers' understanding of learning goals and the criteria indicating progress toward them, serves more than just a quality assurance function.

The provision of a bank of well-designed tasks, with marking criteria, can do more than help teachers to make judgments about their pupils' achievements. Such tasks exemplify activities through which pupils can work toward important goals, such as critical reasoning and the application of knowledge in new situations. As assessment tasks, they can provide pupils with intriguing and relevant learning experiences. We should not allow them to dominate the assessment process, nor should we view them as separate measures to supplement teachers' judgments. Nor do they aim to validate the judgments of teachers. Instead, they serve as a component of the evidence that teachers can utilize, if necessary, to guarantee the achievement of all intended goals in their assessment.

Where teachers and users of summative assessment have become dependent upon external tests, it will take time to increase teachers' competence in using ongoing assessment and to build confidence in teachers' judgments. Everyone involved should have enough time to test and assess new practices, and they should understand the procedures and the built-in safeguards to ensure dependability.

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