



Volume 14, Issue 2 - 2026 · ISSN 2534-9538

STUDIES IN LINGUISTICS, CULTURE AND FLT



Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen
Department of English Studies



Studies in Linguistics, Culture and FLT

Volume 14, Issue 2- 2026



Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen
Department of English Studies



This second issue of the fourteenth volume of *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT* is the end result of the work of the Department of English Studies, Faculty of Humanities, *Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen*.

All issues in this volume have been published with the financial support of the Project of the Bulgarian National Science Fund – Bulgarian Scientific Periodicals KP-06 NP 7/65 dated December 12, 2025. The Bulgarian National Science Fund bears no responsibility for the content or accuracy of the materials.

Editorial Board*: Editor-in-chief: Prof. Roumyana Todorova, PhD (Bulgaria)

Co-Editor-in-chief: Assoc. Prof. Desislava Cheshmedzhieva-Stoycheva, PhD (Bulgaria)

Editors: Assoc. Prof. Carol Griffiths, PhD (Leeds University, UK); Prof. Dr. el-Sayed el-Aswad (Member of the American Anthropological Association, USA); Prof. Dr. Birsen Tütünlü (Istanbul Kültür University, Istanbul, Turkey); Prof. Dr. Habil Hristo Kyuchukov (University of Silesia, Katowice, Poland); Prof. Dr. Habil Berrin Aksoy (Atılım University, Ankara, Turkey); Assoc. Prof. Brîndușa-Mariana Amălacei, PhD (University of Bacău, Romania); †**Prof. D. Litt. Maya Pencheva** (Sofia University, Sofia, Bulgaria); Prof. Peter Gärdenfors (Lund University, Lund, Sweden); Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Z. Atayurt-Fenge (Ankara University, Ankara, Turkey); Assoc. Prof. Dr. Habil Anna Bączkowska (University of Gdańsk, Poland); Assoc. Prof. Mihaela Culea, PhD (University of Bacău, Romania); Assist. Prof. Abdullah Ahmed Zughaibi (English Department, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia); Assist. Prof. Joanna Mikosz, PhD (Lodz University, Lodz, Poland); Assoc. Prof. Irina Ivanova, PhD (Shumen University, Shumen, Bulgaria); Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cihat Atar (Sakarya University, Sakarya, Turkey); Assoc. Prof. Mamadou Abdou Babou Ngom, PhD (Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar, Senegal); Assist. Prof. Mira Bekar, PhD (Saints Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia); Giulia Magazzù, PhD (Gabriele D'Annunzio University of Chieti- Pescara, Italy)

SILC is indexed and watched by SCOPUS, Index Copernicus, ErihPlus, EBSCO, Directory of Open Access Journals, Scribd, Google Scholar, Directory of Research Journals Indexing (DRJI), ROAD – Directory of Open Access Scholarly Resources, RINZ, MLA Directory of Periodicals, MLA International Bibliography, Dimensions, National Centre for Information and Documentaion (ID 2775), ResearchBib, Mendeley, and MIAR.

SILC is archived in CEEOL (full texts, electronic), Bulgarian National Library St. St. Cyril and Methodius (full texts, print and electronic), Index Copernicus (full texts, electronic), and the Bulgarian Portal for Open Science (full texts, electronic).

** The Editorial Board bear no responsibility for the content or accuracy of the published articles.*

© Individual contributions: respective authors

© *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*

© Asenevtsi Publishing, Sofia

e-ISSN 2534-9538; p-ISSN 2534-952X

<https://doi.org/10.46687>

Q2, SJR 2025: 0.202; H-index 4



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Contents

PREFACE.....	5
--------------	---

POETICAL LESSONS IN SELF-SUBVERSION: ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING'S JUVENILIA (CA. 1812–1814) <i>Yana Rowland</i>	8
---	---

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ZIMMERMAN'S SELF-REGULATED LEARNING MODEL ON LISTENING COMPREHENSION: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY WITH JORDANIAN EFL UNDERGRADUATES <i>Rabab Ahmad Mizher</i>	30
---	----

THE ROLE OF LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL MEANS OF MODALITY IN REALISING INTENTIONALITY OF MEDIA DISCOURSE <i>S. Rajeswari</i>	52
---	----

POLITICAL FLAMING IN THE 21st-CENTURY WAR DISCOURSE: A PRAGMA-LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE <i>Gaiane Muradian</i>	71
---	----

FROM SACRED VESSEL TO SYMBOLIC RELIC: THE LINGUISTIC EVOLUTION OF <i>ARK</i> IN MARITIME ENGLISH <i>Raycho Penchev Ivanov</i>	86
---	----

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN L2 GRAMMAR LEARNING: PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF MACEDONIAN UNIVERSITY FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS <i>Silvana Neshkovska, Milena Kasaposka-Chadlovskaa, Lela Ivanovska</i>	98
---	----

INQUIRY-ORIENTED AUGMENTED REALITY AS A
TOOL FOR BOOSTING READING PROFICIENCY AND MOTIVATION
AMONG SECONDARY EFL STUDENTS

Manna Dey..... 120

ENGLISH WRITING PERFORMANCE IN THE 2025 BULGARIAN
MATURA EXAMINATION: EXAMINER OBSERVATIONS AND
PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Evgeni Stanchev 135

EXPLORING GLOBAL EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES
ON WORLD ENGLISHES: THE VOICES FROM NON-NATIVE
ENGLISH SPEAKERS

*Retno Wulan, Urip Sulistiyo, Eddy Haryanto, Marsandi Manar,
Muhammad Kristiawan*..... 163

PREFACE

The second issue of volume 14 of *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT* for 2026 includes articles related to three very broadly defined fields, namely literary studies, discourse studies and FLT.

The issue opens up with Yana Rowland's analysis on Elizabeth Barrett Browning's Juvenilia. The study "Poetical lessons in self-subversion: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's juvenilia (ca. 1812–1814)" analyses eleven poems, the earliest works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, dating back to 1812-1814. Yana Rowland argues that "the addressivity of the chosen poems could be seen to substantiate her chronic resistance against authorial exceptionalism, motivating narrative as the core of the child poet's empathically proactive imagination which sought an outlet for its agential potency and dialectical performativity". Going through the different topics covered in young Elizabeth Barrett Browning's writing, the author manages to prove her hypothesis and show how advanced and highly sensitive Browning was to everything and everyone that came close to her.

The next two analyses in this issue focus on matters related to discourse. In the small-scale study "The role of lexical and grammatical means of modality in realising intentionality of media discourse" S. Rajeswari uses mixed-methods corpus assisted discourse analysis and compares the devices extracted from 20 feature articles on climate change published by *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Times of India*. The author highlights the similarities and differences in the use of various ways of expressing modality and how they affect journalistic intentionality and concludes that modality is also used as a rhetorical tool by journalists.

Gaiane Muradian explores another phenomenon in discourse studies, i.e. political flaming. Using both the Framing Theory of Entman and the Appraisal Theory of Martin and White, the study "Political flaming in the 21st-century war discourse: A pragma-linguistic perspective" shows how political figures use different linguistic markers and evaluative strategies to inflame the tension in some of the recent conflicts such as Russia-Ukraine, Israel-Gaza and Israel-Iran.

"From sacred vessel to symbolic relic: The linguistic evolution of ark in maritime English" by Raycho Ivanov looks into the development of the term "ark" from a historical-linguistic perspective. The approach applied by the author is a mixed-methods, combining philological methods, etymological tracing, and componential analysis. The analysis is also diachronic starting with the use of the term in the King James Version of the Bible (1611), then in historical lexicographical sources, and last but not least, in the Standard Marine Communication Phrases (2001). The conclusion reached is that "ark" which used to be a significant nautical term with rich associations is currently marginalized in operational discourse which only confirms the observation that terms considered spiritual or mythical are not included in technical vocabularies.

The next paper is on the very popular topic of the use of AI in FLT. Three scholars from the Republic of Northern Macedonia have collaborated in the study titled “Artificial intelligence in L2 grammar learning: Perceptions and practices of Macedonian university foreign language learners”. Silvana Neshkovska, Milena Kasaposka-Chadlovska and Lela Ivanovska explore the application of AI in grammar learning. They apply a mixed-methods design to explore Macedonian university students’ perceptions and experiences with AI as a feedback and correction tool in the context of L2 grammar mastery. The scholars conducted a three-stage experiment with language-oriented and non-language oriented students. The objective was to find out whether the two groups perform better individually or with AI assistance. The study concludes that there is a very strong potential in using AI as a complementary tool for grammar learning; however, it also confirmed the need for critical human oversight and further pedagogical innovation.

Still in the field of language learning, however, with focus on listening comprehension, Rabab Ahmad Mizher in his “The effectiveness of Zimmerman’s self-regulated learning model on listening comprehension: A quasi-experimental study with Jordanian EFL undergraduates” focuses on the application of Barry J. Zimmerman’s (2000) three phase model of self-regulated learning (SRL). The author used a pre-test post-test design to study the results of 34 first-year English majors involved in SRL. The results of the two months’ study showed that the students who engaged with SRL demonstrated noticeable gains in identifying a relationship between ideas and listening for specific information, which comes to prove that adopting SRL instruction can improve EFL listening performance.

The next paper in the field, “Inquiry-oriented augmented reality as a tool for boosting reading proficiency and motivation among secondary EFL students” by Manna Dey, presents a small-scale study on the application of inquiry-based augmented reality (AR) on an experimental and a control group of 10 secondary school students each. The progress was tested through pre- and post-tests. The results revealed better performance by the experimental group and thus implied the feasibility of the inquiry-based AR as a pedagogical tool in EFL.

“English writing performance in the 2025 Bulgarian Matura examination: Examiner observations and pedagogical implications” by Evgeni Stanchev provides the personal observations of the author as a blind examiner at the Bulgarian matriculation exam in English, which is elective and marks the final stage of high school education. The analysis is based on 506 anonymised scripts from the 2025 examination focusing on the part related to the open-ended reading-comprehension responses, formal email writing, and argumentative essays. The study highlights the correlation between high performance in essay and email writing and better results in open-ended reading-response production.

The findings could be applied in English language teaching and thus contribute to the better preparation of high school students for this important exam.

The issue finishes with a small-scale study conducted by a group of scholars from Indonesia. In “Exploring global experiences and perspectives on world Englishes: The voices from non-native English speakers” Retno Wulan, Urip Sulistiyo, Eddy Haryanto, Marsandi Manar and Muhammad Kristiawan conduct semi-structured interviews with non-native speakers of English in order to assess how individuals from diverse educational and professional backgrounds use world Englishes in real-life communication. The findings have implications for classroom practices as the scholars vouch for inclusion of global English diversity in ELT which in their opinion will foster better understanding among the communicative partners and thus contribute to overall communicative ease.

POETICAL LESSONS IN SELF-SUBVERSION: ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING'S JUVENILIA (CA. 1812–1814)

Yana Rowland

Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria

Abstract: *This paper aims at establishing the pedagogical dimensions of self-interrogation in the foundation of narrative as human necessity in the earliest works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861): eleven poems dated back to ca. 1812–1814, and unpublished in her own lifetime. Despite the re-awakened in the last decade of the 20th century interest in English Romantic and Victorian juvenile writers, Barrett Browning's first poetical attempts remain feebly explored, especially in terms of the civilizational impulse of self-doubt. As a child writer, Barrett Browning achieved narrative intensity whose roots may be sought in her sensitivity to politics, social matters, emotions, and especially suffering. I argue that the addressivity of the chosen poems could be seen to substantiate her chronic resistance against authorial exceptionalism, motivating narrative as the core of the child poet's empathically proactive imagination which sought an outlet for its agential potency and dialectical performativity.*

Keywords: *Elizabeth Barrett Browning, juvenilia, self-interrogation, narrative, imagination*

About the author: *Yana Rowland is a full-time Associate Professor of English at the English Department of Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria. She holds an MA in English & Russian (summa cum laude, 2000) and a doctoral degree (2006) in English Literature. Her monographs, *The Treatment of the Themes of Mortality in the Poetry of the Brontë Sisters* (Plovdiv University Press, 2006) and *Movable Thresholds: On Victorian Poetry and Beyond in Nineteen Glimpses* (Plovdiv University Press, 2014) express her research interests in the area of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century English poetry (especially Alfred Tennyson and Thomas Hardy). Yana Rowland teaches core and elective BA & MA modules in English (English Literature of the Victorian Age, Modernism and Postmodernism, English-Language Children's Literature, Literary Anthropology, Stylistics of the English Language, Autobiography in English Literature, Narrative). Since 2015 Yana Rowland has published on Elizabeth Barrett Browning.*

e-mail: *yanarowland@uni-plovdiv.bg*

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0906-1454>

Copyright © 2026 Yana Rowland

Article history: Received: 12 January 2026; Reviewed: 18 June 2026; Revised: 27 June 2026; Accepted: 29 June 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Rowland, Y. (2026). Poetical lessons in self-subversion: Elizabeth Barrett Browning's juvenilia (ca. 1812–1814). *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 8–29. <https://doi.org/10.46687/BGVZ1168>

The world isn't just the way it is. It is how we understand it, no? And in understanding something, we bring something to it, no? Doesn't that make life a story? (Martel, 2003, p. 302)

Introduction

In nineteenth-century England the child writer – middle class, notably enough – was not a rarity. What children wrote was of pronouncedly cautionary essence, and yet it exhibited rebellious attitudes to the indoctrination of normative behavior. The list may include Jane Austen, Lord Byron, Leigh Hunt, Felicia Hemans, William Blake, William Wordsworth, and Thomas Hood, to name but a few. Marked by empathic intellectualism, self-contemplative responsivity in acting, and depth of faith, the Regency period (ca. 1795–1837) became a hard-to-abandon idyllic realm before the advent of the evolutionist and naturalist leanings of the time to follow (the Victorian age, 1837–1901). Juvenile narratives strove to consecrate life, as well as the uniqueness of a young individual's genius and skills of communication. Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861) – a Regency infant but a Victorian adult, author of *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850), *Aurora Leigh* (1856), a myriad of ballads, political poems, and some impressive translations (not least Aeschylus' *Prometheus Bound*, 1833 and 1850), a fine diarist, essayist, autobiographer, and prolific correspondent alert to injustice, a champion of the spirit of liberty, a dweller of Florence (1846–1861) witnessing the Italian Risorgimento – was one of those gifted children. Her earliest works are eleven poems she penned between the ages of six and eight (ca. 1812–1814).¹ They draw the reader's attention to common throes such as enforced military conscription, poverty, infant mortality, loneliness, and a growing individual's departure from the magnetism of nature's polyglot voice. Said poems vary between self-oriented addresses ('On the Cruelty of Forcement to Man'), indignant exclamatory doubts ('On Early Rising'), exhilarated imperatives ('Ye lovely lilies of the Vale'), unabashed and fragmentary self-addresses ('Ah! Virtue – come my steps to stay'), dramatized moralistic tales based on retrospective experiences ('Upon the boundaries of a lofty wood'), bold conversations with oneself, camouflaged as talks to an imagined interlocutor ('Oh! Thou! Whom Fortune led to stray'), and what could be deemed *prima-facie* descriptive pieces ('Soft as the dew from

1. Unless specified otherwise, references to, and quotations from, the works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning (distinguishing, in addition, the poet's works from editorial notes) adhere to Sandra Donaldson's 2010 five-volume edition. The citation of Elizabeth's letters follows the Wedgstone Press complete edition of The Brownings' Correspondence (hereby abbreviated as BC, and obtained from <https://www.browningscorrespondence.com/>), specifying the volume, page(s), letter number, and date. Barrett Browning's, as well as other poets', original spelling, punctuation, and emphases have been preserved. In quoting other original writing, I have preferred the name(s) of editor(s), whenever available. Titles of poems appear in single inverted commas, except for larger dramatic works and whole poetical volumes which I have italicized.

Heaven descends', 'Soft were the murmurs of the gentle rill', 'Its golden plumage glittered on its breast').

Few biographers have taken the time to acknowledge the centrality and long-term phenomenological worth of these juvenile works. Among the most proficient twentieth-century scholars one ought to note the names of Barbara Taylor, Sandra Donaldson, and Melissa Brotton. Pioneering work was done by Charlotte Porter, Helen Clarke, Harriet Preston, and Harry B. Forman: while all noted Elizabeth's early writings (such as 'The Battle of Marathon' (1820) and 'An Essay on Mind' (1826)), her eleven earliest poems remained neglected for a long time. Margaret Forster's pithy analysis praised Elizabeth's childhood experimental epic, her autobiographical verve, her early awareness of international politics (e.g., slavery and the poet's guilt about her own descent from a family of plantation holders), her non-reclusiveness, and her (self)exploratory escapades in the countryside, "bereft of adult company" and in charge of small siblings (Forster, 2004, pp. 5, 11-12, 15-16, 19). Preston revealed the child's "astonishing avidity and aptitude for learning, omnivorous reading, and [yet] no regular training whatsoever" (Preston, 1900, pp. xi-xii). Porter and Clarke traced Elizabeth's "impressional youth", "alert intelligence ... [and] rapidly unfolding independence" (Porter & Clarke, 1900, pp. viii-ix, xiii, xxxvi), relating it to later poems such as 'The Deserted Garden' (1838) and 'The Lost Bower' (1843). Buxton Forman published Elizabeth's earliest works for the first time in 1914, depicting the "little poet" as a person "deadly in earnest", of "quixotic attitude", introspective, yet blessed with a vivid imagination, an "enfant terrible" who stretched the specular dimensions of space and time (Buxton Forman, 1914, pp. xxx, xxxiv-xxxvii). Later and recent research on the range of self-interrogation in Elizabeth's juvenilia follows further in the present paper.

A cultural excursus

The writer's shyness about her own juvenile poems, her merciless self-revisionist ways, and her intense inner life (Donaldson, 2010, vol. 5, pp. xix-xxiii) would have found favor with a time (1800–1830) in English culture particularly sensitive to matters such as the dichotomy individual – society, the educational value of the past, the need to study the heart and memory as prerequisites for the development of identity, the beneficial liaison between the family and the burgeoning school system in raising a healthy mind, and a child's right to a space of their own in a growingly callous utilitarian world.² By the *fin de siècle*, an emphasis had been laid on the significance of the "critical reflexivity on the act of

2. By the 1820s about half of the population of England had been composed of children under the age of nineteen (Langbauer, 2016, p. 1, n. 1). Even though "children were frequently to be found in circulating libraries, ... children's books were not" (Grenby, 2002, pp. 25, 28, 30, 32): the choice of titles was restricted to moralistic stories and fables, resounding with "the little busy bee" (from the hymnic lessons of Isaac Watts), and cautioning against indiscriminate reading, unruly impulses, and sheer amusement.

knowing”, as well as emotional intelligence in a partnership between instructor and instructed (Salvatori, 2003, pp. 8, 18). Sadly, but unsurprisingly, apart from schooling in music and French, Elizabeth, like many other intelligent girls at the time, was almost entirely self-educated, excelling in Ancient Greek, Hebrew, and the classics, backed up by the scarcity and irregularity of help provided by her brothers’ teachers and a blind classicist (Hugh Stuart Boyd). Narrative, in her case, became a means of self-preservation yet self-confrontation, emanating her alertness to the sexual, social, and cultural dimensions of the contingencies of authorship.

Nineteenth-century English pedagogy encouraged, as Theresa Michaels has argued, the promotion of “economic rationality [which] consisted of being unlike a child”, i.e., of an ability to resist material flashiness and worthlessness, yet faith that the child “had to be both seen and heard by their parents” who would do justice to the young individual by promoting “intellectual curiosity or sound judgement” (Michaels, 2008, pp. 34-35). Gradually, juvenile writing gained more confidence so as to beg recognition of the creative act not as subjected but contributive to a sense of history as also one’s own story, one’s own life – a unique experiential entity placed not simply under the aegis of an uncontestable grand precursory history, with a certain truth to be rediscovered; juvenile narratives created individuals and helped overcome the fault of “history ... seen as outside literature” (Watkins, 2002, p. 30).

Gabriel Compayré’s observations on the weakening of the impact of the church, the emerging rapport between the school and the private home in childcare, the attention given to the heart, memory and imagination in the birth of a compound approach to learning comprising empiricism, psychological idealism, and an efficacy-based organicist faith “to have every member of the human family participate in its benefits” (i.e. the benefits of education) critically and self-consciously (Compayré, 1889, pp. 508-509) seem contextually relevant for perceiving Elizabeth’s juvenile poetry as a self-disputing but timely tableaux-vivant chronicle of her growing curiosity about herself and her own place in life, rather than still-life blueprints of an uncontroversial greater external reality. Elizabeth obviously needed a living, uniquely tactile environment in which she could operate self-editorially, making up for the lack of such an officially-sanctioned space of learning. Moralistic narrative – as in ‘Ah! Virtue – come my steps to stay’, ‘On the Cruelty of Forcement to Man’, and ‘Loft, on the Top of that High Hill’ – would provide an allegorical, dichotomous terrain for being and seeing: self-acquisition by way of creating an Other to be actually addressed, instructed, reproached, and hopefully, redeemed. Elizabeth could seethe with indignation over unjust fate, invoking strength of mind to help the victim (first poem mentioned above: “... the poor lad in yonder boat / Forced from his wife, his friends, his home / ... how can you / Look at the misery of this doom!”, ll.1-4, Browning, in Donaldson, 2010, vol. 5, p. 160). She would

pray to avoid the wrong path in life (second poem: "... Or else, I go the other way...", l. 2, p. 161); she would mourn the hapless lot of a child lost alone in the waste (third poem: "But now she's gone! For ever more...", l. 4, p. 162). Her earliest poems tell stories emblemizing yet subverting the status quo of things in life. Generously conversational and conscience-provoking, these poems are also transparently self-oriented. They guard against complacency, sin (such as disrespect of God, or of one's own father), and prodigality, while prototyping innocence, vulnerability, spontaneity and susceptibility to injurious thinking. Suffering through erring, if half-wittedly, is proffered for deliverance. Elizabeth's Christological leanings stress the precedence of pain and guilt en route to salvation – often, a spectrally present, or second, auxiliary voice emerges. Unexceptionally, all poems are also self-addresses: the lyrical speaker blames herself for what occurs.

The Regency-era child, permitted a breathable domain for playing, was to be treated by the Victorians as a "grav[e]" sinner", cast off to become a lonely universe of its own against a hostile social world which nonetheless held infancy in an iconographically respectable and representationally dynamic ideational niche – the home of Jesus Christ (Ariès, 1962, pp. 114-115, 117, 119, 124, 402-403). Such a niche would require a highly performative narrative, one strewn with questions, surprises, enigmatical statements urging action, and addresses to an interlocutor capable of debating hazardous ventures. Elizabeth Barrett Browning's earliest poems emit the young writer's curiosity about, and management of, "social positions" and "personal positions" ("e.g., I as imprisoned, I as an optimist, I as a clown") in an indicatively processual understanding of identity (Hermans & Hermans-Konopka, 2010, p. 75). Christine Alexander has pointed out that the child writer's world could be viewed as a "microcosm" of the adult world – here inclusive of some "strangely cynical early lyrics" on being a passionless onlooker of human misery (Alexander, 2005, pp. 11, 18, 24, 27). The child's cognitive perimeter in these eleven earliest poems includes reticence, commiseration, indignation, humanitarian intervention, and landscape-lyric contemplation of divinely regulated harmony. The poet's habitat of individuation seems pent dichotomously and exegetically: between viewer and viewed; speaker and addressee; self-exiting and self-intruding; a child who sees herself as a child, calling a spade a spade, yet allegorizing, pretending to be older than a child in order to create a distance from which to face herself more amply and objectively. A kind of psychological mimicry, this also looks like a natural means of grasping an other's viewpoint, of putting oneself into someone else's shoes. Such presentational narrative gestures, which I should like to dub symptomatic metamorphic self-telling, enact a realm of animated absence, or a second-order reality, in which the child gets a chance to acquire themselves anew. What we have is pretend playing inductive of a narrative reality, a unique referential world of its own aimed at helping the child become visible and

actualize themselves and their creative potential as adults-to-be. In this reality, a child's senses and perceptual apparatus are not confused – narrative self-comprehension tends to become more “coherent”, “longer”, enhanced through “the pretend content – the experienced emotions, thoughts, perceptions of the characters [as] ... relat[ions] ... to the world and their actions” (Lillard, 2013, pp. 137, 139).

Elizabeth's “surprising” political awareness and mature take on life manifested themselves in “the pathos of the individual's distress” in her juvenile poem ‘On the Cruelty of Forcement...’ (Taylor, 2005, pp. 138, 140). Her creative teenagehood was marked by a growing length of narrative, and depth of self-analysis, seen also in the bulging range of her lyrical speakers' assumed family and communal roles. With time, narrating, she achieved greater factual precision and intimacy of self-revelation. Her self-doubt grew alongside her expanding interest in history. What she wrote in 1814 reflects her sincere devotion to her parents, siblings, and to momentous events – it is a chronicle of her fermenting awareness of life and of the world around her. Examples could be found in: ‘To My Dearest Papa 27th April 1814’; ‘Sent to Mama on 1st May 1814’ (‘Twas dark – the tempest blew aloud’); ‘To Baby’ (‘Dear suffering angel Arabella go’), and its counterpart ‘Addressed to Dearest Papa on His Birthday upon the Recovery of Little Arabella, from a Dangerous Illness’; ‘An Epistle to Dearest Papa in London’, ‘First French Lines’; ‘On Hearing Catalini Sing at Newcastle, and Being Told Her Story, ‘Hannibal's Passage of the Alps’ (Donaldson et al, 2010, vol. 5, pp. 165-192). Questioning her own capacities of thinking and acting, she struggled to accept tragedy: for instance, the sight of a helpless mother's plight and inability to rescue her own children from the grip of poverty, disease, and death (as in the sonnet ‘To Mama...’, based on the actual demise of Elizabeth's baby sister Mary, who died in the spring of 1814, p. 167, n. 1). Through anaphoric repetitions (“No houses...”, “No mortal lived...”, “No man can pass”) working towards the fatal denouement of the mother's suicidal repose in the waters of a “chilling tempest” (ll. 8-14), helplessness and powerlessness build up – the poet could only partially make amends through her poem as a social act, one of remembrance. Illness proved at once an unsettling and a restorative experience, unlocking the poet's self-questioning and self-belittlement (as in ‘An Epistle to Henrietta’, where, next to her ill sister, the poet defined herself as “a chatting parrot”, ll. 1-5, 13-16). Elizabeth contemplated the smallness of a human being's presence against the infinitude of divine grace: her poem ‘First French Lines’, consisting of a mere couple of lines, is an address to God: “Dieu! Je te remercie des biens que tu donnes à moi / Quelle recompense, puis Je offrir à Toi?”. On the other hand, as Beverly Taylor has noted, it was in “loss and faith” (in combination) that the young poet tended to “discover [...] freedom” (Taylor, 2005, p. 151). Which required aporetic, sinuous narrative routes, between a

sense of time as a grand historical body, and the tactile memory of a common mortal (as in ‘Hannibal’s Passage of the Alps’).

“How To Do Things with Words”

Confessed “naughtiness” hides the hope of being forgiven. Elizabeth’s juvenile self-interrogator would seek deliverance by way of carving out images of her own imperfection, placed, like an offering, in the hands of others. Aged eight, she apologized to her maternal grandmother for delaying thanking her for “a beautiful workbox” – she also praised herself as her grandmother’s “very pretty” namesake (BC 1, 1984, pp. 9-10, # 10, 3 Mar, 1814). In an eight-line ode to her paternal uncle she came out as an intrepid fatalist (Browning. In Donaldson, 2010, vol. 5, p. 175; emphasis added):

Dear Sam, accept my humble lay,
How dear to me, I need not say,
And when from Carlton I am gone,
I’ll never cease, thy love to mourn.
At childhood’s age, these faults forgive,
When I am older, if I live,
I’ll offer better verse to thee,
Who’s been so very kind to me:

Like many other poems on reflection bent, the conditional mood of this one suggests the existence of a plot: the anxiety about whether, how, and where the child poet would live. Grammar- and punctuation-wise, there is no overt question. Still, the address seems an inquiry into the way life is, would be, and has been, between a child and an adult. This mini-plot utilizes a popular mechanism of constructing events tutorially: prolepsis. The child poet anticipates things to come, based on recollective actualization of the way things have been so far. If she says she shall be a better writer, she also says she has so far already been one. A palpable temporal line emerges as narrative: self-examination, self-improvement, growth, appreciation of an Other.

Young Elizabeth Barrett held tension inside.³ It is almost certain that “her father was never a man to respect the feelings of others or disguise his own from

3. Despite their father’s dominant nature and “years of arbitrary treatment”, it seems unlikely that the Barrett children of Hope End (the family estate they were to lose in 1832, posterior to the Emancipation Act and their failing business of sugar-cane trading) were ever punished physically (Hewlett, 1953, p. 5). Fond of their father, they respected him, and he served as an exemplarily dutiful person, kindling Elizabeth’s “strongly humanitarian poems” which called for action in an intelligent, inquisitive and un-militant way: one of those was ‘On the Cruelty of Forcement to Man’ (pp. 11-12). Gardner Taplin singled out Elizabeth’s

his children” – his literary daughter parried this feature of his, accumulating internal “resentment, guilt”, becoming “confused” and “increasingly at war with herself” (Dally, 1989, pp. 17-18, 20), which could be one reason behind the vehemently dramatized questioning of the ways of the world, and the expressed need to share by way of narrating. Her innately subversive, auto-didactic narratorial skills could have been propelled also by a longing to compensate for “the gaps in her education” she was well aware of (Dennis, 1996, p. 31): a young tragedian, she would poetically carnivalize her life as that of an outcast, she would tell of the woes of becoming a woman. Yet, soberly enough, “despite her fairytale setting[s]”, Barrett was enviably well-informed of “current events on the world stage” – she frequently employed “innocent children in the tradition of Wordsworthian Romanticism to contrast their spontaneous freshness and wonderment with the grief and loss of experience,” in “service” of “social reform” (Taylor, 2008, pp. 410, 414). She would deal harshly with young shrews, building counterpoints to reveal character contrast, thinking how she could act in their stead. So signals the initial exclamation of one of her earliest poems: “How foolish to slumber away from the light, / And slumber away from the time” (‘On Early Rising’, ll. 1-2). In this unfinished poetical allegory, the idleness of the girl “Slothful” is counteracted by the energy of the girl “Health”. A fragmentary six-line cautionary narrative, this is also a compliment to its young author’s boldness of self-trial whereby she admits the duality of her own nature and the dichotomous essence of intellectual labor set between two extremes. It is the latter that motivates the element of choice as a plot engine which extends the responsibility for initiating this story and for its self-evident (though unuttered) finale to the speaker herself. A self-disquieting voice instructs against irrational flights in ‘Near to a shady wood where fir trees grew:’ a young “niece” sneaks away from her uncle who rescues her. Disobedience and self-recovery conjoin in laying the foundations of self-authorization.

J. L. Austin believed that “the uttering of the word is, indeed, usually, or even the, leading incident in the performance of the act, ... which is also the object of the utterance;” the illocutionary element (e.g. a promise made, or indignation verbally presented) presupposes an addressee, respondent, or a reaction to the perpetrator’s intention (meant and voiced as a question), sometimes disguised as an emotional plea to oneself, but one containing, in fact, a stimulus to respond

wildly enthusiastic faith and her “forthright manner of expression” fostered on the grown-up provocative reading she had done by her teens: Tom Paine, Voltaire, Hume, Mary Wollstonecraft, Homer, Plato, Horace, Dante, Ovid, Shakespeare, Byron, etc. (Taplin, 1957, pp. 9-10, 21-22). Rosalie Mander insisted on Elizabeth’s early tomboyishness and tantrum-prone character, insinuating that the origin of her early creative impulse could be related to her father’s disciplinarian supervision of her composition and translation practice; an auto-didactic frame of mind would propel further the performative reservoir of words and of writing which became a duty, standard, and routine aimed at improving the young writer’s own self by way of noting and instructing others (Mander, 1980, pp. 1-3, 8). Hence the discursive genre diversity of Elizabeth’s juvenilia: odes, epistles, essayistic self-revelations, etc.

and insinuating a perlocutionary effect – “a non-conventional ‘physical’ action” – issuing out of a mere “constative utterance” (Austin, 1962, pp. 8, 22, 98-99, 109-110). Elizabeth’s first poem ever (?1812), recorded in her own hand, a lament over the unjust impressment of men to serve in the military conflict between England and the United States at the time of England’s war with France (of which she might have known through family discussions on published news in the spring of 1812; Donaldson, 2010, vol. 5, p. 159), is a terse illocutionary act which narrativizes an intelligent and responsible young citizen’s dilemma. Addressing herself, just this dilemma-reality the young poet turns into a matter in need of solution – a four-line offensive against ignorance:

Ah! The poor lad in yonder boat,
Forced from his wife, his friends, his home,
Now gentle Maiden how can you
Look at the misery of this doom!

Highly performative, this exclamatory provocation is an act of self-indictment – that she has remained complacent and owes an explanation to an Other employed to hear and react. An Other who springs from a self-exodic frame of mind tied to utterances as direct contact with a reality spun out of perceivable thoughts, rather than just of recollections of pieces of news, or facts read about in newspaper reports on politics. Verbally, the poet seems to increase reality by enacting self-reproach (a feature of her mental activity manifested as self-transportation across spaces and times) aimed at improving an Other’s suffering. Which calls for Hans-Georg Gadamer’s hermeneutical understanding of writing as an indispensable presentational augmentation of being:

Every ... presentation is an ontological event and occupies the same ontological level as what is represented. By being presented it experiences, as it were, an increase in being. The content of the picture itself is ontologically defined as an emanation of the original. ... The ideality of the word is what raises everything linguistic beyond the finitude and transience that characterize other remnants of past existence. (Gadamer, 2006, pp. 135).

The poignant narrative intensity (ll. 1 & 2) introducing a poor young man forcibly drawn to military service, leaving behind his family, friends, and his hearth, unfolds also an arresting self-image: how could she sit and watch, impartial, this misery! Complicit in a tragedy through inaction, she winds up the poem’s eventful coil which consumes and implicates her as a perpetrator and rescuer. As she interrogates herself about her own passivity, she narrativizes herself, so that we could get to know her. If she had been ideal, victorious, and unguilty, she would have remained invisible and inaudible. Her faultiness is what births her. Her uttering an appeal liberates the rendition of facts from constative

simplicity, adorns them with the privilege of a special motion in the transition from illocution to perlocution, drives the narrative out of its literariness, and launches it into the experiential vitality of an action of its own: protest.

Narrative is a means of subversive self-recognition. It is born out of, and aims at, the differentiation between two involved in communication as exchange. Personhood, as Paul Ricoeur argued, rests on “identifying reference”, which enhances “self-designation that makes the person not merely a unique type of thing but a self” (Ricoeur, 1994, pp. 27, 32, 39). The interpretable grain of sense in the shortish poem discussed above is the “reciprocity ... between someone who is me and another who is you” (p. 39). The Other is the soldier lad; the addressive “you” refers to a maiden, watching, helpless, the lad’s predicament. Such a dual charge is a clever, over-intuitive, solution to the problem Ricoeur discerned in the communicativeness of narrative per se: “how the “I-you” of interlocution can be externalized in a “him” or a “her” without losing its capacity to designate itself, and further, how the “he/she” of identifying reference can be internalized in a speaking subject designating themselves as an I” (p. 41). Illocution succeeds allocution: “the utterance ... is ... a bipolar phenomenon: it implies simultaneously an “I” that speaks and a “you” to whom the former addresses itself” (p. 43). If “the gentle Maiden” scandalized thus is a self-reference, her vehement narrational emotionalism is no less an act of inciting action – it rests on dialogizing the need to hold someone responsible for the way things are. Yet in the long run, the dedication is to the lad, despite the fact that it may look like an act of self-messaging. The danger rests in the temptation to see “this other” as perhaps “an alter ego”, “a reduplication of myself” (Ricoeur, 1994, pp. 181-182). It seems, however, that this instance could be grasped as part of an “ethics” of doing, such as friendship (rather than just a manifestation of “a psychology of feelings of affection and attachment to others”) – a true “virtue – an excellence – at work in deliberative choices and capable of being elevated to the rank of *habitus*”. Elizabeth’s earliest poem reveals a bi-directional structure through the “reversibility” of roles (“speaker and listener”) in interrogation: the lad and the maiden are two sides of the same coin and could both be recognized as the Other, as “not only the counterpart of the Same but ... the intimate constitution of its sense” (p. 329). The lad who the maiden is not is also the one who she cannot be, or see herself, without. Or, as Ricoeur would wonder: “If another were not counting on me, would I be capable of keeping my word, or maintaining myself?” (p. 341).

Such an impasse – a speaker questioning the order of things in a self-accusatory manner, as if assuming responsibility for all and everyone, which would also indicate the authority deposited in the speaker’s self-perception, erected on the notion of self-sacrifice – is found also in other poems written in 1814. They distill the lyrical narrator’s sentient sight, interrogating her descent, intensifying chthonian imagery which betrays her visions of existential journeys in which

vessels get lost from sight and hope, destitute loners survive on water and herbs, and whole communities beg rescuing in time of natural cataclysms ('In Imitation of Pity the Sorrows of a Poor Old Man', ll. 2-3; 'The Hermit', ll. 2-4, 7-8; 'On an Eruption of Mount Etna!', ll. 3, 5-6, 8, 11-12; Browning in Donaldson et al, 2010, vol. 5, pp. 166-169). The young poet's dedication to alleviating existential ills through narratorial self-subversion, which implicates the sayer as the doer of the action, could also be interpreted as a tutorial auto-constructionist practice founded on image as "an illustration of thought" (rather than some immediately available physical reality in proximity) in spells of self-provocative reduction of the graspable, instances of "epoché", or movement "among appearances", working toward "a philosophy of perception" which actually aims at "transcendence of the perceived", thus becoming a candidate for "the thing itself", in Ricoeur's understanding (Taylor et al, 2024, pp. 153-156). In her further juvenile works, ailing individuals in need of assistance would form a compound "temporal object" (pp. 157-161) delivered out of the poet's first-hand experience of reading, seeing, recollecting, as well as anticipating tragedies, and allowing the progression of her sameness through "impressional content" (in her 1814 poem 'To the Fishing Net...', ll. 3-4', she excoriates murder in a speech defending the life of fish). Elizabeth's first eleven poems are united by their "same referent" through "two modes of givenness" – images of suffering the child-writer would receive through actual encounters with affliction (e.g. a man in need, or a local calamity), and perceptions of suffering the child-writer might want to expose as a reduction of her own temporally defined self (as in 'On a Ship Being Lost at Tynemouth', Browning in Donaldson 2010, vol. 5, pp. 178-179). In her daily routine, very much dependent on adults, young Elizabeth created images of suffering that could inconvenience an unengaged mind. Sometimes, she would draw attention to events allegedly missing from her direct physical involvement with the world. In Ricoeur's terms, she "ma[de] present what [was] absent," "giving ... mental equivalent[s] of the absent" which grew the more noticeable the more she developed her poetical language (Taylor et al, 2024, p. 5). Images of suffering began to function as "traces of ... previous perceptions" of suffering (pp. 7-8), acquiring "residual" viability, "transfer[ring]" what she "derived" as "content of reality" into a new realm, that of "absence" (pp. 7-8, 275). An absence which threatened a placid reality with visions of pain a young intellectual found herself unable to cure, but an intellectual who, at the same time, augmented reality by redirecting it to a referential realm amassed through poetic language, which would permit substantiation of a willingness to act by at least holding oneself responsible to begin with.

Similar self-interrogatory phenomenological reductions of a responsively narratorial caliber would appear to tell apart the mind also of other sensitive early nineteenth-century juvenile English writers. Fourteen-year-old Felicia Hemans (1793–1835), in 'England and Spain: or, Valour and Patriotism' (1807),

raged against the tyranny reigning over Europe at the time of Napoleon's march. The narrative is founded on rhetorical questions, actually self-addressed and indicative of the young poet's own inability to change things and alleviate the destiny of the suffering: "How long shall despots and usurpers reign? / Is honour's lofty soul for ever fled! / Is virtue lost? Is martial ardour dead? / Is there no heart where worth and valour dwell..." (Hemans, 1875, p. 4, ll. 34-37). This informed poetical creative instance maps the life of a "temporal object": suffering as testimony of the receptive apparatus and reactionary potential of the young poet's own, unfolding an agential portfolio of emotions verbally conveyed. Another promising young mind, a heart greater than its feeble age, Scottish juvenile writer Marjory Fleming (1803 – 1811), prematurely taken away by death at a time of an epidemic, in her poems and journals broadcast her measureless love for her family, her gratitude to her patron, cousin Isabella, and her growing awareness of life and the world. Unveiling the Devil in her (McLean, 1999, pp. 25-26), making her own naughtiness a point of narratorial self-reflection (i.e., self-temporalization), Fleming boldly declared her involvement in history. Rather than reverentially describe the life of a monarch, she durst indicate – in a first-person singular form – what she would have done, had she been in royal shoes, also her unhappiness over her own ignorance. The result: a highly self-objectifying interrogative discourse aiming to solve political enigmas and parade fermenting curiosity and an embryonic literary talent: "I cannot think without a sigh ... / The King was killed I'm sorry to say... / ... / I have not got a rhyme for that ..." ('The Life of Mary Queen of Scots', McLean, 1999, pp. 59, 62); "I would have don't if I was he / ... I'd be frightened for a conspiracy" ('The Life of the King James', pp. 66, 68). The *what-if-I-were-him* element implies self-subversion, justifying narrative as a dialogue between two participants: *Self* and *Other*, or *I* and *You*. Barrett Browning's 'On the Cruelty of Forcement...' is a dialogue of this kind: it is an attempt to totalize time by way of an artistic focus on an event of major social significance and of an ethical order, one questioning the young writer's own comfort zone of social standing and mental balance. In her attempt to articulate a past experience – including cultural memory as an indirect, though no less active, involvement in social tragedies – her own sense of time captured an event remote enough from her yet one which helped form a gestalt of the world to suit her own socially proactive imagination. In this gestalt, incompleteness (seen also in the fragmentary nature of her first poem ever) proved a productive *modus vivendi*. Fictively, the juvenile poet would extend an *in-actu* event, making a new inroad into reality which would begin, further in her juvenile works of social value, to acquire a more complete referential substantiality in need of linguistic expression. Reinhart Koselleck's reflections on the (counter)sequential interrelationship between becoming and saying, as well as on the benefit of interior, quasi-totalizing, selective, experiences of time, may provide food for thought on juvenile writers' historical consciousness:

What has happened, and has happened beyond my own experience, is something that I can experience merely by way of speech or writing. Even if language may – in part – have been only a secondary factor in the enactment of doings and sufferings, as soon as an event has become past, language becomes the primary factor without which no recollection and no scientific transposition of this recollection is possible. The anthropological primacy of language for the representation of past history thus gains an epistemological status, for it must be decided in language what in past history was necessitated by language and what was not. In anthropological terms, any “history” constitutes itself through oral and written communication between generations that live together and convey their own respective experiences to one another. Only when, with the passing of older generations, the orally conveyed space of recollection melts away, does writing become the primary carrier of historical imparting (Koselleck, 2002, p. 27).

Language creates, as well as dismantles, truth and fiction. The dramatic mode of individuation, of which self-questioning through making “a moral statement” is an expression, had appealed to women writers since the late eighteenth century – it gradually became part of a pedagogy of learning through fiction (Ruwe, 2014, pp. 19, 32-33, 37). One variety of instructive fiction was the “dramatic-lecture monologue” where the lesson was contrived by an adult, “or a good child”, who scolded the disobedient; there were also narrative “papillonades” (pp. 41-42) encouraging transformative self-reflection based on love and cognition of Nature (as in Elizabeth’s poem “To the Fishing Net...”). Dialogic narration burgeoned, assuming a gentle Lockean model of honesty, insisting on the rearing of a healthy spirit in a child entitled to grow up enlightened, virtuous, moderate, not “dejected” but willing to strive for verity as internal necessity and inspiration (Locke, 1779, pp. 49-50, 201). The motivational element of this philosophy could be perceived in one’s ability to critique unjustness, and fight pain and social ills caused by ignorance and insensitivity. In her early poetry, Elizabeth took a self-demanding stance to adhere to duty and empathy, while also developing narrative as the pleasure of self-acquaintance in a wide world of social interaction. The expansive plots of her juvenile lyrical dramas (marked by elliptical sentences, impulsive punctuation, and catastrophically accumulating tension in descriptions of woe) invite the reader to abstain from, as prominent educationalist Maria Edgeworth would put it, “precipitately suspect[ing] [the child]... of falsehood” (Edgeworth, 1855, p. 151) – they encourage recognition of linguistic dexterity and a sense of integrity based on careful research of an Other as part of self-knowledge.

Empathic Ex-Centric Self-Migration

Self-doubting narrative arising out of a faithful devotion to an Other and a hope to grow into a better and more intelligent person matured in Elizabeth's two autobiographical essays, *My Own Character* (1818), and *Glimpses into My own Life and Literary Character* (1820). Both display a fear of self-revelation, yet respect for the primacy of her own internal voice: "I proceed to the investigation of myself with no small anxiety. ... I have endeavored to insinuate myself into the windings of other souls, ... but I have never, even in imagination looked into my own heart – How few indeed know themselves!" (Barrett, 1974, p. 119, emphasis added). The first essay narrativizes the young writer's yearning to discover an innate principle of life in herself, exposing, simultaneously, idealism and empiricism. Naming Locke her role-model, she is driven by a "desire of improvement, ... of reaching the truth," so that she "may be forgiven" the sin of ignorance. The second chronicles events between the ages of three and fourteen: becoming "Poet Laureat of Hope End" (dubbed so by her own father); writing a major epic, 'The Battle of Marathon' (1820); anxieties about self-governance and obstinacy of mind; her legacy bequeathed to other ambitious young intellectuals imperiled by impulses of self-writing, "never ... write your own life!" (pp. 122-123, 125, 127-128, 131, 133). Elizabeth's earliest poems, discussed in this paper, were precursory lessons. They underpin her juvenile prose-fiction tales which would exercise further her instructive capacities: 'Sebastian or the Lost Child', 'The Way to Humble Pride', Disobedience' (all 1814), 'Julia or Virtue. A Novel.' (1815), 'Charles de Grandville' (1818). Commonly enough, events got narrated in juxtapositional order, contrastively, in the examination of the self, of virtue and vice, with a prosopopoeic supply of faces a young writer, equally dreading recognition and de-personalization, would autodidactically require. In one of Elizabeth's earliest poems, 'On Early Rising', the dialectics of self-formation was narratively developed through the exposure of the habits of two girls, 'Health' and 'Slothful'. In 'Ah! Virtue – come my steps to stay', "Vice" and "Virtue" emerge contrapuntally, with two roads for a young mind to choose between. The poem 'Oh! Thou! Whom Fortune led to stray' seems like a didactic agenda: self-immunization against swerving from the right path (allegorically, a "poor Man" is invited to abandon the road of perdition and return to righteousness). Interconnected in their instructive worth, these poems showcase the ontological reach of the young writer's imagination through a circuitous model: a departure from a source and a return to it, the young heroine illuminated.

Purportedly, the three poems of ca. 1812–1814 analyzed above generate Ricoeurian "meanings without a referent" (Taylor et al, p. 162), aiming at no one specifically, coming from no one particularly. On the other hand, they develop the author's own signature through implied self-reformation. Such "objective inexistence[s]", or "modalities of belief" (in the train of thought of Husserl, which Ricoeur followed), sabotage the young poet's self-certainty, showing meaning

to be outwardly bound but inwardly propelled by “the consciousness of the ‘picture’” as “an existential experience”, rather than as a “perceptual reality” (p. 165). To become known, such a reality needs time – it unfolds as a narrative subverting the author’s beliefs and experiential competence. The picturing of a poor man’s downfall creates an ideational time-space for a growing author’s desire for self-fulfillment and self-display. Contrapuntally, it provides “a window, whose frame is very important, since the act of imagination is itself framed by it” (p. 166). Elizabeth’s juvenile poems evidence of her wish to sustain an ontology of her own by way of proleptic narratorial (self)questioning. “[A] performative speech act, ... prolepsis ... insists on ... simultaneity” – of the meaningful picture which narrative unfolds as, whereby creative act-moments of saying, or uttering (writing), as Laurie Langbauer expounds, are induced by the young writer’s “presupposed prematurity requir[ing] that they actively engage with questions of identity and meaning-making and ruthlessly interrogate preconceptions of causality and development” (Langbauer, 2016, pp. 6-8). Barrett Browning’s early poems are acts of “complicating [her] ... moment in time” (pp. 6-8): poetical speech acts (i.e., “What if...”, “Would I myself...”, etc.) responding to, rather than just inciting, meaning as commenced or required by an Other.

Self-interrogatory disquisitions on private conscience, communal faith, and time as the eternity of the presence of the divine form the architecture of Elizabeth Barrett Browning’s juvenile poetry. These are anti-utilitarian excursions amidst Wordsworthian wise Nature whose many-tongues the young writer taught herself to speak, as in ‘Soft as the dew from Heaven descends’, ‘Soft were the murmurs of the gentle rill, and ‘Its golden plumage glittered on its breast’ – all united by a first-personal-singular narrative stance through “quasi-miraculous fusion[s] between the event recounted and the narrating instance, ... both late (final) and “omnitemporal” in their moral spark (Genette, 1983, p. 70). Elizabeth’s early nature poems paint pictures of serenity and order, pregnant, nonetheless, with tension and grief over a world ruled by irredeemable fleetingness. “Early risers on their way” (‘Soft as...’, l. 9) – a self-image of the poet’s own – witness the “panting snowdrop[’s] drooping head” (‘Soft were...’, ll. 2-5). Conundrums arise: why is one soul spared death, while another is not? Such dilemmas may erode, narratively, the consistency of an onlooker’s own place and framework of mind, transforming a poetical texture woven out of statements into a palpable under-tier of rhetorical questions. If the singularity of an utterance were taken as a post-facto phenomenon ensuing from an event regretted, but resuscitated, once, by the act of writing, and by implication, further, by an act of reading by another, these poetical tales would look like belatedness. However, the simple lessons they convey could only be grasped as an anticipated event-content to unfold at the outset of the act of reading. Each such cautionary poetical interrogatory auto-narrative is therefore “final” yet “inaugural” (Genette, 1983, p. 72). Such perceptual duality, or complementarity, that Elizabeth’s early poetical narratives cleverly maintain (see

also ‘Ye lovely lilies of the vale’, ll. 1-2, 4) arises simultaneously out of two senses: beginning and ending. It may also relate to a greater, cosmic time (and natural phenomena) the young poet sought to connect individual life to, in her heartfelt resistance against a mechanical view on life that the advent of the “new scientific pedagogy” promised in confining physical and mental spaces to “increasing [...] schematiz[ation]” and indoor learning (Gargano, 2008, pp. 12, 14-15).

Resulting from “the interplay between likeness and negation”, recollection and anticipation, a young writer’s mental agility seems founded on an embedded anxiety about adulthood as a venerable and exemplary position to speak back from. Imagining what one could be, as Ricoeur argued, they the young writer would reveal “fictions ... [as] components or stages in some strategy of discourse, thought, or action that [would] provide a framework for the mimetic function,” such as “writing a poem” within which “the poet [would] provide images” (Taylor et al., 2024, p. 221). The work of imagination could not be severed from “the work of discourse”, and discourse rests on constant reconfirmation, through interrogation, of its own current, which could be captured, for instance, in Elizabeth’s desire to become an other-worded being, such as a flower, or a bird, whereby she would thrive “parasitically” on what she was not. A tangential proof of this is the prefatory autobiographical note attached to the poem ‘Its golden plumage...’ (Browning in Donaldson et al., 2010, vol. 5, p. 163), in which Elizabeth inserted her impressions of a bird’s fledgling’s infancy, insinuating her own volatile and temporary position as a child, and perhaps as a mother-to be. That the poet occupied a middle ground between likeness and negation, as discussed above, could also be seen in further poems written in 1814. Discursively (sometimes with the help of a direct *You* address, or even naming the lyrical narrator as ‘Ba’ – a short family name for Elizabeth), self-questioningly, based on statement-like strings of sentences, these poems emboss a young person’s power of agitating the kingdom of nature to seek justification for her own existence: ‘On the Return of the Fine Season’, Occasioned by a Fall of Snow’, ‘To Flora’, ‘Upon the Rose Blowing after the Lilly’, ‘On Visiting Matlock, Derbyshire’, ‘On First Seeing the Sea at Tynemouth’, ‘Ah! Now, stern winter’s chilling blast returns’, ‘After a Shower of Rain’, and ‘The Seasons. Spring’. A “gentle Maiden” willing to satiate her zest for learning, Elizabeth camouflaged herself as a sufferer, pauper, lost, fearing uninvolvedness, expected to discover the true meaning of vice and virtue while protecting the life of an Other (e.g. the conscripted “poor lad in yonder boat”). She thus became a Ricoeurian “objective inexistence”: a reality of the imagination, developing at once the having-occurred and the about-to-occur in further poems of 1814 governed by young cavillers and questioners: ‘Mine’s the sweet home in yonder cell’, ‘Oh virtues gone, sweet virtue flies’, ‘A Song’ (‘Peter Quarry...’), ‘By a large and spacious plain’, ‘By the side of a hill hollow’, ‘As I wandered along thro’ a wood’, ‘Down in a Vale a cottage rose’, ‘In a Vale a lilly droops’.

A juvenile author is a Janus-like creature – learner and tutor, infant and grown-up, carrying, and carried by, discourse, in a flow between the contingent moment of the occurrence of events (recollected or anticipated) in the story and the narrative currency of speaking (or reading). Elizabeth's earliest poems are fragmentary spells of contemplative self-othering: a martyrology of human stoicism, a demonstration of fanning out identity into a panoply of endless possibilities of spiritual self-reconstruction through striving for beyond-human goodness. Which may invite Martin Buber's reflections on "the development of the soul in the child ... inextricably bound up with that of the longing for the Thou, with the satisfaction and the disappointment of this longing, with the game of is experiments and the tragic seriousness of his perplexity" (Buber, 1937, p. 28). The Thou being a divinely-pitched Self's moral imperative, a devout criterion of justice obtained through dialogue. As a child poet, Elizabeth defined the child as the Other prone to commit errors. She clung to a restorative purity of mind and soul in a world of sightless insensitivity where "the meeting of self with other" would be "the test of their humanity", but also a kind of "self-enclosure that" would further "elicit the adult's longing and fear" of the thought that "the child mark[ed] the beginning and the end of desire" (McGillis, 2012, 103, 113-114). The performative element of her earliest poems could be discerned in the creation of aesthetic distance: the lyrical speaker would meet, and talk to (if indirectly), another child (a sufferer, an interlocutor), which would help the juvenile poet demarcate and deepen her understanding of herself. Such reflexivity would prove self-subversive: the poet would have to recognize the face of misery and injustice in a poor child-Other, which is how she would question her own mind and soul. Self-disquieting communication would become narrative as a wish to inhabit a shared time and space.

Toward the Interior

A recipient, in her eleven earliest poetical tales (ca. 1812–1814), of the life of other children, an observer of the woes and toil of lonely waiters on providence, and of maidens abandoned, or themselves having prodigally abandoned home, the juvenile poet yielded a boon of self-catechetical reflections. In more recent times, Laura Rotunno has contextualized Elizabeth Barrett Browning's self-questioning narratorial voice as a woman "artist's acknowledgement of ... her own unique nature and subsequent ability to understand and interact with others", which resulted, further, in larger-scale hybrid-genre "texts of social significance", such as *Aurora Leigh* (Rotunno, 2008, pp. 58-60). In her earliest poems, the narrative stance, from a linguistic perspective, consists predominantly of statements recovering some past, and yet the dramatization of self-questioning is no less apparent, if only because of the insistence on the defining presence of a child–adult pair of participants in a dialogue of mutually educational merit. So it is in 'Near to a shady wood where Fir trees

grew' (the lyrical narrator warns of the detrimental effects of disobedience as she introduces, but leaves unfinished, the tale of a niece who abandons her uncle and their pious little home cottage), 'Loft, on the top of that high hill' (the "lonely cottage" stands alone, lamenting Ellen's "hapless fate"), and 'Upon the boundaries of a lofty wood' (little Ellen of the little cottage loses her father – her sole friend – but gains the eternal blessing of the Divine, or "Fortune love"). Death looks like an objectless reality that curtails yet amasses experience, to the effect of creating a Ricoeurian "impressional content" – an entity lasting as story time as well as the time of the narrative, and supplying an eventfulness short of which the young poet simply could not be. From a biopsychological perspective, death, for a young writer, could be related to a self-antagonistic, yet magnetically compelling, atavistic fear of the unfamiliar, the inexpressible, the morally confounding (Cf. Darwin, 1877, pp. 288, 291). Which would result in quests for a way out of the darkest recesses of one's own mind through life-sustaining verbal activeness. Remembered or anticipated, pictures of another being's demise would work cathartically, presaging the limits of the poet's own life. Self-interrogation would legitimize a living individual's place and worth in life, particularly in poetical I-narratives, where Other and Self would form an osmotic construct permitting the flip-flopping of roles in staging also the limits of language.

Perceiving herself as a sinner, the child writer Elizabeth Barrett would end up in a kind of suspension, or restriction, of life through which she could throw her own image into relief. She would construct an identity through self-denial, incompleteness, nothingness, and mortality. Thus, the array of roles she could be captured performing in her very early poetry could function as what Ricoeur defined as "stages" in the process of self-recognition, if recognition – i.e., telling apart something knowable in time and space, such as the self's own manifestations – be taken as a sequence of "short event[s] of thought" flowing, generically, into poems of occasional, confessional, or devotional nature (Taylor et al., 2024, p. 223). "Thinking as" and "seeing as" would then correlate, as the poet would attest her presence by way of questioning her right to be. Defending justice (as in her very first poem ever), expressing her unconditional love for her family and for God, she thought as a common mortal and saw as a common mortal. Both ways, she was the underdog. But she was also an attention-seeker. Imperfect and sinful, she proved the same (*idem*) as before, and other (*ipse*) than an imagined better counterpart who she strove to emulate – an expression of an ultimate (Ricoeurian) connection between "likeness and negation" that the "intellectual process" of composition perforce feeds on and itself generates by suspending time as sense (pp. 241-242). Hence Elizabeth's narratorial self-fictionalization as self-disagreement.

Conclusions

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's earliest eleven poems (ca. 1812–1814) are united in their focus on family virtues, respect for the Other, care for wild nature, and yet defense of individual freedom. Moreover, they dramatize an advanced child's desire to perceive herself critically, maintain her memory in good repair, and exercise her language skills for producing and preserving images of the world, life, and time. The current investigation has shown that the young poet would fend off childhood amnesia, relishing the consecration of experiences through the development of discourse, giving "[an] account of childhood while [she] ... lived in it" (Laing, 2024, pp. 71-72, 76, 78). She cherished her own experiential capacities, piling up recollections and images of bravery, metonymizing herself narratively as a "gentle Maiden", "Ellen" of the wood, an "early riser", "a long-loved niece", and rural flowers which spoke the language of youth. Such imaginative being could perhaps also be addressed as what Paul L. Harris has termed "ontological lulling": a kind of "availability heuristic" (Harris, 2013, pp. 34, 38), that is, when a child (aged five to seven, as Elizabeth was at the time) recognizes an event as unrealistic in terms of an actual occurrence, and yet possible as part of the phenomenology of narrating self-conflict for the sake of individual transformation. The research has emblemized a highly self-conscious frame of mind as authorial being. Lingered between what she was (a child) and what she was not (an adult), but was probably expected to behave like, overly sensitive, Elizabeth might have been bemused by, yet satisfied with, such an ambivalent place to occupy – between the known and the knowable; at peace with, but also in a war against, herself. Narrative was her rite of passage – narrating, she questioned her right to be.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

No AI tools have been used in preparation of this paper. The text is a faithful reflection of the author's own research and all bibliographic sources have been dutifully referenced.

References

- Alexander, C. (2005). Nineteenth-century juvenilia. A survey. In C. Alexander, & J. McMaster (Eds.), *The child writer from Austen to Woolf* (pp. 11-30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ariès, P. (1962). *Centuries of childhood. A social history of family life*. (R. Baldick, Trans.). New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Austin, J. L. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- BC 1. (1984). *The Brownings' correspondence*. Vol. 1 (1809–1826, Letters 1–244). P. Kelley, & R. Hudson (Eds.). Winfield, Kansas: Wedgestone Press.
- Barrett, E. (1974). Two autobiographical essays by Elizabeth Barrett. *Browning Institute Studies*, 2(March), 119-134. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0092472500000407>
- Buber, M. (1937). *I and Thou*. (R. G. Smith, Trans.). Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. Retrieved on 5 May, 2025, from <https://www.maximusveritas.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/iandthou.pdf>
- Buxton Forman, H. (Ed.) (1914). *Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Hitherto unpublished poems and stories: with an inedited autobiography*. Vol. 1. Boston: The Bibliophile Society.
- Compayré, G. (1889). *The history of pedagogy*. (W. H. Payne, Trans.). Boston: D. C. Heath & Company. Retrieved on 3 July, 2025, from <https://dn721905.ca.archive.org/0/items/historyofpedagog00compuoft/historyofpedagog00compuoft.pdf>
- Dally, P. (1989). *Elizabeth Barrett Browning. A psychological portrait*. London: Macmillan.
- Darwin, C. (1877). A biographical sketch of an infant. *Mind. A Quarterly Review of Psychology and Philosophy*, 2, 7(July), 285-294. Retrieved on 19 August, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/os-2.7.285>
- Dennis, B. (1996). *Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The Hope End years*. Bridgend: Seren – Poetry Wales Press Ltd.
- Donaldson, S. (Ed. gen.) (2010). *The works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. Vol. 5. *Last poems* (1862). *Works unpublished in EBB's lifetime*. S. Donaldson, R. Patteson, M. Stone, B. Taylor, & M. Brotton (Vol. eds.). London: Pickering & Chatto.
- Edgeworth, M. (1855). *Practical education*. New York: Harper & Brothers. Retrieved on 22 August, 2025, from <https://archive.org/details/practicaleducati00edgerich>
- Forster, M. (2004). *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. London: Vintage.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (2006). *Truth and method*. (J. Weinsheimer & D. G. Marshall, Trans.). London – New York: Continuum.
- Gargano, E. (2008). *Reading Victorian schoolrooms. Childhood and education in nineteenth-century fiction*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Genette, G. (1983). *Narrative discourse. An essay in method*. (J. E. Lewin, Trans.). Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Grenby, M. O. (2002). Adults only? Children and children's books in British circulating libraries, 1748–1848. *Book History*, vol. 5, 19-38. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/bh.2002.0007>

- Harris, P. L. (2013). Fairy tales, history, and religion. In M. Taylor (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of the development of imagination* (pp. 31-41). Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195395761.013.0003>
- Hemans, F. (1875). *The poems of Felicia Hemans*. London: William P. Nimmo. Retrieved on 17 August, 2025, from <https://archive.org/details/poemsoffeliciahe00hemaiala/poemsoffeliciahe00hemaiala/>
- Hermans, H. & Hermans-Konopka, A. (2010). *Dialogical-self theory. Positioning and counter-positioning in a global society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511712142>
- Hewlett, D. (1953). *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. London: Cassell & Company LTD.
- Koselleck, R. (2002). *The Practice of conceptual history. Timing history, spacing concepts*. (T. S. Pressner et al, Trans.). Stanford: Stanford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503619104>
- Laing, R. (2024). The precocious child in Victorian literature and culture. Development and selfhood from Darwin to Freud. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-41382-7>
- Langbauer, L. (2016). *The juvenile tradition. Young writers and prolepsis, 1750–1835*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198739203.001.0001>
- Lillard, A. S. (2013). Fictional worlds, the neuroscience of the imagination, and childhood education. In M. Taylor (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of the development of imagination* (pp. 137-157). Oxford: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195395761.013.0010>
- Locke, J. (1779). *Some thoughts concerning education*. London: J. & R. Tonson. Retrieved on 25 July, 2025, from https://archive.org/details/bim_eighteenth-century_some-thoughts-concerning_locke-john_1779
- Mander, R. (1980). *Mrs. Browning. The story of Elizabeth Barrett*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson.
- Martel, Y. (2003). *Life of Pi*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books Ltd.
- McGillis, R. (2012). Irony and performance: the Romantic child. In A. E. Gavin (Ed.), *The child in British literature. Literary constructions of childhood, medieval to contemporary* (pp. 101-115). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230361867_7
- McLean, B. (Ed.) (1999). *Marjory's book: the complete journals, letters, and poems of a young girl*. Edinburgh: Mercat Press.
- Michaels, T. (2008). Experiments before breakfast: toys, education and middle-class childhood. In D. Denisoff (Ed.), *The Nineteenth-century child and consumer culture* (pp. 29-42). London – New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315238074-ch-1>

- Porter, C., & Clarke, H. A. (Eds.) (1900). *Elizabeth Barrett Browning's complete works*. Vol. 1. New York: T. Y. Crowell & Company.
- Preston, H. W. (1900). *The complete poetical works of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin; Cambridge, Massachusetts: Riverside Press.
- Ricoeur, P. (1994). *Oneself as another*. (K. Blamey, Trans.). Chicago: London: The University of Chicago Press. <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226844541.001.0001>
- Rotunno, L. (2008). Writers of reform and reforming writers in *Aurora Leigh* and *A Writer of Books*. In A. Rose (Ed.), *Gender and Victorian Reform* (pp. 58-72). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Ruwe, D. (2014). *British children's poetry in the Romantic era. Verse, riddle, and rhyme*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137319807>
- Salvatori, M. R. (2003). Introduction. Chronicle of a search. Of pedagogues and pedagogy, pedants and pedantry. In M. R. Salvatori (Ed.), *Pedagogy. Disturbing History, 1819–1929* (pp. 1-21). Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press.
- Taplin, G. (1957). *The Life of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. London: John Murray.
- Taylor, B. (2005). Childhood writings of Elizabeth Barrett Browning: 'At four I first mounted Pegasus'. In C. Alexander, J. McMaster (Eds.), *The child writer from Austen to Woolf* (pp. 138-153). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Taylor, B. (2008). Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the politics of childhood. *Victorian Poetry*, 46, 4 (405-427). <https://doi.org/10.1353/vp.0.0033>
- Taylor, G. H., Sweeney, R.D., Amalric, J.-L., & Crosby, P. F. (Eds.) (2024). *Paul Ricoeur. Lectures on imagination*. Chicago & London: Chicago University Press.
- Watkins, T. (2002). The setting of children's literature: history and culture. In P. Hunt (Ed.), *Understanding children's literature* (pp. 30-38). London – New York: Routledge.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ZIMMERMAN'S SELF-REGULATED LEARNING MODEL ON LISTENING COMPREHENSION: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY WITH JORDANIAN EFL UNDERGRADUATES

Rabab Ahmad Mizher

Al-Balqa Applied University, Salt, Jordan

Abstract: *Though listening comprehension remains one of the most challenging skills for EFL learners, there is relatively limited research on self-regulated learning (SRL) practices in listening, particularly within Jordanian EFL undergraduate context. Thus, based on Zimmerman's (2000) three-phase model of self-regulated learning (SRL) (forethought, performance control, and self-reflection), this study investigates the effectiveness of SRL practices on EFL listening comprehension. The researcher employed a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design over two months on 34 first-year English majors at Al-Balqa Applied University - Jordan. The EFL learners were engaged in SRL-based listening practices including goal setting and planning strategies (forethought), monitoring strategy use and concentration during listening tasks (performance control) and assessment of progress to modify subsequent learning (self-reflection). A paired-t-test indicated a statistically significant improvement from the pretest to the posttest ($p < .05$) with a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.04$). The learners who were engaged in self-regulated learning practices demonstrated noticeable gains in identifying relationship between ideas and listening for specific information. This study contributes to the state of art of language learning and suggests that explicit SRL instruction can enhance EFL listening performance and offer practical implications for listening pedagogy in similar contexts.*

Keywords: *self-regulated learning, listening skill, EFL learners, autonomous learner, Zimmerman's model*

About the author: *Rabab Ahmad Mizher is an associate professor at the Department of English Language and Literature, Al-Balqa Applied University (Jordan). She received her PhD in TEFL from Yarmouk University, and her MA in Translation and BA in English Language and Literature from the University of Jordan. Her areas of research are in intelligent computer-assisted language learning (ICALL), TEFL, translation studies, contrastive studies, and teaching translation.*

E-mail: *rabab_mizher@bau.edu.jo*

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0351-0105>

Copyright © 2026 Rabab Ahmad Mizher

Article history: Received: 8 August 2025; Reviewed: 6 May 2026; Revised: 5 June 2026; Accepted: 14 July 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Mizher, R. A. (2026). The Effectiveness of Zimmerman's Self-Regulated Learning Model on Listening Comprehension: A Quasi-Experimental Study with Jordanian EFL Undergraduates. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 30-51. <https://doi.org/10.46687/QALJ2568>

Introduction

Since language is a social interaction, learning a second or foreign language cannot be paused at the end of the formal academic graduation. Persistently, language learners ought to refine their lifelong language learning skills to survive and preserve their image in their professional life, at the workplace, or even informally during social gatherings and at home. To do so, they ought to be innately motivated to know how to learn and then learn. This notion brings to light the fact that the concepts of intrinsic motivation and self-regulated learning (SRL) are interrelated (Nakata, 2010). “The best scenario in this respect is for learners to enjoy what they do, to feel in control of their own learning, ... and to be able to take steps to manage or regulate the tasks they undertake to learn” (Nakata, 2010, p. 2). Zimmerman (2000, p. 14) defines self-regulated learning as the “self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals”. Pintrich (2000, p. 453) well-defined it as “an active, constructive process whereby learners set goals for their learning and then attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior, guided and constrained by their goals and the contextual features in the environment”.

In other words, if language learners understand their learning processes, they will be capable of undertaking their own learning tasks (Nakata, 2010). Moreover, their inclination towards higher levels of language proficiency will be heightened. Language pedagogical researchers and scholars strive hard to build an autonomous learner of English language. English language learners gain benefit “when they feel responsible for, and autonomous in, their own learning” (Nakata, 2010, p. 1). Learners who progress from teacher-dependent (Stage one) to self-directed (Stage four) (Grow, 1991) may exhibit greater post-intervention gains, possibly because they internalize strategies like setting of goals and self-evaluation. Being interdependent, “it is highly likely that both intrinsic motivation and self-regulated learning entail the development of learner autonomy” (Nakata, 2010, p. 2).

The skill of listening comprehension is crucial in language learning, yet it presents significant challenges for learners due to its complex and transitory nature. Challenges like speech’s speed and teacher control over number of listening times establish negative settings for learners (Ozcelik et al., 2020). Likewise, traditional classroom-based listening instruction often lacks the individualized unique support essential for learners to develop autonomy in their listening strategies. Existing research highlights the essential role of the practices of self-regulated learning along with the use of innovative approaches in improving listening proficiency because self-regulated practices may foster autonomy and encourages learners to take control of their listening development (Barjesteh & Ghaseminia, 2019; Hawkins, 2018; Ozcelik et al., 2019). According to Ozcelik et al. (2019) and Zeng and Goh (2018), self-regulated learning and

self-controlled input encouraged metacognitive engagement, allowing learners to become strategic in processing auditory information. Moreover, “The use of metacognitive strategies, such as comprehension monitoring, problem identification, and selective attention appeared to be the significant factor distinguishing the successful from the less successful listener” (Vandergrift, 1997, p. 387). Similarly, Hawkins (2018) underscored that self-directed listening activities enhanced comprehension by promoting repeated exposure, active listening, and self-assessment, in addition to the significance of preview activities and listening strategies (Zhou & Rose, 2021).

Given the significance of the practices of self-regulated learning in learning listening comprehension skill, I tested the following null hypothesis:

H0: There is no significant relationship between the pretest and posttest results because of listening comprehension self-regulated practices/learning

by administering the English learners to a **paired t-test** to gauge the improvement in their listening proficiency level. Then I analyzed whether the difference between pretest and posttest results was statistically significant. I utilized the theoretical framework of Zimmerman’s three-phase self-regulated learning model (2000). It has three distinct stages: Stage One is forethought. This stage serves as a preparatory phase that includes setting of goals, planning of strategies and fostering of motivational beliefs such as outcome expectation. Stage Two is the performance control stage. This stage integrates self-monitoring and strategic engagement all through the task. It is an implementation phase. Listening learners apply the learned strategies during the listening task. It incorporates learner’s self-control like strategy use and concentration in addition to the learners’ self-monitoring where the learners track their own progress. Stage Three is self-reflection. It is an evaluative phase after task completion. English learners reflect on their own progress, monitor their success or failure and modify their learning strategies accordingly.

Literature Review

Research has shown that learners who are engaged in structured self-regulated practices demonstrate higher levels of English proficiency compared to those who relied solely on traditional classroom teaching methods (Hawkins, 2018; Ozcelik et al., 2019; Ozcelik et al., 2020; Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1988). Through SRL practices, students activate their cognitive abilities, their motivation, and their behavioral activities to achieve their academic goals (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1988). This process includes setting of goals, self-monitoring, environmental structuring, and self-evaluation that, according to Hawkins (2018), form the core of autonomous learning. Teacher ratings and achievement tests validate SRL, which includes cyclical phases of planning, execution, and reflection as described by Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons’ model (1988). According to Zimmerman and

Martinez-Pons (1988) students' self-reported strategies such as rehearsing and organizing practices showed a high degree of agreement ($r = .70$) with teacher ratings of academic self-regulation.

Focusing more specifically on listening skill, several studies have assessed the impact of SRL on listening comprehension (Alhabahba et al., 2016; Barjesteh & Ghaseminia, 2019; Hawkins, 2018; Ozcelik et al., 2019; Ozcelik et al., 2020; Rababah et al., 2023; Zeng & Goh, 2018; Zhou & Rose, 2021). Zeng and Goh (2018) applied a paired *t*-test to gauge the efficiency of SRL. The results revealed statistically significant gains in listening comprehension. Learners who showed high proficiency in English skills with SRL practices focused on directed attention and problem solving during extensive listening classes and achieved significant posttest results compared to low-achieving learners. Zeng and Goh (2018) pointed out that successful listeners utilize the strategies of planning, monitoring, and evaluating listening tasks, all of which considerably align with SRL practices. Students' awareness of their metacognitive strategies, measured via the Metacognitive Awareness of Listening Questionnaire (MALQ; Vandergrift et al., 2006), correlated with better performance, suggesting that SRL enhanced listening learning (Joo & Lee, 2025; Zeng & Goh, 2018). Furthermore, authors, such as Hawkins (2018), have also shown that the listening learners who have practiced self-regulated learning accomplish assessable improvement in both objectives of identifying specific details and understanding the main ideas in a listening task. They also suggested that learners who were engaged in SRL showed measurable improvement in listening skills compared to those who do not (Hawkins, 2018).

By the same token, Zhou and Rose (2021) have applied Zimmerman's three-phase self-regulated model (2000) on Chinese first year students to examine how listening students self-regulate their learning to improve their listening proficiency level. Students were engaged in a cycle of self-regulatory learning to tackle the shift from Mandarin in high school to English medium instructions (EMI) in tertiary education. The researchers have used **Zimmerman's three-phase self-regulated learning model that has three stages:** forethought, performance, and self-reflection. According to their results, self-regulated learning helps the critical developmental stage of students to cope up with the new demands in tertiary education. In particular, their results revealed the augmented role of previewing activities in comprehending English audios, underlining the salience of forethought-phase strategies. Their findings also reinforced the role of listening comprehension metacognitive strategies such as problem solving and directed attention. Finally, their results revealed that students with higher self-efficacy levels (highly motivated) were more prone to be engaged in SRL practices.

In a comparable manner, Barjesteh and Ghaseminia (2019) analyzed the impact of pre-listening activities like video and podcast on the learners' listening comprehension, which resonated with the forethought stage proposed by Zimmerman's learning model (2000). The key findings proved that the video-based pre-listening activities enhanced listening learners' gap-filling listening task. In general, their findings support the incorporation of authentic and multi-modal content (video and audio) to magnify EFL learners listening comprehension. However, the study of Ozcelik et al. (2019) provided a robust and empirical evidence on SRL role in enhancing EFL learners listening comprehension. The researchers entitled the learners with full physical control over the listening input. For instance, listening learners may rewind or pause the audio. The key findings of the study proved that students were capable of employing metacognitive strategies to address any immediate comprehension difficulties. Obviously, the approach of this study echoed the performance control stage in Zimmerman's learning model (2000) where EFL learners observed and adapted their practices during the listening task. Although Barjesteh and Ghaseminia (2019) and Ozcelik et al. (2019) did not utilize Zimmerman's SRL model, their findings exposed the learners' SRL practices and metacognitive behaviors like the adaptive strategy and self-monitoring.

As for the Jordanian context, teaching and learning listening in Jordan did not receive high attention among EFL researchers. The status of English language education in Jordan has been widely reviewed for institutional limitations, such as teacher-centered pedagogy, outdated curricula (Alhabahba et al., 2016), or learners' lack of strategy training (Al-Maani et al., 2024). According to Alhabahba et al. (2016), Jordanian EFL learners face challenges while learning listening skills because of the use of traditional teacher-centered approach and lack quality authentic resources and appropriate teacher education in most public schools. Yet technological and innovative methods like mobile-assisted language learning were shown to be effective in improving listening proficiency. Rababah et al. (2023) findings revealed that incorporating audio resources in mobile technology led to better learners' listening performance in addition to vocabulary development. According to Rababah et al. (2023), Jordanian EFL learners scores in the experimental group were better compared to those in the control group.

In light of the reviewed literature above, it is noticeable that research on learning of listening comprehension using SRL practices is growing. Nonetheless, listening comprehension remains under-represented in SRL research relative to other skills. Zhang and Zou (2024) review 58 studies, and only five studies examined listening proficiency. It is also evident that there is a consensus on the challenging nature of listening comprehension for EFL learners (Ozcelik et al., 2020; Vandergrift, 1999). Consequently, SRL, which is grounded in Zimmerman's (2000) three-phase model, is proposed as a framework to improve the learning of listening comprehension. This model was developed

and theorized mainly within U.S. educational psychology (Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman, 2000) and extended in Japanese applied linguistics (Nakata, 2010) and U.S. English language program contexts (Hawkins, 2018).

Moreover, empirical studies on SRL have been examined and applied across various non-Arab contexts such as China (Zeng & Goh, 2018; Zhou & Rose, 2021), Iran (Barjesteh & Ghasemina, 2019), Turkey (Ozcelik et al., 2019) and Belgium (Ozcelik et al., 2020). Additionally, the field of SRL itself regards contextual replication crucial; Ozcelik et al. (2020) took their Turkish study to Belgium for the same reason. With regard to Jordan, research on the education of English language skills documents low proficiency, teacher-centered and textbook-oriented approaches, along with minimal focus on strategy teaching (Alhabahba et al., 2016). Some research papers have addressed the technology-based approaches to listening instruction rather than metacognitive or strategy-based approaches such as SRL (Rababah et al., 2023). Thus, this research adds to a relatively small but growing body of research on SRL in EFL listening comprehension by providing empirical evidence from an under-examined context: first-year English majors at a Jordanian university.

Methodology

This paper employed a quasi-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design with 34 students. The pre and posttest scores serve as the outcome measure, whereas the self-regulated learning practices constituted the intervention. The researcher used a paired-samples *t*-test to determine whether the mean scores differed significantly from pretest to posttest, and Cohen's *d* was computed to estimate the magnitude of the effect. The researcher administered both tests under identical conditions – the same environment, instructions and equipment.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to the administration of the pretest, the researcher informed the students orally that this test was for research purposes. The students' consent was received by agreeing to the take the test. They have the choice not to take it since participation was voluntary and it had not any effect on their course grade or evaluation. Moreover, students indicated their consent by writing their names willingly on the back of the test sheet. They were also free to remain anonymous or decline participation as a whole. As a result, students completed the test without grade pressure that supported the validity of the scores.

The Participants

The study sample consisted of 34 students who were studying in the English Language and Literature Department in Salt College for Human Sciences at

BAU, a public university in Jordan. Admission to public universities is governed by a competitive national Unified Admission platform administered through the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The participants had specifically chosen to major in English Language and Literature rather than any other discipline. Participation was voluntary; as a result, the sample was self-selected. The researcher delivered orientation sessions about the procedures of the experiment. Then she gave the students the freedom whether to write their names or remain anonymous. If the students were willing to take part, they may write their names on the back of the test sheet. As a result, 34 students have written their names on the pre and posttest sheets, and they became later the study sample. Figure 1 clarifies their gender demographic distribution, taking into consideration that in Jordan, these percentages are common among language learners at the Bachelor of Arts level (BA), particularly in public universities.

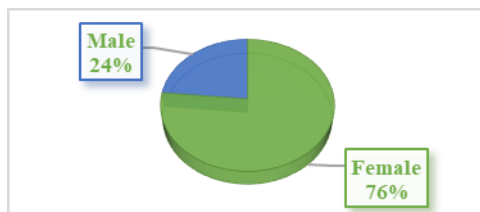


Figure 1. *Demographic Distribution for Gender*

The sample sat for the pre and posttests. Prior to administering the test to the study sample, the researcher administered the test to a pilot sample of 50 students. The results of the 50 students served to define the validity and the reliability of the instrument (explained below). Finally, to guarantee the homogeneity of the participants, the researcher asked the students to write down their high-school average and their English course grades from their high-school certificate. The overall average of high school grades among the study sample was 84.7 out of 100, while the overall average of English grades among the study sample was 152.30 out of 200.

The Instrument

The researcher used IELTS listening sample task (IELTS academic test) as a test. Furthermore, the reliability and validity of the test were calculated (see below). The test (Appendix 1) consisted of two questions. The first question consisted of four items where students match the description of a hotel to the hotel's name. The second question was a short answer where students have to write six short answers of no more than three words to three questions. Spelling mistakes were not taken into consideration unless the mistake affected comprehension. These two questions reflected the following learning objectives:

a. Recognize relationship between ideas. Students match spoken content to categories.

Question Type: Match

b. Identify specific information. Students listen to missing words or phrases.

Question Type: Short Answer

Reliability of the instrument: The researcher calculated the Cronbach's alpha coefficient by applying the study test to a pilot study which is of (50) respondents from outside the main study sample. The researcher also applied the test to the study sample of (34) respondents, as the Cronbach's alpha values are acceptable if they exceed the value (0.70) according to (Hair et al., 2010) as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. *The reliability by Cronbach Alpha test*

Statements	N = 50	N = 34
10	0.744	0.703

Table 1 showed that Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the total degree for the pilot study (n=50) was 0.744. Moreover, Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the total degree for the main sample was 0.703, which is acceptable because it is more than the value of (0.70) (Hair et al., 2010).

Validity of the instrument: Although the test is IELTS listening task (IELTS academic test), the researcher used discriminant and difficulty coefficients to show the validity of the test. The researcher calculated the difficulty and discrimination coefficients for each question of each item for the pilot study sample of 50 male and female students. The correct answer for the question that obtains a discrimination coefficient higher than 0.30 was considered highly appropriate and the question that obtains a discrimination coefficient within the range of 0.20-0.30 is considered acceptable. Additionally, the question that obtains a discrimination coefficient less than 0.20 or with a negative degree was considered unacceptable and inappropriate. Furthermore, if the difficulty coefficient for the question is within the range of 0.30-0.70, it is considered an appropriate and good question. However, if the difficulty coefficient is less than the value of 0.30, it is inappropriate. Finally, though item 10 obtained a difficulty coefficient of 0.280, which is marginally below the 0.30 threshold, it was retained because it discriminated strongly between high-and-low-performing students (discrimination coefficient = 0.556) and showed high construct validity ($r = 0.668$, $p < 0.01$). Table 2 below shows the results of the difficulty and discrimination coefficients for each item of the test:

Table 2. *Validity of difficulty and discriminant coefficients (n = 50)*

Question Type	No. of item	Difficulty coefficient	Discriminant coefficient
Matching	1	0.300	0.226
	2	0.380	0.257
	3	0.480	0.298
	4	0.680	0.292
Fill in the blank	5	0.500	0.344
	6	0.400	0.634
	7	0.360	0.415
	8	0.500	0.661
	9	0.420	0.394
	10	0.280	0.556

Furthermore, the researcher used Pearson Correlation to display the relationship between each item degree with total degree to show the construct validity of the test for pilot study as shown in Table 3

Table 3. *Pearson Correlation Coefficient to show the Construct validity (n=50)*

Question Type	No. of item	(R)
Matching	1	.386**
	2	.424**
	3	.464**
	4	.449**
Fill in the blank	5	.505**
	6	.738**
	7	.559**
	8	.761**
	9	.545**
	10	.668**

**** Significant at (0.01)**

It was noted from Table 3 that the values of the correlation coefficients between the test items and the total score exceeded the value of 0.30, which is considered a criterion for accepting the questions as indicated by Pallant (2005). It also showed that all the questions measure the same characteristic, which indicates the validity of the test's construction, and that the scale actually consists of 10 questions.

Procedures of the treatment

The researcher applied the following procedures:

1. The pilot sample (50 students) sat the pretest (see Appendix 1)
2. The study sample (34 students) sat the pretest (see Appendix 1)
3. Over a two-month period, the researcher guided the students to self-regulatory practices that are based on the metacognitive listening sequence of planning, monitoring, and evaluating (Goh & Vandergrift, 2022) outside the classroom through the following:

- A preparatory phase (Forethought): The researcher delivered two orientation lectures to help students set their goals, understand their learning preferences and employ them. In particular, students practice listening to an online listening task preferably on the British Council's website (<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org>) and ESL-lab (<https://www.esl-lab.com>) (see Appendix 4). These two sites offer free online activities that range from beginners to advanced levels. The beginners/ easy level helps low achievers to gain confidence. Other sites include but are not limited to BBC Learning English (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/learnenglish>), American English (<https://www.americanenglish.state.gov>), and TED (<https://www.ted.com>). The researcher encouraged students to self-practice the same audio until they master it. Such rehearsal repetition built familiarity and confidence with the listening content.
- An implementation phase (Performance) students rehearse listening to the same task as many times as it requires mastering the content and answering the questions confidently. They may refer to the script if necessary. The researcher provided the students with a progress sheet (see Appendix 2) for them to monitor their own progress and daily routine practice of listening. Frequency of repetition was learner-dependent by design, a choice that matches the self-regulated nature of the intervention. Each student determined the frequency, ranging from once a week to daily. This scheduling autonomy is a feature of self-regulated learning rather than a procedural inconsistency. All 34 participants completed and returned their progress sheets (some submitting two). The progress sheets documented the listening materials used, their level, the number of repetitions and the duration of practice. These progress sheets served as evidence that self-regulated practices were carried out as intended.
- An evaluative phase (Self-reflection): Students resay/ summarize the content of the audio verbally -as a must- to their peer, friend, sibling, parents or any listener or in writing. For the researcher, this is the most important step. The guiding principle is a productive recall that students needed to produce the content of an audio to make sure that they have mastered it. In this way, the students gear their own progress and reflect on their own learning strategies.

4. The study sample (34 students) sat for the posttest (see Appendix 3) and results are statistically calculated. The study sample scores are dependent. Each pretest score corresponds to the posttest score of the same student (paired *t*-test). There are no extreme outliers.

Findings

A paired-samples *t*-test showed a statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest scores ($p < .05$). The null hypothesis, which stated that there are no statistically significant differences at the level of matching and specific information and total degree according to self-regulatory learning intervention, was therefore rejected. Table 4 provides full illustration of the findings.

Table 4. Paired sample *t*-test results

	Test	Mean	N _o	SD	M ~diff~	T value	df	p	d
Pair 1	Matching - pre	1.44	34	0.89	-0.76	-3.772	33	< .001	0.65
	Matching - post	2.21	34	1.30					
Pair 2	Specific - pre	2.62	34	1.99	-0.88	-4.731	33	< .001	0.81
	Specific - post	3.50	34	1.96					
Pair 3	Total - pre	4.06	34	2.37	-1.65	-6.083	33	< .001	1.04
	Total - post	5.71	34	2.95					

*Significant at level of 0.05

The results in Table 4 showed that the mean score on the matching question rose from the pretest ($M = 1.44$, $SD = 0.89$) to the posttest ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 1.30$). This improvement was statistically significant, $t(33) = -3.77$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.65$, which represents a medium-to-large effect in favor of the posttest. As for the specific information question, the mean score rose from the pretest ($M = 2.62$, $SD = 1.99$) to the posttest ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.96$). Similarly, this improvement was statistically significant, $t(33) = -4.73$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.81$, which represents a large effect in favor of the posttest. Finally, the total score rose from the pretest ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 2.37$) to the posttest ($M = 5.71$, $SD = 2.95$). This improvement is also statistically significant, $t(33) = -6.08$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.04$, representing a large effect in favor of the posttest as shown in Figure 2 below.

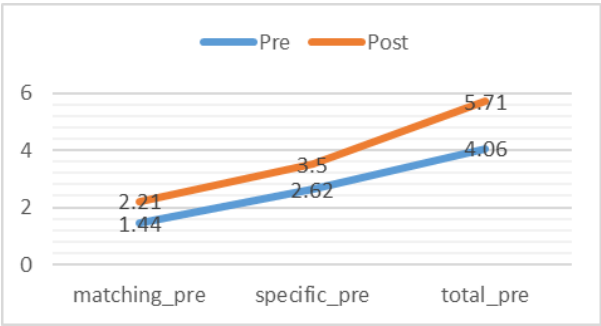


Figure 2. Self-regulatory treatment variance in favor of the posttest

Figure 2 displays the improvement across the three measures. The listening comprehension scores of the participants improved from the pretest to the posttest on the two types of questions: the matching question and the specific information question, along with the total score. In each type of question, the paired-samples *t*-test indicated that the improvement was statistically significant as the posttest scores exceeded the pretest scores. Moreover, as reported in Table 4 above, effect sizes were large on the specific-information question and ranged from medium to large on the matching question. The total effect size was also large on the total score.

Discussion

The scores of the posttest were statistically significant with large effect size on total scores. These findings aligned with previous scholarly articles (Alhabahba et al., 2016; Barjesteh & Ghasemina, 2019; Hawkins, 2018; Ozcelik et al., 2019; Rababah et al., 2023; Zeng & Goh, 2018; Zhou & Rose, 2021) that reported the prominent role and effectiveness of SRL in improving English learner listening comprehension. Moreover, Xu and Luo (2024), who conducted a quasi-experimental study on self-regulated learning listening intervention, found a large effect size for SRL listening comprehension instruction, which is in line with the large total-score effect of the current study. Similarly, Irgin and Ilgun-Dibek (2026), using a controlled design, found that the cognitive and metacognitive listening strategy intervention significantly improved young EFL learners' listening comprehension with large effect size. These findings are also consistent with the conception of SRL as a behavioural and cognitive process that enabled English learners to manage their learning experiences autonomously (Nakata, 2010; Zimmerman, 1990). Finally, using Zimmerman's cyclical three-phase model on Chinese EFL learners, Yang et al. (2025) reached compatible results finding that SRL intervention produced significant gains in English proficiency and strategic competence. Importantly, though, research studies by Irgin and Ilgun-Dibek (2026) and by Xu and Luo (2024) provide causal evidence compared to the present one-group design. Accordingly, the findings of the current study indicate associations rather than established causation.

Specifically, listening learners' scores have improved in the matching and specific information (fill-in-the blank) questions. Their improvement ranges from medium-to-large and to large. This progress may reflect their ability to spot the relationships between ideas (matching question) in addition to their ability to identify specific information (fill-in-the blank question). Such improvement suggested that SRL practices as the repeated exposure and focused listening may have promoted the learners' cognitive engagement and enabled them to process the audio content effectively and improve their detailed listening comprehension skills. The self-determined practice frequency reflects a core assumption of self-regulated learning: learners differ in prior knowledge and processing demands, so the number of repetitions required to master a listening task varies across individuals. These results resonate with Hawkins (2018) and Zeng and Goh (2018) who indicated that metacognitive strategies augmented the ability of listening learners to extract specific details from audio content.

The significance of these findings is even clearer when considered against the Jordanian EFL context. Jordanian EFL instruction is limited in strategy teaching, for it is characterized by being textbook-oriented and teacher-centered (Alhabahba et al., 2016). Al-Maani et al. (2024), using think-aloud protocols, have also found that language-learning planning was only utilized by advanced

EFL learners, and their participants have also reported the absence of explicit instruction in learning strategies. Thus, this study's SRL intervention may be especially valuable to EFL learners who do not have prior strategy training. As a result, the gains of self-regulation and the deliberate planning may fill the gap in strategic teaching of listening comprehension in Jordanian EFL context.

Conclusion and Implications

This study provided empirical evidence that SRL practices were associated with improvement in listening comprehension, with effect sizes ranging from medium-to-large to large. The paired samples *t*-test results indicated that the engagement in SRL practices was associated with improved listening comprehension, which may suggest that learners could gain confidence and obtain a more autonomous and self-directed approach to their learning. The scores of English listening learners who were engaged in SRL practices were significantly higher (posttest vs pretest) in identifying relationships between ideas and listening for specific information. These results suggest that English instructors and curriculum designers could incorporate SRL practices in teaching listening and foster autonomous learning. English instructors could encourage learners to set their own goals, monitor their progress, and reflect on their own learning. In light of these findings, curriculum designers along with educators may consider integrating self-regulated strategies to improve language learning in general and listening skill in particular. Finally, future research could investigate the effectiveness of the teaching and training of SRL practices in enhancing English learners' other language skills.

Limitations

First, this study used a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group. Accordingly, though the gains were substantial (with effect sizes ranging from medium-to-large to large), they cannot be attributed with full certainty to the intervention alone because other factors cannot be ruled out, such as familiarity with the posttest and the participants' regular English courses that they were taking during the same period. Second, the participants were drawn from one public university and a specific group – first year English majors – so the gains may not transfer to learners in other contexts or proficiency levels. Future research could address these limitations and use controlled designs with larger or more varied samples across different proficiency levels. Finally, this study measured the product (whether the scores improved) not the process (how the learners experienced the SRL intervention). Ghanipour and Bozorgian (2025) found that even an effective metacognitive/SRL intervention is subject to challenges such as cognitive load or unfamiliarity with strategies. Consequently, future work could examine the process dimension and the related difficulties.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

No generative AI tools were used in the preparation or writing of this research paper.

References

- Alhababha, M. M., Pandian, A., & Mahfoodh, O. H. A. (2016). English language education in Jordan: Some recent trends and challenges. *Cogent Education*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1156809>
- Al-Maani, A., AlAbabneh, B., Mashaqba, B., & Huneety, A. (2024). Investigating second language learning strategies using think aloud protocols: Evidence from Jordanian EFL learners. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 10(2), 12–22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.32601/ejal.10202>
- Barjesteh, H., & Ghasemini, M. (2019). Effects of pre-listening task types on the development of EFL learners' listening comprehension ability. *International Journal of Listening*, 37, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2019.1654867>
- Ghanipour, F., & Bozorgian, H. (2025). EFL learners' challenges in metacognitive listening intervention. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, (0)1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.12862>
- Goh, C. C., & Vandergrift, L. (2022). *Teaching and learning second language listening: Metacognition in action* (2nd ed.) Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429287749>
- Grow, G. (1991). Teaching learners to be self-directed. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 41(3), 125–149. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001848191041003001>
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., & Tatham, R. L. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th ed.). Pearson.
- Hawkins, W. M. (2018). Self-directed learning as related to learning strategies, self-regulation, and autonomy in an English language program: A local application with global implications. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 8(2), 445–469. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2018.8.2.12>
- Irgin, P., & Ilgun-Dibek, M. (2026). The effect of listening strategy intervention on the development of young learners' L2 listening skills. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.70136>
- Joo, D., & Lee, J. (2025). The effect of task complexity on young EFL learners' listening comprehension and metacognitive awareness. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 35(3), 1314–1325. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.12702>
- Nakata, Y. (2010). Toward a framework for self-regulated language learning. *TESL Canada Journal*, 27(2), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.18806/tesl.v27i2.1047>

- Ozcelik, H. N., Van den Branden, K., & Van Steendam, E. (2019). Listening Comprehension Problems of FL Learners in a Peer Interactive, Self-Regulated Listening Task. *International Journal of Listening*, 37(2), 142–155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2019.1659141>
- Ozcelik, H. N., Van den Branden, K., & Van Steendam, E. (2020). Alleviating Effects of Self-Regulating the Audio on Listening Comprehension Problems. *International Journal of Listening*, 38(2), 89–104. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10904018.2020.1788946>
- Pallant, J. (2005). *SPSS survival manual: A step-by-step guide to data analysis using SPSS for Windows (Version 12)* (2nd ed.). Open University Press.
- Pintrich, P. R. (2000). The role of goal orientation in self-regulated learning. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 451–502). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012109890-2/50043-3>
- Rababah, L. M., Al-Khawaldeh, N., & Rababah, M. A. (2023). Mobile-assisted listening instructions with jordanian audio materials: A pathway to EFL proficiency. *International Journal of Interactive Mobile Technologies (iJIM)*, 17(21), 129–144. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijim.v17i21.42789>
- Vandergrift, L. (1997). The comprehension strategies of second language (French) listeners: A descriptive study. *Foreign Language Annals*, 30, 387–409. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1997.tb02362.x>
- Vandergrift, L. (1999). Facilitating second language listening comprehension: Acquiring successful strategies. *ELT Journal*, 53(3), 168–176. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/53.3.168>
- Vandergrift, L., Goh, C. C. M., Mareschal, C. J., & Tafaghodtari, M. H. (2006). The metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire: Development and validation. *Language Learning*, 56(3), 431–462. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2006.00373.x>
- Xu, J., & Luo, K. (2024). Immersing learners in English listening classroom: Does self-regulated learning instruction make a difference? *Applied Linguistics Review*, 15(1), 219–240. <https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2021-0171>
- Yang, T., Wang, Y., & Yang, C. (2025). Unravelling the effectiveness of self-regulated language learning intervention on Chinese EFL Students' motivation, strategic competence and English proficiency: A mixed methods study. *British Educational Research Journal*, 51(1) 4–24. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.4061>
- Zeng, Y., & Goh, C. (2018). A self-regulated learning approach to extensive listening and its impact on listening achievement and metacognitive

- awareness. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 8(2), 193–218. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2018.8.2.2>
- Zhang, R., & Zou, D. (2024). Self-regulated second language learning: A review of types and benefits of strategies, modes of teacher support, and pedagogical implications. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 37(5–6), 720–765. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2022.2055081>
- Zhou, S., & Rose, H. (2021). Self-regulated listening of students at transition from high school to an English medium instruction (EMI) transnational university in China. *System*, 103, Article 102644. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102644>
- Zimmerman, B., & Martinez-Pons, M. (1988). Construct validation of a strategy model of student self-regulated learning. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 80(3), 284–290. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.80.3.284>
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In M. Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (Eds.), *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 13–39). Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-012109890-2/50031-7>

Appendix 1

Al-Balqa Applied University
Salt College for Human Sciences
Department of English Language and Literature
10 & 11 March 2024

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Pre-Test

Dear Student

By consenting to answer this exam, you will contribute to enhancing understanding and knowledge in the learning and teaching of listening to EFL learners at the university.

عزيزي الطالب / عزيزتي الطالبة:
باجابتك على هذا الامتحان انت توافق / توافقين على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة و التي ستساهم في تعزيز الفهم
والمعرفة في مجال تعلم و تعليم مهارة الاستيعاب السمعي لطلبة اللغة الانجليزية في جامعة البلقاء التطبيقية

المعدل في الثانوية العامة: _____ علامة مبحث اللغة الانجليزية في الثانوية العامة: _____
المستوى الدراسي في الجامعة: _____ الجنس: _____

LISTEN TO THE AUDIOS, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

Part 1: Which hotel matches each des

1. _____ is in a rural area.
2. _____ only opened recently.
3. _____ offers facilities for business functions.
4. _____ has an indoor swimming pool.

Part 2: Write no more than three words and/or a number for each answer.

➤ What **TWO** factors can make social contact in a foreign country difficult?

1. _____
2. _____

➤ Which types of community group does the speaker give examples of?

Theatre

3. _____
4. _____

➤ In which **TWO** places can information about community activities be found?

5. _____
6. _____

The End of the Questions

Appendix 2

Al-Balqa Applied University

Salt College for Human Sciences

Department of English Language and Literature

2023/2024

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Progress Sheet

مسا ا:

[illegible]

Appendix 3

Al-Balqa Applied University
Salt College for Human Sciences
Department of English Language and Literature
May 2023/2024

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Post-Test

Dear Student

By consenting to answer this exam, you will contribute to enhancing understanding and knowledge in the learning and teaching of listening to EFL learners at the university.

عزيزي الطالب / عزيزتي الطالبة:
باجابتك على هذا الامتحان انت توافق / توافقين على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة و التي ستساهم في تعزيز الفهم
والمعرفة في مجال تعلم و تعليم مهارة الاستيعاب السمعي لطلبة اللغة الانجليزية في جامعة البلقاء التطبيقية

المعدل في الثانوية العامة: _____ علامة مبحث اللغة الانجليزية في الثانوية العامة: _____
المستوى الدراسي في الجامعة: _____ الجنس: _____

LISTEN TO THE AUDIOS, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

Part 1: Which hotel matches each description?

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. _____ is in a rural area. | A. The Bridge Hotel |
| 2. _____ only opened recently. | B. Carlton House |
| 3. _____ offers facilities for business functions. | C. The Imperial |
| 4. _____ has an indoor swimming pool. | D. The Majestic |

Part 2: Write no more than three words and/or a number for each answer.

➤ What **TWO** factors can make social contact in a foreign country difficult?

1. _____ 2. _____

➤ Which types of community group does the speaker give examples of?

Theatre 3. _____ 4. _____

➤ In which **TWO** places can information about community activities be found?

5. _____ 6. _____

The End of the Questions

Appendix 4

List of Online Listening Resources

- American English. (n.d.). *American English*. U.S. Department of State. Retrieved March 12, 2024, from <https://americanenglish.state.gov>
- BBC Learning English. (n.d.). *BBC Learning English*. Retrieved March 12, 2024, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/learnenglish>
- British English (n.d.). *LearnEnglish*. British Council. Retrieved March 12, 2024, from <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/listening>
- Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab (n.d.). *Randall's ESL Cyber Listening Lab*. Retrieved March 12, 2024, from <https://www.esl-lab.com>
- TED. (n.d.). *TED*. Retrieved March 12, 2024, from <https://www.ted.com>

THE ROLE OF LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL MEANS OF MODALITY IN REALISING INTENTIONALITY OF MEDIA DISCOURSE

S. Rajeswari

Gokaraju Rangaraju Institute of Engineering and Technology, Hyderabad, India

Abstract: *This study investigates the contribution of lexical and grammatical modality devices towards conveying intentionality in media discourse through a comparative analysis of feature journalism articles from The Times of India (TOI) and The Los Angeles Times (The LA Times). Mixed-methods corpus-assisted discourse analysis was employed on 20 climate feature articles. There were 85 lexical modal markers and 81 grammatical markers identified in the dataset. Findings show that TOI employs more epistemic modals such as “may” and “could” (over 50% of its modal verbs) and passive voice (15 times), indicative of a conservative, fact-reporting tone. The LA Times, on the other hand, uses more deontic modals (must, should) and evaluative adverbs (nine compared to three for TOI), and recurring conditional clauses (14 times), connoting urgency and commanding force. These patterns demonstrate how modality is not only a semantic category but also a rhetorical tool that resonates with journalistic intentionality, building persuasion, hedging, and depersonalization.*

Keywords: *modality, intentionality, media discourse, climate change journalism, corpus-assisted discourse analysis*

About the author: Dr. S. Rajeswari is working as Associate Professor of English in the Department of Humanities and Sciences, Gokaraju Rangaraju Institute of Engineering and Technology, Hyderabad, Telangana, India. She obtained an M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur. She has 25 years of academic experience. She prepared English study material for an engineering course. She was the course writer for OU CDE and prepared video lessons for EMMREC and EFLU. She has published 21 research papers in various national and international journals and presented papers at several national and international seminars and Conferences. She has attended workshops, symposia, FDPs, and online certification courses in related areas. She teaches English, English for Technical Communication, English Language Communication Skills, and Advanced English Language Communication Skills Lab to enhance employability skills among the students.

E-mail: rajishankar96@gmail.com

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2952-800X>

Copyright © 2026 S. Rajeswari

Article history: Received: 3 September 2025; Reviewed: 22 May 2026; Revised: 16 June 2026; Accepted: 20 June 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Rajeswari, S. (2026). The role of lexical and grammatical means of modality in realising intentionality of media discourse. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 52-70. <https://doi.org/10.46687/IPMX1299>

Introduction

Media discourse is at the center of constructing public realities and shaping collective opinion. Feature reporting directs readers toward certain interpretations of events, actors, and policy decisions through selective framing, lexical choices, and syntactic structure. In the contemporary information environment, such framing is further amplified through digital and social media, making the linguistic construction of meaning a powerful influence on public understanding (Wike et al., 2022). One of the principal linguistic mechanisms through which media discourse achieves this framing is modality. By expressing varying degrees of certainty, obligation, possibility, and evaluation, modal expressions influence how readers interpret events and assess the credibility of information. In linguistics, modality is regarded as one primary resource for marking a speaker's or writer's attitude, degree of commitment, and relationship to truth.

Modal expressions play a central role in persuasive and evaluative positioning by allowing journalists to calibrate certainty, obligation, and stance. Modality is extremely wide-ranging, from expressions of epistemic certainty and probability (e.g., *may*, *might*, *likely*) to expressions of deontic obligation and permission (e.g., *must*, *should*, *ought to*). It also includes grammatical resources such as conditionals, mood, and tense or aspect choice, which influence the mode of presentation of propositions to readers. More recent studies, though, have found that epistemic markers are likely to operate not only as semantic qualifiers but as deliberate rhetorical devices used to guide interpretation (Míguez, 2022). Feature articles are particularly rich in modal expressions because they combine factual reporting with interpretation, evaluation, and commentary. Previous studies have shown that modality is especially prominent in interpretive journalistic genres where writers negotiate authority and stance (Hyland, 2005; Rantsudu & Bartlett, 2024). Here, modality serves to do more than indicate levels of certainty: it builds authorial credibility, controls the threat of challenge, and directs readers towards intended senses. Corpus- and discourse-based studies have demonstrated that modality in journalism contributes to the construction of ideological positions and persuasive goals, appearing in both lexical items (modal verbs, adverbs, adjectives) and grammatical forms (conditional clauses, nominalizations, passive or active voice) (Lijuan & Afzaal, 2024; Rantsudu & Bartlett, 2024).

Although there is substantial research on modality in political speeches, public health communication, and social media discourse (Halliday, 2014; Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 2001; Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2000; Hyland, 2005), relatively few studies have examined how lexical and grammatical modalities are used together in English-language newspaper feature articles across different national media contexts. Even fewer studies explicitly connect these linguistic choices to the discourse-level concept of intentionality, understood here as the

author's communicative aim to influence, persuade, or orient readers toward specific judgments or actions. While recent analyses of climate reporting or pandemic-era journalism illustrate the power of modality, they rarely combine three important aspects: a genre-specific focus on feature journalism, a detailed distinction between lexical and grammatical resources, and a direct link to intentionality. This gap makes it difficult to fully understand how journalists strategically use modal resources across different linguistic levels to achieve persuasive effects (Öhman & Liimatta, 2024; Wu & Wang, 2026).

The present study seeks to address this gap through a corpus-assisted discourse analysis of feature articles from major English-language newspapers representing Indian and American media contexts. Its main aim is to examine how lexical means of modality (such as modal auxiliaries, modal adverbs, modal adjectives, and stance verbs) and grammatical means (such as conditional constructions, mood and voice choices, and tense/aspect modulation) contribute to the realization of intentionality in media discourse. Specifically, the study asks: (1) Which lexical and grammatical modal resources are most frequently used in American feature journalism, and in what contexts? (2) How do these resources function to build authorial stance, weaken or strengthen claims, and guide reader interpretation? (3) Are there consistent patterns across newspapers or thematic frames that suggest systematic rhetorical strategies?

To answer these questions, the study compiles a corpus of feature articles and applies a mixed qualitative–quantitative method. Frequency analysis is used to identify prominent modal markers, followed by close discourse analysis of selected examples to explain how modality supports intentionality. The findings are expected to contribute both to the theoretical understandings of modality as a discourse strategy and to the applied insights into media persuasion that are relevant for media literacy and critical discourse analysis.

Theoretical Framework

Modality in Linguistics

Modality is a core linguistic category that expresses a speaker's or writer's judgment about the likelihood, necessity, obligation, ability, or desirability of a proposition. Traditional typologies identify three main types of modality: epistemic modality (indicating degrees of certainty or belief, e.g., *might*, *probably*, *it is likely that*), deontic modality (indicating obligation, permission, or necessity, e.g., *must*, *should*, *may*), and dynamic modality (indicating ability or disposition, e.g., *can*, *be able to*). Recent studies continue to refine this tripartite model, particularly in discourse-focused research that highlights the pragmatic consequences of different modal types (Rudin, 2025; Yang, 2021).

Foundational scholarship has significantly shaped contemporary understandings of modality and discourse. Halliday's systemic functional framework conceptualizes modality as an interpersonal resource through which speakers negotiate probability, obligation, and evaluation in social interaction (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Lyons distinguishes epistemic modality from deontic modality by emphasizing the relationship between linguistic expression and speaker commitment to truth or necessity (Lyons, 1977), while Palmer further develops modality as a grammaticalized expression of subjectivity and speaker stance (Palmer, 2001). Coates demonstrates how modal auxiliaries function pragmatically in authentic discourse contexts, often conveying ambiguity, politeness, and hedging rather than fixed semantic meanings (Coates, 1983). These theoretical approaches collectively establish modality not merely as a grammatical category but as a discourse-level mechanism for positioning attitudes, authority, and interpersonal relations.

Modality is realised through both lexical and grammatical means. Lexical means include modal auxiliaries (*may, might, must, should*), semi-modals (*need to, have to, be able to*), adverbs and adjectives (*probably, certainly, possible, likely*), and stance verbs (*believe, suggest, claim*). Grammatical means include syntactic constructions and morphosyntactic choices such as conditional clauses, counterfactuals, mood and modality marking (e.g., the subjunctive), voice alternations (active vs. passive), and tense or aspect variation that frames commitments to time and certainty. Importantly, lexical and grammatical resources often interact. For instance, certain modal verbs are regularly paired with conditional structures to produce nuanced stance profiles (Abubakarova et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022).

From a discourse perspective, modality functions less as a purely semantic qualifier and more as a stance-taking resource. Epistemic modals can hedge claims, establish expertise, or create rhetorical distance. Deontic modals can foreground normative judgments or reinforce authority. Grammatical choices such as passive constructions, nominalizations, or conditionals can diffuse responsibility or project possible futures. Taken together, modality operates as a network of lexical and grammatical resources that jointly determine how information is evaluated, attributed, and positioned within discourse (Depraetere & Reed, 2020; Míguez, 2022).

Intentionality in Media Discourse

In media discourse, intentionality refers to the communicative goals that writers or institutions pursue through language choices, such as persuading, orienting readers' evaluations, legitimizing perspectives, or managing contestation. Although intentionality cannot be observed directly, it can be inferred from systematic linguistic patterns, framing devices, and intertextual strategies.

Feature journalism, in particular, is an interpretive and evaluative genre that combines narrative, backgrounding, and commentary. Such texts frequently mobilize linguistic resources to guide readers toward specific interpretations and affective responses (Hendrickx & Vázquez-Herrero, 2024; Opgenhaffen & d’Haenens, 2011).

The concept of intentionality in discourse is also closely connected to pragmatic and critical discourse traditions. Grice’s theory of conversational implicature emphasizes that communicative meaning extends beyond literal semantic content and depends on inferred speaker intentions (Grice, 1975). In media discourse analysis, Fairclough and van Dijk argue that linguistic choices in journalism are ideologically motivated and contribute to the construction of social realities, authority, and power relations (Fairclough, 1995; Van Dijk, 2000). Similarly, Hyland (2005) highlights the role of stance and engagement features in shaping writer–reader interaction, particularly through hedging, boosters, and evaluative language (Hyland, 2005). These perspectives support the present study’s assumption that modality functions strategically in feature journalism to guide interpretation and frame ideological positioning.

Modality plays a central role in this process because it encodes levels of certainty, obligation, and probability that shape the persuasive force of claims. Hard-news reporting relies more on factuality and less on hedges, while feature articles utilize epistemic hedging, evaluative adverbials, and conditionals to achieve a balance of authority and subtlety. Grammatical devices such as passive voice, nominalization, and conditionals also increase intentionality by diffusing responsibility, generalizing claims, or projecting counterfactuals. Recent research documents evidence showing that modalization is one of the main mechanisms through which journalistic texts create evaluative and persuasive effects (Opdahl et al., 2023; Zahidi, 2025).

Previous Studies

In the recent past (2021–2025), modality research has widened to include a wide range of registers. Corpus studies have examined stance-taking patterns and modal use in diverse genres, while psycholinguistic studies have attempted to explain how readers construct modal meaning. Applied studies have investigated modality in sport reporting, health communication, and online news. For example, some studies show how stance-taking is shaped by lexical-grammatical pairings, while others demonstrate how modality interacts with multimodal features in online media (Wang et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2024).

Despite this growing body of work, important gaps remain. Most recent studies focus on social media, multimedia formats, or political speech, rather than on traditional print feature journalism. Others investigate modality at a general level without distinguishing between lexical and grammatical contributions

in a genre-sensitive way. Few studies systematically compare how lexical and grammatical modalities function together in feature articles, even though this genre often makes intentionality more explicit than standard news reporting. Moreover, cross-newspaper or cross-topic analyses that examine how modal strategies vary according to institutional identity or subject matter are still rare. These gaps underscore the need for a focused, mixed-methods study of how Indian and American newspaper feature articles use lexical and grammatical means of modality to realise intentionality. Intentionality is therefore understood in the present study not as direct access to journalists' cognitive intentions, but as the discursive projection of communicative purposes that become observable through recurrent linguistic choices, evaluative positioning, and modal framing strategies. Following Fairclough (1995), van Dijk (2000), and Hyland (2005), intentionality is examined as a textual and interactional phenomenon manifested through discourse rather than as an individual psychological state.

Research Methodology

Corpus Selection

The present study employs a corpus of feature articles from leading newspapers to examine how lexical and grammatical means of modality contribute to the realization of intentionality in media discourse. Feature articles, as opposed to hard news, were selected because they are inherently interpretive, evaluative, and persuasive in nature. They offer a rich linguistic environment where authors strategically deploy modality to encode stance, guide reader interpretation, and manage authority, hedging, or evaluation.

The corpus comprises 20 feature articles published between February 2024 and August 2025, sourced from *The Times of India* and *The Los Angeles Times*. The selection prioritizes articles covering topics with social, environmental, and political significance, including climate change, public policy, and societal challenges. The final corpus size was deemed sufficient for qualitative discourse analysis while remaining manageable for detailed coding of lexical and grammatical features.

Table 1: *Corpus of Feature Articles Analyzed*

No.	Title	Newspaper	Date	Article Reference
1	Sustainability constraints have halved the land available for tree planting	<i>The Times of India</i>	August 30, 2025	(Kamal, 2025b)
2	Climate change added 41 days of dangerous heat in 2024, caused unrelenting suffering	<i>The Times of India</i>	August 30, 2025	(Kamal, 2024)

3	IIT-Madras study shows human activity can alter clouds, shake up climate models	<i>The Times of India</i>	August 27, 2025	(Gohain, 2025)
4	Young showcase talent at climate change competition	<i>The Times of India</i>	August 27, 2025	(n.d., 2025)
5	Hotter, drier, different: How climate change will alter L.A.	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	September 9, 2024	(Smith, 2024a)
6	Column: It's 2024. Time to start acting like climate change actually matters	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	January 4, 2024	(Roth, 2024)
7	Climate impacts in India: Experience, worry, and attribution to global warming	<i>The Times of India</i>	May 30, 2025	(Kamal, 2025a)
8	To fix climate anxiety, we first have to fix individualism	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	September 11, 2024	(Xia, 2024)
9	Year 2024 is on track to be warmest year on record: WMO	<i>The Times of India</i>	November 7, 2024	(Mohan, 2024b)
10	Climate change found to be main driver of worsening drought	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	November 7, 2024	(James, 2024)
11	Half of the world's population endured an extra month of extreme heat due to climate change	<i>The Times of India</i>	May 30, 2025	(n.d., 2025)
12	Will global warming turn L.A. into San Bernardino?	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	August 4, 2024	(Smith, 2024b)
13	Was 2024 hottest year ever on Earth? Weather agencies reveal shocking details	<i>The Times of India</i>	May 30, 2025	(n.d., 2025)
14	Climate California Live 2024 - Los Angeles Times	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	November 2024	(Roth et al., 2024)
15	India's annual mean temperature rose from 25.05°C in 2001 to 25.74°C in 2024	<i>The Times of India</i>	May 30, 2025	(Mohan, 2025)
16	Boiling Point: Not a great year for climate change at the Oscars	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	February 20, 2025	(Roth, 2025)
17	2000 dead, more than \$228 billion lost to top 10 climate disasters in 2024	<i>The Times of India</i>	August 30, 2025	(Mohan, 2024a)
18	Climate scientists hope this new mapping tool helps drive the point home	<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	August 5, 2024	(Fonseca, 2024)
19	Record-breaking global warming grips Earth: An urgent call for action	<i>The Times of India</i>	February 28, 2024	(Bandyopadhyay, 2024)

Analytical Approach

The study adopts a mixed qualitative–quantitative methodology, combining corpus-assisted tools with discourse-analytic techniques to examine how modality contributes to intentionality in feature journalism. The analytical process comprises several interconnected steps, presented in Figure 1, and discussed below.

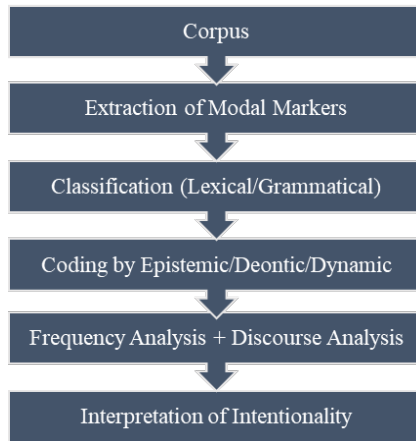


Figure 1. *Corpus-Based Methodology for Investigating Modality and Intentionality*

Step 1: Identification and extraction of modal markers

All instances of modality were systematically identified in the corpus. Lexical markers include modal verbs (*may, might, must, should*), semi-modals (*need to, have to*), modal adverbs (*probably, certainly, definitely*), adjectives (*likely, possible, certain*), and verbs of stance (*assert, suggest, believe*). Grammatical markers encompass syntactic constructions that encode modality indirectly, such as conditional clauses, passive voice, mood variations, and tense/aspect modulation. Each article was read carefully, and occurrences of these markers were highlighted to ensure that both explicit and subtle expressions of modality were captured. This comprehensive extraction is essential because some evaluative or persuasive intentions are realised through subtle grammatical patterns rather than overt lexical items.

Step 2: Classification by modality type

Each identified modal marker was categorized according to epistemic, deontic, or dynamic modality.

- Epistemic markers express the writer's judgment or assessment of probability, certainty, or knowledge, thereby indicating confidence or hedging (e.g., *might, probably, likely*).
- Deontic markers indicate obligation, necessity, or permission, revealing evaluative or normative stance (e.g., *must, should, may*).
- Dynamic markers refer to the ability, capacity, or potential action, typically associated with actors or agents (e.g., *can, be able to*).

This classification allows for systematic comparison of how different types of modality contribute to shaping the author's communicative intent.

Step 3: Corpus-assisted frequency and co-occurrence analysis

After coding, quantitative analysis was conducted using AntConc to generate frequency counts and concordance lines for each lexical and grammatical marker. This step facilitates the recognition of the most frequent modal forms and patterns throughout the corpus. Co-occurrence patterns were also taken into account – whether, say, epistemic modals are more likely to accompany conditional clauses, or deontic modals with passive constructions as a means of softening authorial blame. This stage ensures that the study captures not only freestanding markers but also how they cluster in encoding nuanced evaluative meanings.

Step 4: Discourse-level qualitative analysis

After the quantitative phase, targeted passages were studied qualitatively to see how modal options achieve intentionality. This includes examining:

- How epistemic modals hedge claims or project expertise.
- How deontic modals guide reader judgment or imply normative expectations.
- How grammatical devices (e.g., passives, conditionals, tense shifts) frame events, manage agency, or emphasize consequences.

This step integrates linguistic findings with discourse function, showing how lexical and grammatical modalities collectively construct authorial stance, persuasion, and ideological positioning. Examples are annotated and interpreted to illustrate the strategic deployment of modality in guiding readers' interpretations and aligning with the article's intended communicative effect.

Step 5: Reliability and validation

To enhance reliability, the coding framework was developed using established modality classifications derived from prior linguistic research. Coding decisions were cross-checked repeatedly during the analytical process to ensure consistency between lexical and grammatical categories. Ambiguous instances were revisited in relation to their surrounding discourse context before final classification. In addition, concordance outputs generated through AntConc were manually verified to minimize extraction inconsistencies. Because the study is exploratory and discourse-oriented in nature, emphasis was placed on interpretive consistency rather than automated annotation. The integration of corpus-assisted frequency analysis with qualitative discourse interpretation strengthens methodological triangulation and enhances the validity of the findings.

Tools and Software:

- AntConc for concordance searches, keyword analysis, and frequency counts of lexical and grammatical markers.
- NVivo for qualitative coding, thematic organization, and annotation of modal expressions in context (optional; manual coding used where software was not applicable).

Findings and Analysis

Lexical Means of Modality

Using AntConc, the frequencies of key modal verbs (*must, should, may, might, could*) and modal adverbs (*probably, clearly*) across *The Times of India* and *The Los Angeles Times* feature articles were extracted and tabulated.

The AntConc analysis produced the frequency counts, reported in Table 2:

Table 2. *Comparison of Grammatical Markers*

Newspaper	must	should	may	might	could	Verbs sub- total	probably	clearly	Adverbs subtotal	Total Lexi- cal Modality Markers
<i>The Times of India</i>	8	5	12	3	10	38	2	1	3	41
<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	10	7	8	4	6	35	4	5	9	44
Total	18	12	20	7	16	73	6	6	12	85

This reveals that while both newspapers display similar overall volumes of lexical modal markers, *The Times of India* used more epistemic modals (*may, could*), accounting for over 50% of its modal verbs, indicating a more cautious reporting style that privileges possibility and qualification. In contrast, *The Los Angeles Times* deployed more deontic modals (*must, should*), suggesting a stronger evaluative or persuasive orientation. Modal adverbs appear nearly three times more often in *The Los Angeles Times*, reinforcing its interpretive approach.

Concordance snapshots from AntConc illustrate context:

- *The Los Angeles Times* (Roth, 2024): “We **must** act now, because the window for effective climate action is closing quickly.”
- *The Los Angeles Times* (Xia, 2024): “We **must** find the courage to care, to change, to reimagine the systems that got us into such a devastating crisis in the first place.”

- *The Los Angeles Times* (Xia, 2024): “It can’t just be my dream, or your dream. It **has to** be our collective dream.”
- *The Los Angeles Times* (Smith, 2025): “...governments **should** accelerate investment in clean-energy infrastructure if long-term climate goals are to be achieved.”
- *The Times of India* (Kamal, 2025b): “These findings **may** indicate that, under current constraints, reforestation alone will not compensate for carbon loss.”
- *The Times of India* (Mohan 2025): “The monthly fluctuations **may** suggest shifting rainfall patterns within the monsoon season.”
- *The Times of India* (Mohan 2025): “...which **may** hint at evolving climatic conditions.”
- *The Times of India* (Gohain 2025): “The findings, scientists say, **could** help reduce uncertainties in global climate models.”
- *The Times of India* (Kamal 2025b): “Brazil alone represents one-fifth of the potentially suitable area,” followed by recommendations that wealthier economies **could** strengthen international support through financing and technology transfer.

These examples show how “**must**” and “**should**” deploy a strong directive force in *The LA Times*, whereas “**may**” and “**could**” in *The Times of India* are used as hedges, reflecting greater epistemic restraint.

Grammatical Means of Modality

Using AntConc and manual coding, the results were obtained and reported in Table 3 and visualised in Figure 2:

Table 3. *Use of Linguistic Strategies in Climate Change Reporting*

Newspaper	Conditional Clauses ('if'- 'will')	Passive Structures	Means of Express- ing Futurity ('will be')	Counterfactual ("would ... have")	Total Grammatical Markers
<i>The Times of India</i>	10	15	12	5	42
<i>The Los Angeles Times</i>	14	8	11	6	39
Total	24	23	23	11	81

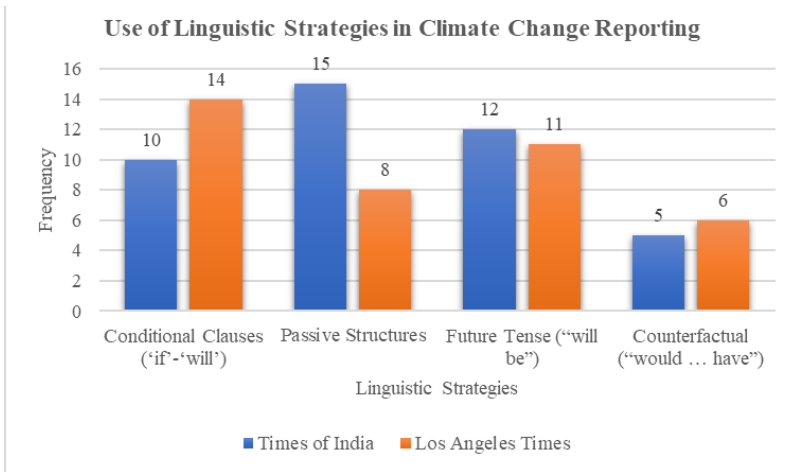


Figure 2. *Use of Linguistic Strategies in Climate Change Reporting*

- Conditional clauses are more frequent in *The LA Times*, consistent with its engagement in speculative framing.
- Passive structures occur more often in *The Times of India*, aligning with its factual, depersonalized reporting style.
- Future tense usage is evenly distributed, reflecting forward-looking discourse in both outlets.
- Counterfactual constructions are modest but significant in both contexts, underscoring hypothetical reasoning.

Sample extracts:

- (*The LA Times*, Smith, 2024) “If global warming continues, Los Angeles will experience unprecedented heatwaves.”
- (*The Times of India*, Kamal, 2025b) “The area where forests can store carbon has been halved, raising concerns.”

These instances highlight how grammatical structures underpin modal meaning: the conditional + will framing in *The LA Times* constructs projected futures; the passive “has been halved” in *The Times of India* emphasizes change in the object rather than the agent.

Contribution to Intentionality

The interplay of lexical and grammatical modality constructs distinct intentional profiles in the two newspapers:

- *The Los Angeles Times* adopts a more engaged, persuasive stance, using directives (*must*, *should*), modal adverbs (*clearly*), and conditional futures to guide reader interpretation toward urgency and action.

- *The Times of India* conveys a more distanced, factual posture, favoring epistemic modals (*may, could*), passive constructions, and neutral futurities without explicit urgency.

These patterns align with the broad rhetorical aims of each outlet: *The LA Times* steers readers toward interpretive engagement, while *The Times of India* emphasizes transparent reporting of scientific or observational findings.

NVivo Qualitative Coding Summary

Modal tokens were assigned NVivo thematic node coding, capturing intentionality: Persuasion, Hedging/Epistemic Caution, Predictive Framing, and Depersonalization. Figure 3 presents node frequency counts.

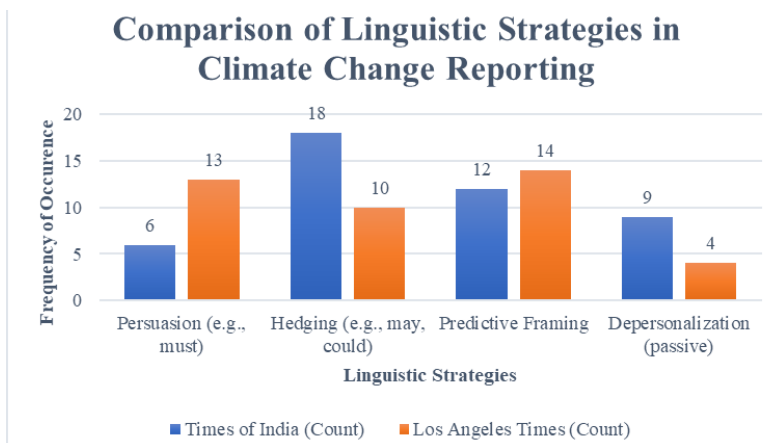


Figure 3. *Comparison of Linguistic Strategies in Climate Change Reporting*

- *The LA Times* contains more persuasion codes than the other analysed paper, reinforcing its directive tone.
- *The Times of India* uses more hedging than *The LA Times* in maintaining its conservative epistemic policy.
- Framing in predictive through future tense and conditionals is strong.
- Depersonalization suggests *The Times of India*'s preference to locate phenomena in the center rather than actors.

Interpretation in discourse:

- *The LA Times*' headlines tend to end with declarations such as, "We must ensure the next generation does not inherit this crisis". These codings indicate a strategic rhetorical action to engage and convince readers.

- *The Times of India* often employs sections such as “These results may reflect broader trends”, which the hedging node identifies, emphasizing authorial restraint and focus on credibility.

Although frequency differences between the two newspapers are not substantial in absolute terms, their distribution reveals distinct discursive tendencies. *The Times of India* exhibits greater reliance on epistemic modality, whereas *The LA Times* employs more deontic modality and evaluative expressions. These tendencies suggest differing rhetorical approaches to climate communication despite the shared thematic focus.

Discussion

The quantitative findings point towards different modality profiles of the two papers. In all, 85 lexical markers were found, with *The Los Angeles Times* having more directive and persuasive statements (44 compared to 41 in *TOI*). Deontic verbs such as *must* (10 instances) and *should* (7 instances) were particularly frequent in *The LA Times*, whereas *The TOI* leaned toward epistemic forms like *may* (12) and *could* (10). These patterns suggest a comparatively stronger tendency toward urgency and evaluative framing in *The LA Times*’ corpus.

These differences are significant because they illustrate how modality functions as a mechanism for constructing distinct forms of journalistic intentionality. The greater use of deontic markers in *The Los Angeles Times* suggests an orientation toward reader engagement and normative evaluation, encouraging audiences to view climate change as an issue requiring action and responsibility. In contrast, the preference for epistemic markers in *The Times of India* reflects a more cautious communicative strategy that foregrounds uncertainty, evidentiality, and informational credibility. Consistent with Halliday’s interpersonal model of language and Hyland’s concept of stance, these modal choices shape the relationship between writer, information, and audience, thereby contributing to different patterns of persuasive and interpretive framing.

Grammatical analysis yielded 81 markers, with *The TOI* favoring passive constructions (15 vs. 8 in *The LA Times*) and *The LA Times* more frequently employing conditional clauses (14 vs. 10 in *The TOI*). Both newspapers used future tense forms at comparable levels (11–12 instances each), suggesting a shared focus on predictive framing. Importantly, the interplay of these markers contributes to intentionality: persuasion codes were more prevalent in *The LA Times*, while hedging and depersonalization dominated in *The TOI*.

These results confirm that lexical and grammatical modalities are not isolated but work in tandem to construct stance and guide interpretation. By quantifying modal distributions, this study illustrates how institutional styles manifest in language use: directive force in *The LA Times* and epistemic restraint in *The*

TOI. Such contrasts indicate that modality may contribute to the construction of intentionality and rhetorical positioning within feature journalism discourse. Given the relatively small exploratory corpus, the quantitative findings are interpreted descriptively rather than as claims of broad statistical generalizability. Frequency contrasts are therefore used primarily to identify discourse tendencies and rhetorical preferences across the two newspaper contexts.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that modality is a critical linguistic resource for realizing intentionality in feature journalism. Quantitative findings – 85 lexical and 81 grammatical markers – reveal systematic contrasts between the two outlets: *The LA Times* foregrounds persuasion and urgency through deontic verbs and conditional futures, while *The TOI* emphasizes caution and objectivity through epistemic modals and passive forms. These patterns suggest that modality functions as an important rhetorical resource in shaping climate discourse and reader interpretation.

The study contributes to linguistic theory and applied media analysis by connecting modality to intentionality in feature journalism. While limited to English-language print articles, future research could extend to multimodal and digital contexts. Ultimately, the findings confirm that modality is not a neutral category but a strategic resource, central to the construction of authority, persuasion, and ideology in media discourse.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author did not use generative artificial intelligence or AI-assisted technologies to generate the scientific content, interpret the findings, or draw conclusions. AI-assisted tools were used only for language editing, grammar checking, and referencing. The author carefully reviewed and takes full responsibility for the final content of the manuscript.

Representative prompts used during manuscript preparation included:

- “Improve the academic style of the following paragraph while preserving its original meaning.”
- “Rewrite this paragraph to reduce textual similarity without changing the scientific content.”
- “Suggest a more appropriate figure caption for this figure.”
- “Write this reference in the journal’s required reference style.”

References

- Abubakarova, B. M., Almurzaeva, K., & Usmanov, T. I. (2022). Lexical means of expressing modality in modern English language. *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Actual Issues of Linguistics, Linguodidactics and Intercultural Communication (TLLIC 2022)*. <https://doi.org/10.5220/0011608900003577>
- Bandyopadhyay, K. (2024). *Record-breaking global warming grips Earth: An urgent call for action*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/home/environment/record-breaking-global-warming-grips-earth-an-urgent-call-for-action/articleshow/108079280.cms>
- Coates, J. (1983). *The semantics of the modal auxiliaries*. Croom Helm.
- Depraetere, I., & Reed, S. (2020). Mood and modality in English. In B. Aarts, J. McMahon & L. Hinrichs (Eds.), *The handbook of English linguistics* (2nd ed., pp. 207–227). Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119540618.ch12>
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Media discourse*. Edward Arnold.
- Fonseca, R. (2024). *Mapping tool shows your city's possible climate in 60 years*. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/california/newsletter/2024-08-05/mapping-tool-look-up-cities-climate-future-essential-california>
- Gohain, M.P. (2025). *IIT-Madras study shows human activity can alter clouds, shake up climate models*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/education/iit-madras-study-shows-human-activity-can-alter-clouds-shake-up-climate-models/articleshow/123545013.cms>
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and semantics: Vol. 3. Speech acts* (pp. 41–58). Academic Press. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004368811_003
- Halliday, M. A. K., & Matthiessen, C. M. I. M. (2014). *Halliday's introduction to functional grammar* (4th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203783771>
- Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. Continuum.
- James, I. (2024). *Climate change found to be main driver of worsening drought*. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2024-11-07/climate-change-driving-western-drought>
- Kamal, N. (2024). *Climate change added 41 days of dangerous heat in 2024, caused unrelenting suffering*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/climate-change-added-41-days-of-dangerous-heat-in-2024-caused-unrelenting-suffering/articleshow/116710774.cms>
- Kamal, N. (2025a). *Climate impacts in India: Experience, worry, and attribution to global warming*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/>

- india/climate-impacts-in-india-experience-worry-and-attribution-to-global-warming/articleshow/121368087.cms
- Kamal, N. (2025b). *Sustainability constraints halve land available for tree planting*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/sustainability-constraints-halve-land-available-for-tree-planting/articleshow/123590212.cms>
- Lijuan, D., & Afzaal, M. (2024). Analyzing modality-mediated ideology in translated Chinese political discourses: An ideological square model approach. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1057/S41599-024-03302-Z>
- Lyons, J. (1977). *Semantics* (Vols. 1–2). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511620614>
- Míguez, V. (2022). On epistemic modality and discourse strategy: Evidence from Galician adverbs. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 201, 32–42. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pragma.2022.09.003>
- Mohan, V. (2024a). *2,000 dead, more than \$228 billion lost to top 10 climate disasters in 2024: Report*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/2000-dead-288bn-lost-to-top-10-climate-disasters-in-24-report/articleshow/116779646.cms>
- Mohan, V. (2024b). *Year 2024 is on track to be warmest year on record: WMO*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/year-2024-is-on-track-to-be-warmest-year-on-record-wmo/articleshow/115060473.cms>
- Mohan, V. (2025). *India's annual mean temperature rise up from 25.05°C in 2001 to 25.74°C in 2024, Electricity generation from renewable sources increased more than three times in 10 years*. The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/indias-annual-mean-temperature-rise-up-from-25-05c-in-2001-to-25-74c-in-2024-electricity-generation-from-renewable-sources-increased-more-than-three-times-in-10-years/articleshow/121665364.cms>
- Öhman, E., & Liimatta, A. (2024). Text length and the function of intentionality: A case study of contrastive subreddits. In M. Hämäläinen, E. Öhman, S. Miyagawa, K. Alnajjar & Y. Bizzoni (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference on Natural Language Processing for Digital Humanities* (pp. 1–8). Association for Computational Linguistics. <https://doi.org/10.18653/v1/2024.nlp4dh-1.1>
- Opdahl, A. L., Tessem, B., Dang-Nguyen, D. T., Motta, E., Setty, V., Throndsen, E., Tverberg, A., & Trattner, C. (2023). Trustworthy journalism through AI. *Data & Knowledge Engineering*, 146, 102182. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.datak.2023.102182>

- Oppeghaffen, M., & d'Haenens, L. (2011). The impact of online news features on learning from news: A knowledge experiment. *International Journal of Internet Science*, 6(1), 8–28.
- Palmer, F. R. (2001). *Mood and modality* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139167178>
- Rantsudu, B., & Bartlett, T. (2024). The role of deontic modality in the construction and mitigation of evaluation in hard news reporting. *Journal of World Languages*, 10(1), 51–75. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jwl-2023-0059>
- Roth, S. (2024). *Column: It's 2024. Time to start acting like climate change actually matters*. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/environment/ newsletter/2024-01-04/column-its-2024-time-to-start-acting-like-climate-change-actually-matters-boiling-point>
- Roth, S. (2025). *Boiling Point: Not a great year for climate change at the Oscars*. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/environment/ newsletter/2025-02-20/boiling-point-not-a-great-year-for-climate-change-at-the-oscars-boiling-point>
- Roth, S., Xia, R., Briscoe, T., Morin, M., Rust, S., Mitchell, R., Seidman, L., Short, A., Haggerty, N., James, I., Potts, M.E., & Jaipersaud, A. (2024). *Climate California Live 2024 - Los Angeles Times*. <https://www.latimes.com/9cgfubrs1w-123>
- Rudin, D. (2025). Asserting epistemic modals. *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 48(1), 43–88. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S10988-024-09423-7>
- Smith, H. (2024a). *Hotter, drier, different: How climate change will alter L.A.* Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2024-09-09/ hotter-drier-different-how-climate-change-will-alter-l-a>
- Smith, H. (2024b). *Will global warming turn L.A. into San Bernardino?* Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2024-08-04/ will-global-warming-turn-la-into-san-bernardino>
- van Dijk, T. A. (2000). *Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach*. Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446217856>
- Wang, Z., Fan, W., & Fang, A. C. (2022). Lexical input in the grammatical expression of stance: A collexeme analysis of the introductory it pattern. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, Article 762000. <https://doi.org/10.3389/ fpsyg.2021.762000>
- Wike, R., Silver, L., Fetterolf, J., Huang, C., Austin, S., Clancy, L., & Gubbala, S. (2022, December 6). *Global Views of social media and its impacts on society*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/ global/2022/12/06/views-of-social-media-and-its-impacts-on-society-in-advanced-economies-2022/>

- Wu, W., & Wang, J. (2026). A study on the modality of climate news discourse: The case of *The New York Times*. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 13, Article 102582. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2026.102582>
- Xia, R. (2024). *To fix climate anxiety, we first have to fix individualism*. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/environment/story/2024-09-11/climate-anxiety-essay>
- Yang, S. (2021). *A systemic functional study of modality in modern Chinese*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-16-8020-5>
- Young showcase talent at climate change competition*. (2025). The Times of India. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/raipur/young-showcase-talent-at-climate-change-competition/articleshow/123489309.cms>
- Zahidi, I. (2025). Modalization strategies and axiological values in sports discourse: an analysis of a media dossier. *Saudi Journal of Language Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SJLS-08-2024-0047>
- Zhu, P., Hua, J., Tang, K., Tian, J., Xu, J., & Cui, X. (2024). Multimodal fake news detection through intra-modality feature aggregation and inter-modality semantic fusion. *Complex & Intelligent Systems*, 10(4), 5851–5863. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S40747-024-01473-5>

POLITICAL FLAMING IN THE 21st-CENTURY WAR DISCOURSE: A PRAGMA-LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

Gaiane Muradian

Yerevan State University, Armenia

Abstract: *This article explores the phenomenon of political flaming within 21st-century war discourse from a linguistic perspective. Drawing on Entman's Framing Theory and Martin and White's Appraisal Theory, the study investigates how political figures and media commentators construct antagonistic and emotionally charged language in response to conflict events. Using qualitative coding, pragmatic and lexical analyses, it investigates flaming in political speeches and media commentaries surrounding recent wars and identifies key linguistic markers and evaluative strategies used to frame opponents and legitimize positions. The research highlights how language is employed to inflame political tensions, polarize public opinion, and frames narratives of blame and justification. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the rhetorical mechanics of contemporary war discourse and the role of flaming language in fueling political divisions.*

Keywords: *political flaming, war discourse, media commentary, linguistic markers, evaluative strategies*

About the author: Gaiane Muradian, Dr. of Sciences, Professor at Yerevan State University, is the author of fifty-seven articles and books of varied academic interests, twenty-nine presentations at local and international conferences. In 2018, as a visiting professor, she conducted courses at Ca'Foscari University of Venice. G. Muradian is a board member of the Academic Council of the Department of European Languages and Communication at Yerevan State University; secretary of Supreme Certifying Committee's 009 Specialized Academic Council, board member of Armenian Association for the Study of English; member of the Editorial Board of the journal Armenian Folia Anglistika.

E-mail: g.murad@ysu.am

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7588-5849>

Copyright © 2026 Gaiane Muradian

Article history: Received: 8 August 2025; Reviewed: 29 April 2026; Revised: 2 May 2026; Accepted: 4 May 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Muradian, G. (2026). Political flaming in the 21st-century war discourse: A pragma-linguistic perspective. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 71-85. <https://doi.org/10.46687/MZQP5666>

Introduction

In our digital world where wars are no longer confined to battlefields but are simultaneously waged in political arenas, media outlets and digital spaces, the language of conflict has become incendiary rhetorical. A most striking feature of this evolving antagonism is political flaming – the use of emotionally charged, hostile, or derogatory language by political actors and commentators to attack opponents, delegitimize dissent, and mobilize supporters. Once associated primarily with anonymous online exchanges, flaming has now become a prominent discursive strategy in formal political speech, media commentary, and institutional communication at large (Coe, Kenski & Rains, 2014; Papacharissi, 2004).

Today, we should also recognize that war discourse – the language surrounding narration, justification and reaction to armed conflict – is the reflection and driver of political agendas. Political speeches and opposite the editorial pages (op-eds) often employ vivid and polarizing rhetoric to frame events, allocate blame, and define moral boundaries (Chilton, 2004). These discourses shape how wars are perceived by domestic and international audiences and can profoundly influence public opinion, policy, and even diplomatic relations.

In the 21st century, such rhetoric has intensified due to several interrelated trends. In the hybrid warfare, conventional military operations are intertwined with psychological, informational, and cyber tactics and elevate the strategic value of discourse (Hoffman, 2007). At the same time, digital media accelerate the circulation of supporting narratives, heightening ideological polarization (Tucker et al., 2018). In this context, political flaming serves not just as provocation but as a calculated communicative act aimed at steering public sentiment, framing adversaries, and legitimizing controversial actions.

Hence, this article will examine political flaming in contemporary war discourse from a pragma-linguistic perspective, shedding light on how language is used to provoke, divide, and persuade during times of geopolitical crisis. Drawing on R. M. Entman's Framing Theory (1993), which explains how media and political actors emphasize certain elements of reality to shape public opinion, and J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White's Appraisal Theory (2005), which explores how addressers express attitudes and values, this study will analyze the rhetorical and linguistic features of flaming.

Using (1) qualitative coding, (2) pragmatic analysis, and (3) lexical analysis, it will investigate the strategies and markers of political flaming in speeches and media commentaries surrounding recent conflicts, including those of Israel-Iran, Israel-Palestine and Russia-Ukraine. By identifying recurring linguistic markers of flaming and evaluative strategies, this research will shed light on how flaming functions to construct antagonistic narratives, attribute blame,

and justify political stances. It will argue that these discursive patterns are not incidental, but integral to current political identity and the consolidation of ideological camps. Ultimately, we will seek to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how language functions in the contested spaces of war and politics, where words, as much as weapons, are deployed to assert power, provoke reaction, and control the narrative. Hence, this study seeks to answer research questions referring to how specific lexical markers of flaming function to construct moral judgements within the framing of 21st-century conflicts and in what ways linguo-pragmatic scales of intensity function to consolidate ideological boundaries between *us* and *them*.

Theoretical Framework

The analysis of political flaming in contemporary war discourse is grounded in an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that brings together insights from linguistics, media studies, and political communication. Central to this framework are the Framing Theory (Entman, 1993) and the Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005), both of which provide critical tools for understanding how language shapes perception, constructs conflict, and fuels ideological polarization. These are complemented by studies on flaming and online aggression (Kayany, 1998; Lea & Spears, 1992), which trace the evolution of hostile communication from informal digital spaces to formal political discourse.

Language in war discourse does not merely describe conflict – it constructs it. Language in this case “is not simply a tool for describing a pre-existing reality, but is itself part of the social and cognitive processes that create reality” (Chilton, 2004, p. 6). As argued, political language during wartime plays an active role in the production and reproduction of power relations where linguistic choices form social identities, legitimize authority (Fairclough, 1995), and shape a key site for the enactment of ideology and reproduction of social dominance (Van Dijk, 1998).

Through metaphor, presupposition, and framing, war discourse shapes how conflicts are understood and justified. For instance, it is noted that political rhetoric often employs spatial and moral metaphors to delineate *us* versus *them*, *defense* versus *attack*, *victim* versus *aggressor* and other binaries, asserting that “a key function of political discourse is the construction of political space” (Chilton, 2004, p. 50). Discourse in such contexts is “not neutral or objective, but loaded with evaluations and ideological standpoints” (ibid, p. 45), reinforcing existing power structures and facilitating conflict through communicative means.

This is particularly evident in hostile language which functions not merely as personal attack but as a form of ideological performance (Herring, 2002; Hoskins & Shchelin, 2023), enabling to align with or against particular political

or cultural positions. As Wodak (2001) and Foucault (1980) suggest, such discourse contributes to the construction of social reality and the maintenance of hegemonic narratives, making flaming not just a linguistic outburst but a political act embedded within broader struggles for meaning and power.

In the construction of conflict narratives, authors often employ specific evaluative strategies (polarization, dehumanization, moral superiority, inevitability, threat) to frame reality and mobilize sentiment. At the heart of this process is polarization, a binary framing that partitions the social world into a rigid *us* vs. *them* dichotomy, stripping away the nuance of shared humanity. This divide is often deepened through dehumanization, where the other is stripped of moral standing via evocative metaphors characterizing opponents as barbaric or monstrous to lower the psychological barriers to violence. To validate this exclusion, the discourse frequently invokes moral superiority, positioning one's own side as the sole guardian of universal virtues like peace and freedom. This moral positioning is then used to justify the inevitability of conflict; by framing war as a tragic but unavoidable necessity to remove the possibility of diplomatic alternatives. Finally, these narratives are cemented by the articulation of threat, where the assertion of dominance and the potential for violence are presented as the only logical response to an existential danger. In addition to established evaluative strategies, this article introduces historical analogy as a distinct category to account for the specific rhetorical weight of World War II and genocidal comparisons (DIIS, 2024). While often overlapping with dehumanization, this strategy functions independently by invoking collective cultural trauma to validate current military actions through the lens of historical moral absolutes. Together, these strategies do more than describe a situation: they actively manufacture a climate where conflict is seen as both righteous and inescapable.

The Framing Theory offers a critical lens to examine how political actors and media frame war-related events to influence public opinion. Framing involves selection and salience: "to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality certain and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation" (Entman, 1993, p. 52). In the context of political flaming, this framework helps identify how antagonistic language is used not randomly but strategically – to assign blame, mobilize support, and marginalize dissenting voices. Political figures and media commentators use flaming language to define aggressors and victims, justify military actions, and solidify ideological alignments.

The Appraisal Theory provides a linguistic system for analyzing how speakers express attitude, judgment, and emotion (Combei & Reggi, 2024). "Appraisal is concerned with evaluation: the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned" (Martin & White, 2005, p. 1). The theory categorizes

evaluative language into three domains: attitude (feelings, judgments, appreciation), engagement (source of viewpoints), and graduation (intensity and force). This framework is particularly suited for identifying evaluative strategies in political flaming, such as affect-laden adjectives, loaded naming, and moral judgments aimed at opponents. By applying Appraisal Theory, this study shows how flaming language constructs adversaries as immoral, illegitimate, or dangerous, thereby justifying oppositional stances and actions in wartime flaming narratives.

Traditional research on flaming has focused on hostile exchanges in anonymous, online environments (Kiesler et al., 1984). However, later scholarship acknowledges that flaming has permeated public, formal, and institutional discourse (Jane, 2014; Lea & Spears, 1992). Political flaming in this context is no longer a breach of decorum, but a strategic rhetorical device used in political debates, speeches, and published op-eds characterizing not an isolated behavior but a broader discursive trend in adversarial politics, especially during conflict.

Methodology

To operationalize the above-mentioned theoretical framework, this study uses a triangulated methodology: qualitative coding (to identify recurring themes and categories of flaming such as vilification, demonization, delegitimization, etc.), pragmatic analysis (to examine how speech acts – insults, accusations, threats – function within context to achieve communicative goals) and lexical analysis (to detect evaluative, mostly negative lexis, flaming markers, strategies associated with targets of flaming). Together, the three tools enable a nuanced mapping of how political flaming operates linguistically to frame conflicts, persuade publics, and consolidate ideological boundaries.

To bridge theory and analysis, to ensure the analysis is grounded in the promised theoretical framework, the study operationalizes the mentioned Framing and Appraisal Theories through a specific diagnostic process. Framing Theory is applied by identifying the problem definition and moral evaluation within each text – specifically how the speaker selects certain aspects of the conflict (e.g., *terrorism* or *genocide*) to make them more salient. Simultaneously, Appraisal Theory is used to decode the graduation (intensity) and attitude (judgment) of the language. This allows the study to move beyond simple observation and into a structured evaluation of how specific lexical choices function as both a framing device for conflict and a linguistic marker of flaming. By combining these two lenses, the analysis demonstrates how personal hostility (appraisal) is systematically scaled to create broader political narratives (framing).

To systematically investigate the mechanics of political flaming, this study employs a qualitative, multi-layered linguistic approach. By isolating specific rhetorical patterns within a controlled corpus, the research aims to uncover

how incendiary language is used to shape public perception during geopolitical crises. The analysis is based on a purposive corpus of 45 primary texts curated to represent a broad spectrum of political and media discourse. This includes 15 official political speeches or press statements from heads of state and high-ranking officials, and 30 media commentaries (op-eds) and highly-engaged social media posts from influential political commentators. Data collection was conducted over a specific timeframe – from October 2023 to July 2025 – capturing the immediate rhetorical responses to critical escalations in three primary theaters of conflict:

- The Israel-Iran Escalation: Sourced from *The Times of Israel*, *PressTV*, *ir*, and *The Wall Street Journal*.
- The Israel-Palestine Conflict: Sourced from official press briefings, *Al Jazeera*, and *Kan News*.
- The Russia-Ukraine War: Sourced from official Kremlin transcripts, *The Kyiv Independent*, and state-aligned media outlets.

The three specific conflicts were selected because they represent the most significant discursive flashpoints of the mid-2020s, where traditional military warfare is heavily supplemented by digital and rhetorical warfare.

Examples were curated based on three primary criteria:

1. Prominence: The text was delivered by a high-ranking official or published in a media outlet with a global or significant regional reach (such as international wire services, widely circulated broadsheets, or major state/independent broadcasters with millions of daily readers and viewers).
2. Affective Intensity: The presence of flaming markers (lexis that is explicitly hostile, derogatory, or emotionally charged).
3. Thematic Relevance: The content specifically addresses the justification of military action, the framing of an adversary, or the mobilization of national/international sentiment.

The data was analyzed using a three-tiered method: Qualitative Coding was used to categorize recurring themes of hostility and group the clusters into six primary evaluative strategies (polarization, dehumanization, etc.) that structure the analysis; Pragmatic Analysis was applied to identify how flaming markers function within discursive political contexts and contribute to the delegitimization of the target, and finally, Lexical Analysis based on Appraisal Theory was used to evaluate how specific words function to scale emotion and intensity, i.e. how flame markers amplify the emotional impact of a political frame. This combined methodology ensures that the findings reflect consistent linguistic strategies used in contemporary war discourse.

Political Flaming: Linguistic Markers and Evaluative Strategies in Contemporary War Discourse

In today's globalized and interconnected media-saturated world, war is fought not only on the battlefields but also in the realm of language. Political leaders, media agents, and public figures increasingly engage in rhetorical warfare, using language as a strategic tool to shape perception, justify action, and rally support. In this volatile environment, political flaming has become a prominent communicative strategy: deliberate, emotionally charged, and often deeply polarizing.

Thus, this section focuses on how language functions in times of war not just to express anger or outrage, but to frame narratives, assign blame, and solidify group identities. Political flaming, far from being random or impulsive, is shown here as a purposeful act: a rhetorical maneuver embedded in the broader structure of war discourse.

To explore this, we turn to the linguistic fabric of key conflict zones: Israel-Iran, Israel-Palestine, Russia-Ukraine. Through qualitative coding, pragmatic analysis, and lexical scrutiny, we examine the linguistic markers and evaluative strategies that drive political flaming in these contexts.

To see how geopolitical hostility plays out in high-stakes rhetoric, we look at how political leaders, state media, and commentators frame existential threats and moral duties during escalations between Israel and Iran. The excerpts below highlight the key features of political flaming from outright demonization and apocalyptic warnings to calls for revenge across official speeches, news editorials, and social media posts.

Israel-Iran Conflict Examples

(1) *We are at a decisive moment in Israel's history. We are defending the free world from **terrorism** and **barbarism** that Iran fosters and exports across the globe. Our fight is against the **murderous** Islamic regime that oppresses and impoverishes you. They are targeting civilians because they're a **criminal** regime. They're the **archterrorists** of the world.* (Benjamin Netanyahu, *The Times of Israel*, 13 June 2025)

(2) *If **Khamenei** continues to fire missiles at the Israeli home front, **Tehran will burn**.* (Israel Katz, *The Times of Israel*, 14 June 2025)

(3) *We have begun this operation because the time has come, we are at the **point of no return**. We cannot afford to wait for another time to operate – we have no other choice. [...] I warn that anyone who will try to challenge us **will pay a heavy price**.* (Eyal Zamir, *The Times of Israel*, 13 June 2025)

(4) *The battle begins. The **terrorist Zionist regime** has opened its **wicked** and **bloodstained hand** to a crime in our beloved country. **By God's will**,*

the powerful arm of the Islamic Republic's armed forces will not let it go unpunished. (Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, *The Times of London*, 13 June 2025)

(5) Iran's War of Proxy Terror Must Be Crushed Israel stands at the forefront of the global resistance to militant theocracy. The Iranian regime – brutal, expansionist, and obsessed with annihilating the Jewish state – has left Israel no choice but to act decisively. (*The Wall Street Journal* Editorial, 16 June 2025)

(6) Iran is the world's arsonist, lighting fires from Lebanon to Yemen. Time to extinguish the flame before it burns down civilization. (X/Twitter user @DefendIsrael, 17 June 2025)

(7) Zionist Aggression Will Ignite the Fury of the Muslim Ummah. The illegitimate Zionist entity, drenched in the blood of innocents, has triggered the wrath of a people who will not tolerate occupation, lies, and genocide any longer. (Iranian PressTV.ir, 15 June 2025)

(8) The Zionist regime is a cancerous tumour that must be cut out once and for all. Our missiles are not weapons of destruction – they are instruments of justice. (Ayatollah Ahmad Khatami, Iranian Clerical Sermon, 21 June 2025)

In Netanyahu's speech (1), Israel is framed as a guardian of civilization, while Iran is framed as the source of global terrorism and barbarism. This moral polarization associates Iran with universal evil and positions Israel as the defender of shared values. Linguistic markers include evaluative adjectives (*murderous, criminal*) and nouns (*terrorism, barbarism, archterrorists*). The deictic use of *we* versus *they* evaluates sharp in-group/out-group boundaries.

In Israel Katz's statement (2), political flaming relies on escalation and existential threat. Using a conditional structure (*If Khamenei continues*), Katz frames retaliation not as an act of aggression, but as an inevitable consequence triggered by the enemy. The metaphor *Tehran will burn* shifts the focus from defensive measures to total destruction. By using the capital city metonymically to represent the entire nation, the rhetoric expands the threat beyond political leaders to an entire population, using hyperbole to signal absolute resolve. Eyal Zamir's declaration (3) uses temporal and modal language to construct a narrative of forced action. Idioms of finality (*point of no return*) combined with absolute negation (*no other choice*) effectively erase diplomacy as a realistic option. This framing presents military escalation as an existential necessity rather than a calculated political choice. Finally, pairing a direct warning with high-commitment future modals (*will pay a heavy price*) morally sanitizes state violence, casting it as a simple, necessary reaction to external provocation. In Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's address (4), political flaming centers

on religious polarization and delegitimizing labels. Khamenei relies on heavy evaluative modifiers (*wicked and bloodstained hand*) alongside the formulaic label *terrorist Zionist regime* to strip the adversary of state legitimacy. He then contrasts this villainy with divine authority, using phrases like *By God's will* and personified imagery (*the powerful arm*). By framing military retaliation as a sacred duty (*will not let it go unpunished*), the rhetoric elevates a political conflict into a moral battle. Common strategies include **polarization** (*us vs them*), **dehumanization** (*murderous, barbarism, cancerous tumour*), **moral superiority** (defending peace/justice), **inevitability** (war as unavoidable), and **threat** (violent potential).

Turning to the ongoing conflict in Israel and Palestine, the language shifts from high-level state rivalries to raw battles over basic survival, land, and human rights. The following examples show how political leaders and external advocates draw on both emotions and strict legal jargon to undermine each other's legitimacy.

Israel-Palestine Conflict Examples

(9) “We are fighting **human animals**, and we will act accordingly. Every place Hamas operates will become rubble. This is a battle between **civilization** and **barbarism**.” (Benjamin Netanyahu, Press Briefing, 20 October 2023)

(10) “We will not stop until Hamas **is annihilated**. Gaza will feel the full weight of our resolve. The **terrorists** hide behind children, behind mosques, behind hospitals – but make no mistakes, they **will be eliminated**.” (Yoav Gallant, Kan News, 25 June 2025)

(11) “The **genocidal campaign** by the **Zionist regime** continues unabated. Every child buried in the rubble is **a nail in the coffin** of their legitimacy. This is not a war – it's a **massacre**.” (Mustafa Barghouti, Al Jazeera Interview, 27 June 2025)

(12) “Gaza is not a battlefield. It is a **slaughterhouse**. The so-called ‘self-defense’ of Israel is nothing more than a **licence to exterminate**.” (Francesca Albanese, X/Twitter post, 1 July 2025)

In example (9), political flaming relies on blunt dehumanization and moral binary framing. Labeling the adversary as *human animals* strips away their basic humanity, while setting *civilization* against *barbarism* creates a rigid moral divide that casts the conflict as an existential struggle between total good and absolute evil. Yoav Gallant (10) builds on this binary by pushing the rhetoric toward total military necessity. Using forceful terms like *annihilated* and *eliminated*, Gallant frames the military campaign not as a political conflict open to negotiation, but as an absolute imperative. In contrast, counter-discourse strategies draw on

legally loaded vocabulary to strip the opponent of state legitimacy. In example (11), Mustafa Barghouti uses heavy evaluative terms, most notably *genocidal campaign* and *massacre*, alongside the metaphor *nail in the coffin* to dismantle Israel's moral authority in the international arena. Similarly, Francesca Albanese (12) sharpens this delegitimization through imagery. By reframing Gaza as a *slaughterhouse* rather than a battlefield and dismissing *self-defense* as a *licence to exterminate*, her rhetoric explicitly links state military action to historical atrocities, completing the cycle of mutual delegitimization.

Finally, looking at the war in Eastern Europe, the rhetoric centers heavily on competing historical claims, national sovereignty, and cultural survival. The excerpts below show how state leaders and major media figures in both Russia and Ukraine frame the conflict focusing on existential self-defense, foreign proxy manipulation, and the moral corruption of their opponent.

Russia-Ukraine Conflict Examples

(13) “The **so-called Ukrainian government** is not independent. It is a **colonial administration** controlled by Washington and used as a **battering ram** against Russia. For years, they have waged war on their own people... What we are doing is **not aggression** – it is **liberation**. Russia will not allow **Nazis** and **foreign agents** to threaten our borders.” (Vladimir Putin, 18 March 2024)

(14) “We are not just fighting **Nazis** in Ukraine. We are fighting the entire **Western apparatus of lies**, imperialism, and **moral decay**. NATO has turned Kyiv into a **Frankenstein state** ruled by **drug addicts** and **puppets**.” (Vladimir Solovyov, 15 April 2024)

(15) “Every Ukrainian soldier... is a **war criminal**. They **shell children**, they **bomb kindergartens**. This is **genocide**.” (Maria Zakharova, 10 March 2024)

(16) “Russia is a **terrorist state**. It **bombs civilians**, **kidnaps children**, and uses **rape as a weapon** of war. The world must treat Russia like it treated **Nazi Germany**.” (Dmytro Kuleba, 20 November 2024)

(17) “Putin is a **war criminal** leading a **mafia regime**. He doesn't care about peace – he **thrives on blood**. Every missile... is a signature of **Russian fascism**.” (Mykhailo Podolyak, 6 May 2024)

(18) “This is not a war – it's a **campaign of extermination**. Russia seeks to **erase our identity**... We will resist **until the last breath**.” (Volodymyr Zelenskyy, 2 January 2025)

In Example (13), Vladimir Putin relies on dismissive language and colonial metaphors to strip Ukraine of its political agency. By branding the leadership a

so-called Ukrainian government and a *colonial administration*, Putin reframes military aggression as a righteous act of *liberation* from foreign control. Building on this idea, Vladimir Solovyov (14) pushes the rhetoric into vivid, almost grotesque territory. His description of Ukraine as a *Frankenstein state* run by *drug addicts and puppets*, elevates the conflict from a geopolitical struggle into a grand moral crusade against Western imperialism and cultural decay. Maria Zakharova (15) anchors her argument in intense moral outrage and heavy legalistic terms. By sweeping all Ukrainian soldiers into the category of *war criminals* and labelling their actions as *genocide*, she uses accusations of grave human rights abuses to justify Russia's military response. On the other side, Ukrainian officials counter these claims by tying Russian actions to historical tyranny to rally international support. Dmytro Kuleba (16) draws direct historical parallels, calling Russia a *terrorist state* and comparing it to *Nazi Germany* to tap into shared global memory and demand moral accountability. In a similar spirit, Mykhailo Podolyak (17) focuses directly on the Russian leadership, using criminalizing labels like *mafia regime* and *Russian fascism* to completely strip the Kremlin of political legitimacy. Finally, Volodymyr Zelenskyy (18) frames the war in stark existential terms. By describing it as a *campaign of extermination* meant to wipe out national identity, his rhetoric turns Ukrainian resistance into an absolute struggle for survival: one that must go on *until the last breath*.

Across all three conflict zones, political flaming is never a random outburst of anger; it is a calculated tool of war rhetoric. Whether through existential threats between Israel and Iran, severe dehumanization and legalistic attacks in the Israel-Palestine conflict, or competing historical narratives in the Russia-Ukraine war, these tactics serve the same core purpose. By using specific linguistic tools, from zoomorphic labels and grotesque metaphors to rigid temporal framing, political figures enforce strict *us* versus *them* divides, strip their enemies of legitimacy, and frame military violence as an unavoidable act of self-defense. A complete breakdown of these shared strategies and their functions is presented in the conclusion.

Conclusion

In modern warfare, words are deployed as deliberately as military hardware. As this study shows, political flaming is not just an emotional outburst or a loss of self-control. Grounded in Framing Theory and Appraisal Theory, our analysis demonstrates that flaming is a strategic communicative choice. Across high-stakes conflicts from the Israel-Iran escalations to the Israel-Palestine conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war, political figures and media commentators intentionally use hostile, polarized language to control the narrative, delegitimize enemies, and unite their own bases.

By examining these speeches and commentaries, we can see a clear pattern: speakers use specific language choices to build broader, ideologically loaded narratives about war. To understand how these rhetorical tactics operate in practice, it is helpful to categorize them by their core function and the specific flaming markers that bring them to life. The table below breaks down the primary evaluative strategies identified across our corpus, showing how individual word choices scale up into overarching frames of conflict.

Summary Table. *Flaming Markers and Evaluative Strategies*

Evaluative Strategy	Function	Flaming Markers	Examples
Polarization	Frames conflict as binary moral struggle	Zionist regime, Islamic regime, defending free world, civilization vs arsonist, so-called government, Frankenstein state, imperialist West, Western apparatus of lies, foreign agents, terrorist state, moral decay	(1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 16)
Dehumanization	Strips opponents of human qualities	terrorist, barbarism, murderous, criminal, arch-terrorist, cancerous tumour, arsonist, human animals, drug addict, puppets, war criminal, thrives on blood, shell children, bomb kindergartens, genocide, bombs civilians, kidnaps children, rape as weapon	(1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 17)
Moral Superiority	Frames speaker's side as righteous	guardians of civilization, defenders of justice, instruments of justice, defending peace/freedom, Muslim Ummah, resisting extermination, liberation, fight against fascism	(1, 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 18)
Inevitability	Justifies violence as unavoidable	have no other choice, point of no return, must be crushed, must be cut out, no choice but to act, will not stop, will be eliminated, we will resist until the last breath, never forgive	(3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 15, 18)
Threat	Asserts power through potential violence	Tehran will burn, will pay a heavy price, wrath of the people, extinguish the flame, not let it go unpunished, Gaza will feel the full weight, we will act accordingly	(2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 15)

Evaluative Strategy	Function	Flaming Markers	Examples
Historical Analogy	Evokes weight via past atrocities	Nazis, campaign of extermination, genocidal campaign, slaughterhouse, licence to exterminate, like Nazi Germany, erase our identity	(13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18)
Delegitimization	Denies enemy's standing	Zionist entity, illegitimate regime, colonial administration, puppet state, terrorist regime, so-called self-defence	(4, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16)

As the breakdown above illustrates, political flaming works through a calculated combination of tone and vocabulary. Tactics like polarization and delegitimization draw strict lines between *us* and *them*, leaving almost no room for compromise or diplomatic dialogue. At the same time, dehumanizing terms (such as comparing opponents to animals or disease) work alongside historical analogies (comparing current leaders to Nazis or imperialists) to erase moral empathy, making military force seem necessary and right.

Furthermore, statements emphasizing inevitability and threat allow leaders to reframe aggression as basic self-defense. By claiming they have *no other choice* and asserting their own moral superiority, political actors soften the political cost of military escalation, turning controversial policy choices into moral imperatives.

Ultimately, political flaming in 21st-century war discourse is far more than a debate over bad manners or inflammatory public relations. It is an active tool of political power, identity construction, and narrative strategy. In an age where global conflicts are fought online as much as on the ground, understanding how incendiary language operates is vital to grasping how modern wars are waged, justified, and understood around the world.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the preparation of this paper, I used Gemini to refine some language phrasing and assist in double-checking citation accuracy. After using this tool, I

thoroughly reviewed, verified, and edited the content as needed and thus I take full responsibility for the ultimate content and accuracy of the publication.

References

- Chilton, P. (2004). *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203561218>
- Coe, K., Kenski, K., & Rains, S. A. (2014). Online and uncivil? Patterns and determinants of incivility in newspaper website comments. *Journal of Communication*, 64(4), 658–679. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcom.12104>
- Combei, C. R., & Reggi, O. (2024). *Appraisal, sentiment and emotion analysis in political discourse: A multimodal multi-method approach*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003268345>
- Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS). (2024). *The failure of historical analogies in geopolitical decision-making: World War II analogies in the Ukraine war*. <https://research.diis.dk/>
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4), 51-58. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1993.tb01304.x>
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Media discourse*. Edward Arnold.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings, 1972–1977*. Pantheon Books.
- Herring, S. C. (2002). Flaming. In S. C. Herring (Ed.), *Computer-mediated communication: Linguistic, social and cross-cultural perspectives* (pp. 1–30). John Benjamins.
- Hoffman, F. G. (2007). *Conflict in the 21st century: The rise of hybrid wars*. Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.
- Hoskins, A., & Shchelín, P. (2023). The war feed: Digital war in plain sight. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 67(9), 1115–1132. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00027642221144848>
- Jane, E. A. (2014). “Your a Ugly, Whorish, Slut”: Understanding E-bile. *Feminist Media Studies*, 14(4), 531–546. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2012.741073>
- Kayany, J. M. (1998). Context of uninhibited online behavior: Flaming in social newsgroups on Usenet. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 49(12), 1135-1141. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1097-4571\(1998\)49:12<1135::AID-ASI7>3.0.CO;2-W](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-4571(1998)49:12<1135::AID-ASI7>3.0.CO;2-W)
- Kiesler, S., Siegel, J., & McGuire, T. W. (1984). Social psychological aspects of computer-mediated communication. *American Psychologist*, 39(10), 1123-1134. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.39.10.1123>

- Lea, M., & Spears, R. (1992). *Paralanguage and social perception in computer-mediated communication*. *Journal of Organizational Computing*, 2(3–4), 321–341. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10919399209540190>
- Martin, J. R., & White, P. R. R. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Papacharissi, Z. (2004). Democracy online: Civility, politeness, and the democratic potential of online political discussion groups. *New Media & Society*, 6(2), 259–283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444804041444>
- Tucker, J. A., Guess, A., Barberá, P., Vaccari, C., Siegel, A., Sanovich, S., Stukal, D., & Nyhan, B. (2018, March 21). Social media, political polarization, and political disinformation: A review of the scientific literature. *SSRN*. <http://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3144139>
- Van Dijk, T. A. (1998). *Ideology: A multidisciplinary approach*. SAGE Publications.
- Wodak, R. (2001). The discourse-historical approach. In R. Wodak & M. Meyer (Eds.), *Methods of critical discourse analysis* (pp. 63–94). SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9780857028020.n4>

FROM SACRED VESSEL TO SYMBOLIC RELIC: THE LINGUISTIC EVOLUTION OF *ARK* IN MARITIME ENGLISH

Raycho Penchev Ivanov

Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy, Bulgaria

Abstract: *This article explores the term “ark” from a historical-linguistic perspective; the exploration is executed by tracing its evolution from its biblical origins in the King James Version of the Bible (1611) to its limited and largely symbolic role in contemporary English. The approach utilises philological methods, etymological tracing, and componential analysis. The paper investigates how ark, once a historically significant nautical term with rich theological and navigational associations, has gradually become a metaphorical and largely obsolete term in technical maritime communication. The study examines the practical maritime implications of the term together with its continuing symbolic role, especially in religious and literary discourse. The diachronic method used begins with the King James Version of the Bible (1611), continues with historical lexicographical sources, and concludes with the Standard Marine Communication Phrases (2001) in order to trace the semantic path of the term. The fact that ark is excluded from modern standardised communication lexicon such as the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) is discussed as evidence of its marginalisation in operational discourse. The analysis suggests that the term ark is an example of a trend in which spiritual or mythic terms are excluded from technical vocabularies in favour of precision and functionality. The findings contribute to the broader understanding of the interplay between linguistic evolution, metaphor, and specialised communication in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly within the maritime domain.*

Keywords: *maritime terminology, ark, historical linguistics, Bible, semantic change*

About the author: *Raycho Penchev Ivanov is a senior lecturer in English at Nikola Vaptsarov Naval Academy in Varna, Bulgaria. He specialises in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), with a focus on Maritime English and terminology studies. His academic interests include historical linguistics, semantic analysis, and the evolution of specialised language in professional contexts. He is currently preparing a doctoral thesis on the development of maritime terminology from early English texts to contemporary Seaspeak and SMCP.*

E-mail: *r.ivanov@naval-acad.bg*

ORCID iD: *<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-7084-5037>*

Copyright © 2026 Raycho Penchev Ivanov

Article history: Received: 11 August 2025; Reviewed: 16 May 2026; Revised: 8 June 2026; Accepted: 9 June 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Ivanov, R. P. (2026). From sacred vessel to symbolic relic: The linguistic evolution of ark in maritime English. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 86-97. <https://doi.org/10.46687/YWXE5462>

Introduction

The evolution of maritime terminology is seen as a complex interplay of cultural, religious, and professional influences which are based on practical everyday life. The term *ark* is a great example of how some lexical items move from scriptural texts into secular ones and subsequently fall into disuse within certain professional jargons, in this case, the modern technical lexicon. This article aims to explore the linguistic development of the term *ark*. It traces its journey from biblical scripture to what it represents today as a symbolic relic. The primary aim is to determine how and why *ark*, which was once considered a maritime term, has become non-existent in contemporary maritime English. The analysis draws on historical, etymological, and componential methods to contextualise its semantic trajectory and metaphorical potency. This paper contributes to the broader understanding of language evolution in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly within the domain of maritime terminology. It also seeks to highlight how the demands for precision, unambiguous expression, and standardisation in contemporary technical communication contribute to the exclusion of metaphorically or symbolically charged terms.

Previous Research in the Field

Studies in maritime English have primarily focused on the development and standardisation of communication for safety and operational clarity, where navigational communication “must be precise, simple and unambiguous so as to avoid confusion and error” (International Maritime Organization, 2001, p. 3). As a result, the IMO SMCP manual is deliberately designed to exclude metaphors, idioms, and culturally specific references for safety and intelligibility. However, limited attention has been paid to the historical and cultural layers embedded in older maritime vocabulary. Lexicographical sources such as *The Sailor’s Word-Book* (1867), *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea* (1988), and the *Oxford English Dictionary* have documented the shifting meanings of terms like *ark*, yet there has been little philological analysis of its semantic decline within technical registers. Furthermore, metaphor in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has often been viewed as a hindrance to precision thus leading to the marginalisation of spiritually or symbolically charged terms. Genres impose constraints on form and content to fulfil communicative purposes within a discourse community (Swales, 1990, p. 52). The exclusion of such terms from the SMCP reflects this linguistic trend. On the other hand, some scholars suggest that metaphor may offer cognitive and expressive flexibility, allowing speakers to move meaningfully across conceptual fields without strict logical purpose (Markova, 2023, p. 78).

Extra-linguistic factors are involved in changes of the semantic level of words. “History, social structure and human psychology cause changes in the meaning

of the word” (Molhova, 1976, p. 57). Specialisation is relevant to maritime terminology and standardised language and it “is another source of plurality of meaning. A word acquires additional meanings when used as a technical term” (Molhova, 1976, p. 38). This provides a useful framework for examining *ark* as a lexical item and its semantic change. The article hypothesises that it has remained historically restricted in its terminological use, while its biblical and symbolic meanings have remained prominent in contemporary English.

Sager (1990) notes that the development of new technologies and the growth of scientific and technical communication created a need to record, disseminate, and standardise the terminology of specialised subject fields. He points out specifically that “until the nineteenth century [...] the technical language required by craftsmen [...] was passed down mainly in spoken form from generation to generation along with the skills necessary to perform the job” (p. 163). This is relevant to maritime English, where standardised frameworks such as the SMCP prioritise operational clarity over historically or symbolically loaded vocabulary.

This study aims to build upon these references by applying historical-linguistic and componential analysis to the case of *ark* as a terminological relic.

Methodology and Research Question

This study applies a philological and historical-linguistic approach to investigate the semantic development of the term *ark* in English. This approach is suitable because it uncovers semantic shifts in specialised registers over time. Several analytical methods are employed in combination. First, etymological analysis traces the lexical roots of the term through Latin and Old English into modern usage. Second, a diachronic perspective examines how the meaning and function of *ark* have evolved across historical periods, with special attention to biblical and maritime contexts. Third, componential analysis is used to deconstruct the semantic features of *ark* in different temporal frames, thus identifying key conceptual attributes such as size, material, shape, placement and function. This makes it a suitable tool for identifying the semantic narrowing and eventual marginalisation of *ark* in regulated maritime discourse, while also reflecting broader processes of metaphorization and terminological refinement. Nevertheless, some of the limitations of this method have been criticised as oversimplifications of complex meaning, particularly its difficulty in capturing nuance, polysemy, and connotation thus the need for non-binary contrasts (Lyons, 1977, pp. 287-291; Ullmann, 1972, pp. 138-140; Leech, 1974, pp. 95-125). The study also considers collocational and derivational patterns in order to illustrate how the term *ark* interacts with other lexical items in both literal and figurative registers. While the article does not adopt corpus data, it draws from dictionary definitions, historical usage examples, especially the *King*

James Version of the Bible (1611), and specialist nautical references such as *The Sailor's Word-Book* by Admiral W. H. Smyth (1867) and *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*, edited by Peter Kemp (1988), in order to demonstrate the shifting communicative role of *ark* in English. The primary research question is to assess the factors that led to the term's symbolic retention and its exclusion from modern technical vocabularies, particularly in regulated and standardised frameworks such as the IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP).

The *King James Version of the Bible*, published in 1611, is one of the most influential English-language texts in history and it is known for its literary richness and popularity until the early 20th century, when it “fell into disfavour among many mainstream Protestant churches” (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2024). It was commissioned by King James I and it was written in Early Modern English in which it served not only as a theological document but also as a linguistic benchmark during the rise of England as a maritime power. As such, it contains terminology that reflects the material culture and seafaring knowledge of the early 17th century. Its inclusion in this study allows for a diachronic comparison between spiritually embedded maritime terms and their secular evolution or disappearance.

The Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) were adopted by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in 2001, constituting a set of standardised English phrases used for safety-related communication “from ship to shore and vice versa, from ship to ship, and on-board ship” (International Maritime Organization, 2001, p. 3). Designed to reduce misunderstanding among multinational crews, they represent the culmination of decades of efforts to codify and simplify maritime language. The SMCP is prescriptive, technical, and safety-oriented, and includes only terms with current operational relevance. Its exclusion of metaphorical or religious terms, such as *ark*, highlights the shift toward linguistic precision and functional neutrality in modern maritime English (International Maritime Organization, 2001).

Analysis and Discussion

Lexicographical and Nautical Status of *Ark*

The definition and categorisation provided by the *Oxford English Dictionary*, under the label *nautical*, meaning 3, places the term *ark* within the scope of this research paper. The dictionary offers the following definition “Old English – The large covered floating vessel in which Noah was saved at the Deluge; hence figurative a place of refuge” (2023). This distinction, as a nautical term, shows that, indeed, *ark* is viewed as a type of a watercraft associated with what we understand today as sea or river going vessels. The term acquires the meaning of a floating vessel from 1477 onwards, which solidifies its use as a nautical

term in the *King James Version of the Bible*, where the instructions given to Noah specify and describe a floating vessel as a box-shaped and a house-like structure.

The noun *ark* originates from Latin *arca* meaning “large box” or “chest”, then became *earc* in Old English, and *arke* in Middle English. By the late 15th century, it was also used to describe a type of ship or boat. In 19th-century America, it specifically referred to large, flat-bottomed riverboats used to transport goods, livestock, and other produce, most probably agricultural and farm products, to market (Harper, 2001-2025). The original meaning of the word emphasises its function as a container rather than a navigational vessel. This distinction sets it apart from other maritime terms like *ship* or *vessel*, which retained most of their original properties and evolved to denote more functional and versatile forms of watercraft.

Biblical Usage

The term *ark* holds a prominent place in early religious and cultural texts. It appears in one hundred and ninety-nine verses of the *King James Version of the Bible* (MasonSoft Technology Ltd., 2011-2026). Its most notable use in the Bible is where Noah’s Ark serves as a vessel of salvation during the Flood. This usage makes the term a valid candidate for inclusion in this paper as it acquires the qualities and practicalities of a craft built with the sole purpose of floating on water while carrying various types of objects. The dimensions described in Gen 6:15 below suggest a flat-bottomed, rectangular construction lacking a keel or bow thus making it akin to a barge rather than a ship. The structure is not presented as a navigable vessel but as a floating container built solely for buoyancy and capacity. This architectural profile reinforces the semantic emphasis on refuge and preservation, rather than transport or navigation. Here are some of the verses to illustrate the use in question:

“Make thee an *ark* of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the *ark*, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.” (Gen 6:14)

“And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the *ark* shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.” (Gen 6:15)

“But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the *ark*, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons’ wives with thee.” (Gen 6:18)

“And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the *ark*, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.” (Gen 6:19)

“And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the *ark*, and it was lift up above the earth.” (Gen 7:17)

“And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the *ark*: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged;” (Gen 8:1) (Project Gutenberg, 2024)

In addition to the use discussed above, and apart from its nautical depiction, the word *ark* also appears in *Ark of the Covenant* (Numbers 10:33), *Ark of the Testimony* (Exodus 30:6), *Ark of the Lord* (Joshua 4:11), and *Ark of God* (1 Samuel 3:3), where the noun is primarily used to denote a box.

The term *ark* carries immense symbolic weight due to its usage being largely confined to religious and metaphorical contexts. Unlike terms such as *anchor*, which seamlessly transitioned from antiquity to modern maritime practice and beyond (John, Brooks & Schriever, 2017), *ark* remains static, rooted in its scriptural associations. This linguistic immobility underscores a broader trend: as maritime terminology evolved to meet practical needs, terms with purely symbolic or religious significance were often left behind or entered into minimal use, as they no longer aligned with the technical language required for navigation and shipbuilding.

Derivatives, Compounds and Metaphorical Extensions

Apart from its biblical connotation and principal collocations in that particular context, the word *ark* exhibits more linguistic properties. It collocates with other lexical items, thus creating compounds and derivatives functioning as nouns, adjectives and verbs. Here are some examples from its collocational and derivational behaviour from 1611 onwards:

- *Meal ark* – “A large wooden bin for storing meal.” (Oxford University Press, 2024). This use of the noun dates back to the middle of the sixteenth century; it is still in use in British English, but with a very low frequency.
- *Inark* – “*transitive*. To put or enclose in an ark” (Oxford University Press, 2023). This usage reflects the nautical meaning of the word and its connotation to the biblical *ark*. Its use is now obsolete or rare. *Oxford English Dictionary* has evidence of its use between 1595 and 1647. Similar meaning is attributed to the verb *ark* which is now obsolete and was in use between 1644 and 1845 according to the same source.
- *Unark* – or its variant *vn-arke* is used in the poetic line “Till thou be left vpon Th’ Armenian mount of safety, ioy and rest; Where when thou art thou maist thyselfe vn-arke¹” (Davies, 1611). There are two

1. The word *vn-arke* (or *unark*) appears to be a poetic neologism created by John Davies in *The Scourge of Folly* (1611).

noteworthy items here. The first one is *Th' Armenian mount of safety*, which directly references Mount Ararat, traditionally associated with the resting place of Noah's Ark after the Flood. It symbolises a place of divine providence, peace, and renewal after a period of trial or hardship. The second item is *thou maist thyselfe vn-arke*, which suggests coming out or emerging from the ark. As a poet, Davies uses a creative linguistic style characteristic of the period and creates this new word. The passage can be interpreted in a metaphorical sense where *ark* carries the themes of salvation, transformation, and the transition from adversity to peace. The *Oxford English Dictionary* has labelled this as *nautical*, which affirms its connotation to the biblical vessel of salvation (2024). This example shows how the term was extended linguistically in Early Modern English literature, enhancing its rich symbolic properties and metaphorical potential.

- *Arkite* – adj. “Of or pertaining to Noah's ark” (Oxford University Press, 2024), and *arkite* – n. “An inmate of the ark” (Oxford University Press, 2024) are both classified as nautical terms by the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The adjective appears from 1774 onwards, while the noun is recorded from 1804. The semantic domains occupied are religious and literary and refer to the maritime symbolism either related to Noah's ark as a vessel or to its passengers. The noun appears to remain in use in British English, but no evidence of usage was found in American English.

Nineteenth-Century Nautical and American River Ark Usage

The term *ark* retained its biblical connotations and nautical usage well into the 19th century. In *The Sailor's Word-Book*, Admiral Smyth defines it as “the sacred and capacious vessel built by Noah,” providing not only precise measurements but also describing it as being “pitched over or pay'd with bitumen” (1867, p. 52). He also adds another meaning to the term and its use to describe “a mare's-tail cloud, or cirrus, when it forms a streak across the sky”², indicating a semantic extension of the term based on form, probably because of its long shape.

In *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea* (1988), Peter Kemp describes the term *ark* as “in a maritime sense used to describe the vessel said to have been constructed by *Noah” (p. 37). He questions whether the reality of the *ark* was possible in the given historical context and materials available, such as wood, referring to historians who argue “that the ark of Noah could not have had a wooden hull at all, but could only have been a large raft” (p. 37), adding

2. The verb *to pay* in nautical usage means to coat a ship's surface with tar or pitch for waterproofing. This term is rare or rather obsolete today. The cloud meaning of *ark* (also spelt *cirrus*) likely refers to its long, streak-like shape. These clouds were considered natural meteorological phenomena, often associated with changes in weather (Oxford University Press, 2024).

a description of the construction and information on the historical reality of such vessels. The entry also notes that in American English the term has come to denote “large flat-bottomed vessels used for carriage of produce down the major rivers” (p. 37). These river arks were also known as *flatboats*, *Kentucky boats*, *broadhorns*, *New Orleans boats*, and *flats*. They were widely used on the big southeastern rivers of the United States such as the Mississippi, its tributary Ohio, and the Tennessee rivers from the late 18th to mid-19th centuries. Built commercially from the 1780s, they were rectangular, flat-bottomed wooden craft designed for one-way downstream travel. These *arks* were powered by long oars called *sweeps* and were occasionally fitted with sails. They were used to transport agricultural produce and passengers and played a significant role in the displacement of Native American peoples during the expansion of the United States. Some of these boats had cabins for protection and onboard cooking. The developments in the transportation field in the 1800s made these boats redundant (National Park Service, 2021). This functional profile aligns more closely with the biblical ark’s semantics than with modern, engineered ships which further explains why *ark* did not survive in the technical maritime lexicon. The absence of *ark* in contemporary resources like the SMCP highlights its divergence from the functional language of the sea. This omission reflects the shift from a mythic and symbolic lexicon to one prioritizing clarity, utility, and universality in maritime communication. Thus, *ark* serves as a linguistic artifact – a reminder of the historical and cultural origins of maritime language, even as it finds no place in the standardised operational lexicon of modern seafaring.

Componential Analysis of *Ark*

In order to contextualise the semantic development of the term *ark*, a componential analysis was conducted. The aim was to trace its evolution from a literal vessel of salvation to a largely metaphorical and symbolic concept. This method allows us to systematically compare semantic features such as material, size, shape, placement, and function, across different historical periods. Binary oppositions are used where possible.

Biblical Reference

- Material: +wood, -metal
- Size: +large
- Shape: +box, +flat-bottomed
- Placement: +flood (biblical), -sea, -river
- Function: +salvation, -transport, +nautical

19th Century

- Material: +wood, -metal
- Size: +medium, -large
- Shape: +rectangular, +flat-bottomed
- Placement: +river, -sea, +flood (biblical)
- Function: +salvation (biblical), +transport, +nautical

20th Century

- Material: +wood, -steel
- Size: +large (symbolic)
- Shape: +rectangular, +flat-bottomed (biblical)
- Placement: -river, -sea, +flood (biblical)
- Function: +salvation (biblical), -transport, -nautical

21st Century

- Material: +wood (biblical)
- Size: +large (biblical)
- Shape: +box, +flat-bottomed (biblical)
- Placement: +flood (biblical), -river, -sea
- Function: +salvation (biblical), -transport, -nautical

Modern Technical Exclusion and Symbolic Survival

The results of the diachronic componential analysis demonstrate that, unlike *anchor*, which evolved into a technically precise maritime term (John, Brooks & Schriever, 2017), *ark* retained its religious and cultural weight and connotation without integrating into functional standardised seafaring vocabulary. This semantic stability further explains its absence from modern maritime standards like the SMCP and highlights its symbolic power in literature, religion, and culture.

The analysis also reveals that, although the physical referent has disappeared, the conceptual features associated with *ark*, particularly its shape, material association and function related to salvation, have remained remarkably stable. Its semantic features span from the biblical *ark* of Genesis, commonly understood as a large wooden flat-bottomed container of safety, through the nineteenth-century American river *ark* functioning as a real transport vessel, and finally to

the metaphorical *ark* in present-day discourse, where the term retains a semantic core focused on refuge and containment, rather than navigation or transport. This continuity of essential semantic features helps to explain the continued metaphorical viability of *ark* and its survival as a cultural and symbolic relic despite its marginalisation in modern technical maritime vocabulary.

Conclusion

This article has examined the semantic evolution and symbolic persistence of the term *ark* within the domain of maritime English. By tracing its etymology, biblical usage, and subsequent marginalisation in modern technical vocabulary, the study has shown that *ark* exemplifies a term whose metaphorical and salvific connotations have endured, whereas its practical nautical relevance has diminished. The componential analysis suggests that the material and functional referents of the term have shifted or disappeared while certain core semantic features, e.g., its association with refuge, containment, and symbolic meaning, have remained remarkably stable.

The exclusion of *ark* from language frameworks such as the Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) highlights a noticeable linguistic tendency in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to favour clarity and precision over language that is rooted in historical, religious, or cultural tradition. It is safe to conclude that the interplay of certain historical events such as the invention of the steam engine, the development of the rail and road systems, and the standardisation of the language of the seas has influenced significantly the semantic path of the term *ark*. The narrowing of its semantic range has maintained its metaphorical and religious associations but eliminated its role in the technical maritime lexicon. Future research might extend this approach to other archaic or symbolically charged maritime terms in order to explore patterns of lexical survival, loss, or transformation within technical language communities.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

The author declares that no Generative AI was used to produce any of the research, analysis, or conclusions presented in this work. ChatGPT was used to polish occasional slips of expression. After using the tool, the author reviewed and edited all suggestions and takes full responsibility for the content of the publication.

References

- Davies, J. (1611). *The scourge of folly*. Edward Allde for Richard Redmer.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2024). King James Version. In *Encyclopaedia Britannica Online*. Retrieved January 7, 2025, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/King-James-Version>
- Harper, D. (2001-2025). Etymology of ark. In *Online Etymology dictionary*. Retrieved January 7, 2025, from https://www.etymonline.com/word/ark#etymonline_v_16999
- International Maritime Organization. (2001, November 29). Resolution A.918(22): IMO STANDARD MARINE COMMUNICATION PHRASES. London.
- John, P., Brooks, B., & Schriever, U. (2017). Profiling maritime communication by non-native speakers: A quantitative comparison between the baseline and standard marine communication phraseology. *English for Specific Purposes*, 47, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.esp.2017.03.002>
- Kemp, P. (Ed.). (1988). *The Oxford companion to ships and the sea*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Leech, G. (1974). *Semantics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Lyons, J. (1977). *Semantics* (Vol. 1). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Markova, I. (2023). Savremenniyat chovek v tarsene na eticheskiya horizont [Modern Man in Search of the Ethical Horizon]. Varna: Slavena.
- MasonSoft Technology Ltd. (2011-2026). *The King's Bible*. Retrieved from <https://www.thekingsbible.com/Search/AdvancedSearchResults>
- Molhova, J. (1976). *Outlines of English lexicology*. Sofia: Naouka i Izkoustvo.
- National Park Service. (2021, June 8). Flatboats: Transportation during the Cherokee Removal 1837 - 1839. U.S. Department of the Interior. Retrieved July 10, 2025, from <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/flatboats-transportation-during-the-cherokee-removal-1837-1839.htm>
- Oxford University Press. (2023, July). Ark, n., 3. In *Oxford English dictionary*. Retrieved December 3, 2024, from <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/6661369440>
- Oxford University Press. (2023, July). Inark, v. In *Oxford English dictionary*. Retrieved January 12, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/5156944843>
- Oxford University Press. (2024, December). Arkite, adj. In *Oxford English dictionary*. Retrieved April 12, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/3454369835>
- Oxford University Press. (2024, December). Arkite, n. In *Oxford English dictionary*. Retrieved April 12, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/2447789165>

- Oxford University Press. (2024, December). Cirrus, n.¹, 4. In *Oxford English dictionary*. Retrieved April 12, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/1038586953>
- Oxford University Press. (2024, September). Meal-ark, n. In *Oxford English dictionary*. Retrieved January 12, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/3310580050>
- Oxford University Press. (2024, September). Unark, v. In *Oxford English dictionary*. Retrieved January 12, 2025, from <https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/6934715993>
- Project Gutenberg. (2024, October 29). King James Version of the Bible. Retrieved December 27, 2024, from <https://www.gutenberg.org>
- Sager, J. C. (1990). *A practical course in terminology processing*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company. <https://doi.org/10.1075/z.44>
- Smyth, W. H. (1867). *The sailor's word-wook: An alphabetical digest of nautical terms*. (S. E. Belcher, Ed.) London: Blackie and Son.
- Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ullmann, S. (1972). *Semantics: An introduction to the science of meaning*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell & Mott Ltd.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN L2 GRAMMAR LEARNING: PERCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF MACEDONIAN UNIVERSITY FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Silvana Neshkovska¹, Milena Kasaposka-Chadlovskaa², Lela Ivanovska³

^{1,3}St. Kliment Ohridski University, Republic of North Macedonia, ²Ss. Cyril and Methodius University – Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia

Abstract: Grammar is often regarded as the least engaging aspect of foreign language learning. Traditional approaches to grammar instruction are increasingly failing to meet learners' expectations, as digital-native students perceive conventional grammar books as uninspiring and ineffective. Meanwhile, the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping language learning environments. AI-powered tools such as Grammarly, Babbel, ChatGPT, ProWritingAid, etc. are redefining how learners engage with grammar. While recent studies suggest that AI can serve as a valuable aid for grammar learning, this area remains largely underexplored.

This study employs a mixed-methods design to investigate Macedonian university students' perceptions and experiences with AI as a feedback and correction mechanism in the context of L2 grammar mastery. A small-scale experiment was conducted among language- and non-language-oriented students, who were instructed first to identify and correct grammatical mistakes in an L2 text independently, and then to repeat the task with the aid of an AI tool of their choice. Participants subsequently completed a self-reflection questionnaire on their reliance on AI, the tools they used, and their perceptions of AI reliability.

The study's overall aim was to determine whether language and non-language students perform better individually or with AI assistance. Findings revealed that both groups achieved higher accuracy when supported by AI, though language-oriented students showed greater consistency, while non-language-oriented students displayed more variable outcomes. Overall, these results highlight AI's strong potential as a complementary tool for grammar learning, while underscoring the continued need for critical human oversight and further pedagogical innovation.

Keywords: AI, L2, grammar, language students, non-language students

About the author: Dr. Silvana Neshkovska is a full Professor at the Faculty of Education – Bitola, University St. Kliment Ohridski – Bitola. She teaches a number of courses in English linguistics such as Syntax, Pragmatics, Contrastive Analysis and Phonetics and Phonology as well as Translation, at the Department of Macedonian and Other Foreign Languages. Her main research interests lie in the field of pragmatics, contrastive analysis, English language teaching and translation. She has published a number of research papers in various domestic and foreign scientific journals (e.g., *Lodz Papers of Pragmatics; Acta Neophilologica; Respectus Philologicus; Linguistics, Elope; SILC*, etc.).

e-mail: silvana.neshkovska@uklo.edu.mk

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4417-7783>

Copyright © 2026 Silvana Neshkovska, Milena Kasaposka-Chadlovskaa, Lela Ivanovska

Article history: Received: 8 December 2025; Reviewed: 16 June 2026; Revised: 19 June 2026; Accepted: 24 June 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Neshkovska, S., Kasaposka-Chadlovskaa, M., & Ivanovska, L. (2026). Artificial intelligence in L2 grammar learning: Perceptions and practices of Macedonian university foreign language learners. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 98-119. <https://doi.org/10.46687/HJYK6523>

Introduction

In foreign language learning, mastering grammar is widely recognised as one of the greatest challenges for learners. It requires not only memorizing countless rules and their exceptions, but also finding opportunities for real-life practice, which are often scarce (Selvi & Vaishnavi, 2024). These constraints, combined with the limitations of traditional grammar instruction, which are heavily reliant on intrinsic motivation and persistence, can hinder fluency and long-term mastery (Stevens Jr., 2025).

In recent years, however, the emergence of AI-driven tools has begun to transform grammar teaching and learning. Such tools offer adaptive, interactive, and responsive instruction, enabling learners to internalize grammar more effectively and gain confidence as language users (Stevens Jr., 2025; Priya & Vijayalakshmi, 2024). Although research on AI's role in grammar acquisition is still in its early stages (Norton & Buchanan, 2022), current findings point to significant potential for both learners and teachers.

The study at hand contributes to this growing body of research by examining Macedonian university students' grammar rule awareness and their experience with AI as a feedback and correction mechanism for L2 grammar mastery. The overarching aim is to determine whether students, from both linguistic and non-linguistic profiles, handle L2 grammar mistakes more effectively individually or with the assistance of AI tools.

Theoretical Background

AI tools incorporate natural language processing (NLP) algorithms, allowing them to process vast amounts of data, imitate human intelligence, and generate language with increasing accuracy (Priya & Vijayalakshmi, 2024). They provide a range of advantages: instant error detection and correction; real-time explanations; personalized feedback; performance analysis; identification of problem areas; and continuous practice opportunities (Haleem et al., 2022; Hoang et al., 2021 in Katsarou et al., 2025; Priya & Vijayalakshmi, 2024). Gamification features enhance engagement, while scaffolding enables adaptation to learners' pace and proficiency levels (Stevens Jr., 2025). These elements improve linguistic performance, motivation, and confidence, leading to greater behavioural, emotional, and cognitive engagement (Nazari et al., 2021, in Tarhini, 2024). AI also supports lifelong learning by offering remote, self-paced access to high-quality resources (Priya & Vijayalakshmi, 2024) and aligns with broader educational goals, such as fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy (Kuznietsova & Kulakova, 2024).

Beyond aiding learners, AI supports teachers by processing large datasets, retrieving relevant, up-to-date resources, and tailoring lesson plans to students'

needs. It can also be used to create quizzes and other instructional materials, and to streamline student assessment, making it faster and more efficient (Stevens Jr., 2025).

Tarhini (2024) classifies AI tools for grammar instruction into four categories: **teaching aids** which generate gamified exercises and quizzes (e.g., Quizlet, Kahoot, Duolingo for Schools); **assessment tools** which provide formative and summative assessments in engaging formats (e.g., Edulastic, Classcraft Quests); **error-checking and feedback tools** which detect errors and offer explanations (e.g., Grammarly, NoRedInk, Hemingway Editor, Scribens), and **lesson preparation and design tools** (e.g., Teach AI, Lesson Up, Eduflow, Nearpod, Quizlet). Tarhini (2024) accentuates that all these AI tools are currently free to use and that their effectiveness in improving grammar mastery has been confirmed by other studies too (Anson & Straume, 2022; Dong, 2023; Alharbi, 2023; Vogt & Flindt, 2023; Kawashima, 2023). Selvi and Vaishnavi (2024) highlight popular free tools such as Grammarly and QuillBot (for grammar correction and paraphrasing) and speech-based AI chatbots like Speak and Improve or Deep English (for conversational grammar practice). Priya and Vijayalakshmi (2024) list ten leading AI grammar correction tools: Grammarly, ProWritingAid, Ginger Software, WhiteSmoke Features, Linguix Features, Slick Write Features, Hemingway Editor, LanguageTool, Sapling, and QuillBot, noting their advantages (user-friendly design, in-depth analysis, performance tracking, etc.) and disadvantages (limited free versions, restricted languages, inconsistent suggestions, privacy concerns, etc.). They conclude that learners using AI-powered tools make fewer grammatical errors and produce clearer writing.

Despite these benefits, recent studies underline that challenges in the implementation of AI in grammar instruction still remain. Selecting the most suitable tool for a given learner is not always straightforward; for example, gamification may be very efficient for younger learners but not adequate for advanced learners (Selvi & Vaishnavi, 2024). There are also concerns about over-reliance on AI, as students who use grammar checkers without understanding the grammar rule underlying those corrections run the risk of not internalizing the grammar rules in question (Stevens Jr., 2025).

Due to these challenges and concerns, scholars agree that AI should complement, not replace, teacher-led instruction. A blended learning approach, combining the strengths of both traditional and AI-enhanced methods, appears to be optimal. Stevens Jr. (2025) emphasizes that AI should be seen as a complementary tool rather than an independent solution. He argues that its success relies on human involvement, institutional backing, and systemic equity. According to him, only through a coordinated, inclusive, and adequately resourced effort can AI fully

contribute to advancing English grammar instruction and, more broadly, the educational field.

Research Methodology

Research Aim, Hypotheses, and Questions

For the purposes of this study, we conducted an experiment aimed at shedding light on the **grammar rule awareness** of two profiles of Macedonian university students – **language-oriented (LO)** and **non-language-oriented (NLO)** as well as on their **interaction with AI as a feedback and correction mechanism**. More precisely, this research sought to test two general hypotheses and to provide answers to six research questions:

H1: There is a significant difference in the number of correct corrections made by LO and NLO students without the assistance of AI.

H2: Both profiles of students produce a substantially higher percentage of correct corrections when assisted by AI.

RQ1: What patterns emerge in students' responses during the grammar correction task?

RQ2: To what extent are LO and NLO students able to identify and correct grammatical mistakes in a written text, both independently and with the help of AI?

RQ3: What types of grammatical mistakes are most frequently successfully corrected and what mistakes are overlooked or miscorrected by students, and how does this relate to their academic profile?

RQ4: What AI tools do students use to assist them in identifying and correcting grammatical mistakes in a written text?

RQ5: What are students' attitudes toward AI's grammar corrections and explanations?

RQ6: How accurate is AI in confirming, rejecting, or correcting student-provided grammatical revisions?

Participants in the experiment

A total of **67** students participated in the survey: **30** from the Faculty of Education in Bitola, **25** from the Faculty of Information and Communication Technologies in Bitola, and **12** from the Faculty of Philology in Skopje. The participants were enrolled in different study programs and were in different years of study, ranging from the first to the fourth year of undergraduate programs. This diverse sample was purposefully selected to obtain more comprehensive insights into the use

of AI tools for grammar-related purposes, primarily between two profiles of students – students with a language-focused academic background and students in non-language-oriented study programs who have studied a foreign language as part of their university curriculum. The students with the language-focused academic background were majoring in English (Faculty of Education – Bitola) and French (Faculty of Philology – Skopje); whereas, the students with non-linguistic background were majoring in ICT (Faculty of Information and Communication Technologies – Bitola).

The three phases of the experiment

The experiment was conducted in three phases. During the first phase (P1) the students were instructed to read and analyse a short text on the topic of travelling (“A Traveller’s Tale”) so that they detect and correct the grammar mistakes scattered randomly at different points in the text. The text was generated by ChatGPT 3.5 both in English and French (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2), based on prompts that instructed the AI tool to include a range of specific grammar mistakes. The text contains a total of 25 grammatical mistakes. However, the first two mistakes were presented as examples in the instructions, intended to guide students on how to approach the experiment. Therefore, the actual number of mistakes students worked with during the experiment was 23. The experiment was done in class and lasted 45 minutes¹.

The grammatical mistakes selected were approximately aligned with the B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), ensuring that all participants had comparable exposure to the relevant grammar structures. The selection aimed to include a wide range of grammatical issues, ranging from verb tenses (M7, M8, M13, M22), to articles (M4, M11, M14), habitual past tense (Eng)/ conditional (Fr) (10)², prepositions (M15), gerund (Eng)/ past participle (past participle) (Fr) (M20), singular/ plural form of nouns (M12, M25), adjectives vs. adverbs (M16), pronouns (M17, M23), subject–verb agreement (M3, M21), double negation (M5), collocations (M6), perfect infinitive (M9), embedded questions (M18), conditional sentences (M19), and bare infinitive (M24).

In the second phase of the experiment (P2), the students were allowed to use their mobile phones and employ an AI tool of their choosing, in order to verify

1. For the French language students, the experiment was conducted online, as it was not possible to organize a joint live session due to some participants being on Erasmus mobility exchange at the time of the experiment. Although direct monitoring of their actions during the experiment was limited, the students were given clear instructions to follow the established rules and to complete the three phases of the experiment systematically, in good faith, and with integrity.

2. English and French differ in certain grammatical aspects, which has led to differences in a few error types in the French version of the text generated with ChatGPT.

their corrections but also to make sure that they have not disregarded other mistakes present in the text.

Finally, in the last phase (P3), they were instructed to reflect on their experience using AI to assist them in identifying and correcting the mistakes in the text, by filling in a self-reflection questionnaire composed of eight open-ended questions and a space for an additional comment (see Appendix 3).

Results

Results from the experiment (P1 and P2)

The close analysis of students' responses revealed six recurring patterns of response types (RT) with respect to the grammar mistakes in the text (see Table 1 and Table 2):

RT1. The student identified and corrected the mistake (P1), and, AI approved of their correction (P2) ($\checkmark \checkmark$);

RT2. The student failed to identify and correct the mistake (P1), and, AI offered no correction (P2) ($/ \ /$)³;

RT3. The student failed to identify and correct the mistake (P1), but, AI offered an appropriate correction (P2) ($/ \checkmark$)⁴;

RT4. The student identified the mistake but offered an incorrect correction (P1), and, AI did not approve of it and offered an appropriate correction (P2) ($\checkmark X \checkmark$),

RT5. The student identified the mistake but offered an incorrect correction (P1), and AI offered no correction (P2) ($\checkmark X \ /$)⁵, and

RT6. The student identified and corrected the mistake adequately (P1), but, AI did not approve of the correction (P2) ($\checkmark \checkmark X$).

The analysis of 966 LO students' responses across two university units (690 responses from the Faculty of Education – Bitola and 276 responses from the Faculty of Philology – Skopje) revealed similar recurring patterns in students' engagement with grammar mistakes in the given text (Table 1).

3. In this case, it remains unclear whether the students prompted AI to inspect the text for mistakes. However, since no comments were provided in the column designated for AI suggestions, comments, or corrections, we simply noted that AI did not correct the mistake in question.

4. In this case, it is evident that the student, although failing to notice the mistake independently, did consult an AI tool to check for grammatical mistakes. As a result, the AI tool identified and corrected the mistake at the relevant point in the text.

5. In this case too, we cannot be sure if the students consulted AI or not. We assume that they felt sufficiently confident in their corrections and, as a result, did not seek confirmation from AI. This likely explains the absence of comments in the column designated for AI's corrections and suggestions.

Table 1. Response types of LO students

	English language students (23 mistakes x 30 students = 690 responses)						French language students (23 mistakes x 12 students = 276 responses)					
	RT1 (✓)	RT2 (/)	RT3 (✓)	RT4 (✓X ✓)	RT5 (✓X /)	RT6 (✓X X)	RT1 (✓)	RT2 (/)	RT3 (✓)	RT4 (✓X ✓)	RT5 (✓X /)	RT6 (✓X X)
M3	22	8	/	/	/	/	10	1	1	/	/	/
M4	11	14	2	2	1	/	4	6	2	/	/	/
M5	21	4	/	5	/	/	10	/	/	1		1
M6	27	3	/	/	/	/	7	3	2	/	/	/
M7	4	22	3	1	/	/	3	5	2	/	/	2
M8	27	1	2	/	/	/	7	/	2	1		2
M9	5	11	12	2	/	/	/	7	4	/	/	1
M10	19	10	1	/	/	/	2	3	3	/	1	3
M11	6	15	8	/	1	/	7	2	3	/	/	/
M12	5	17	8	/	/	/	12	/	/	/	/	/
M13	22	3	5	/	/	/	5	5	2	/	/	/
M14	3	22	4	/	1	/	5	5	2	/	/	/
M15	5	22	2	/	1	/	/	10	2	/	/	/
M16	25	5	/	/	/	/	9	2	1	/	/	/
M17	17	11	2	/	/	/	9	2	1	/	/	/
M18	12	15	3	/	/	/	5	6	1	/	/	/
M19	9	10	9	2	/	/	5	3	4	/	/	/
M20	6	18	6	/	/	/	10	2	/	/	/	/
M21	27	3	/	/	/	/	10	2	/	/	/	/
M22	22	6	2	/	/	/	12	/	/	/	/	/
M23	19	10	1	/	/	/	2	7	3	/	/	/
M24	24	4	2	/	/	/	6	5	/	/	/	1
M25	19	10	1	/	/	/	2	4	3	/	/	3
	357 (51.73%)	244 (35.36%)	73 (10.57%)	12 (1.73%)	4 (0.57%)	/	142 (51.44%)	80 (28.98%)	38 (13.76%)	2 (0.72%)	1 (0.36%)	13 (4.71%)

The distribution of the response types in the LO group indicates clear similarities between English and French majors in how they engaged with error correction and AI feedback (Chart 1).

More specifically, the English students (51.73%) and the French students (51.44%) mostly identified and corrected the grammatical mistakes successfully, and then received confirmation from the AI tool for their corrections.

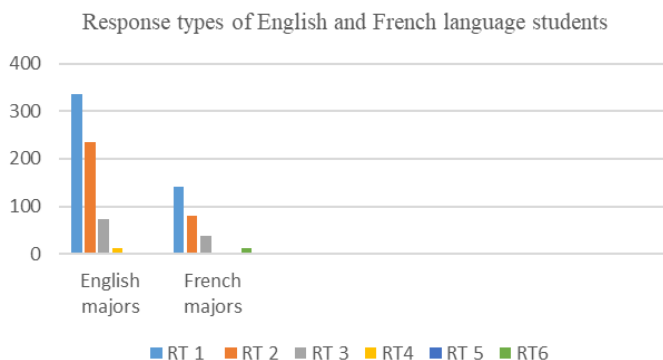


Chart 1. *The response types of the LO students*

The LO students were most successful in detecting and correcting the following mistakes: subject-verb agreement (M3, M21) (1); double negation (M5) (2), verb tenses (M8, M13, M22) (3), and singular/plural of nouns (M25) (4). In addition, the English majors did very well with correcting the mistakes related to collocations (M6) (5), and adjectives vs. adverbs (M16) (6); whereas, the French majors with the participle form (M20) (7).

(1) *Travelling are* [...] corrected as, *Travelling is* [...]

La météo étaient [...] corrected as, *La météo était* [...]

(2) *I have never seen **nothing*** [...] corrected as, *I have never seen **anything*** [...]

Je n'ai pas jamais vu [...] corrected as, *Je n'ai jamais vu* [...]

(3) *One day, he **take*** [...] corrected as, *One day, he **took*** [...]

*Il nous **prend*** [...] corrected as, *Il nous **a pris*** [...]

(4) [...] *and meeting **peoples** from different backgrounds* corrected as [...] *and meeting **people** from different backgrounds*

[...] ***les campagne*** corrected as, [...] ***les campagnes***

(5) [...] ***were got sick*** corrected as, [...] ***got sick***

(6) *The canals in Amsterdam were **beautifully*** [...] corrected as *The canals in Amsterdam were **beautiful*** [...]

(7) *Je me réjouis déjà à l'idée de **planifié** [...]* corrected as, *Je me réjouis déjà à l'idée de **planifier** [...]*

However, it is important to note that a significant portion of their responses, approximately one-third (English – 35.36% vs. French – 28.98%), fell under Response Type 2 (RT2), indicating that the students did not detect the mistakes and, consequently, did not consult AI to verify the grammatical correctness of those sentences. Both groups of language-oriented students were least successful with the following mistakes: articles (M14) (8), and prepositions (M15) (9). The English language students had some issues with the detection and correction of the mistakes related to gerund (M20) (10), and some verb tenses too (M7) (11); whereas, the French language students with the perfect infinitive (M9) (12).

(8) *I didn't knew that **Dutch** are [...]* should have been corrected as, *I didn't know that **the Dutch** are [...]*

*Je ne savais pas que **Néerlandais** [...]* should have been corrected as, *Je ne savais pas que **les Néerlandais** [...]*

(9) *[...] are so good **with** cycling [...]* should have been corrected as, *[...] are so good **at** cycling [...]*

*[...] sont si doués **avec** le vélo [...]* should have been corrected as *[...] sont si doués **pour** le vélo [...]*

(10) *[...] looking forward to **plan**...* should have been corrected as, *... looking forward to **planning** [...]*

(11) *[...] a family friend who **is living** in Munich [...]* should have been corrected as, *[...] a family friend who **lives** in Munich [...]*

(12) *[...] au château de Neuschwanstein, qui est **dit d'avoir eu** inspiré [...]* should have been corrected as, *[...] au château de Neuschwanstein, **qui aurait inspiré** [...]*

Interestingly, a small but significant portion of their responses were classified as Response Type 3 (RT3), meaning that although the students did not perceive any grammatical errors, they still chose to consult AI for confirmation. In these cases, the AI tools identified and corrected the previously unnoticed mistakes (English – 10.57% vs. French – 13.76%). Notably, the AI tools most frequently intervened in correcting the following mistakes: perfect infinitive use (M9) (13), and conditional sentences (M19) (14). With the English majors this was also the case with the use of the articles (M11) (15).

(13) *[...] which is said to **had inspired** Disney's castle [...]* was corrected by AI as *[...] which is said to **have inspired** Disney's castle [...]*

*[...] qui est **dit d'avoir eu** inspiré [...]* was corrected by AI as *[...] **qui aurait inspiré** [...]*

(14) *If I would travel again next year* [...] was corrected by AI as, *If I travel again next year* [...]

Si je voyagerais l'été prochain [...] was corrected by AI as, *Si je voyageais/si je voyage* [...]

(15) *Netherlands* [...] was corrected by AI as, *The Netherland* [...]

The next two response types (RT4 and RT5), although less frequent in both groups, are still noteworthy. Only 1.73% of the responses of the English majors and 0.72% of the French majors' responses fell under Response Type 4 (RT4), where students provided incorrect corrections, which were subsequently revised more accurately by AI. Though rare, such instances indicate meaningful student involvement and emphasize the AI's contribution to improving correction quality. In the case of the English majors, the analysis revealed one to two such occurrences for the following mistakes: articles (M4, M11), verb tenses (M7), perfect infinitive (M9), and conditional sentences (M19); whereas, in the case of the French majors, such instances were noted in relation to double negation (M5) and verb tenses (M8). Then, 0.57% of the English majors' responses and 0.36% of the French majors' responses were categorized as Response Type 5 (RT5), where students suggested incorrect corrections that were, surprisingly, not challenged by AI. In the English group, instances of this type of response were related to the use of the articles, where the students would not add the definite article *the* to nouns such as *Dutch* (when it refers to nationality) and *Netherland*, and AI would not correct them. In the French group, the only mistake recorded in RT5 was with respect to the use of the present conditional form (M10) (16):

(16) *Sur le chemin du retour, on s'arrêterait dans un petit village* [...] corrected by the student as, *on s'arrêtes dans un petit village* [...]

Finally, in the English group of language students, no instances were spotted of RT6, where students made accurate corrections that were not acknowledged by AI. Conversely, in the French group, 4.71% of responses fell under RT6. This percentage suggests occasional inconsistencies in the AI's evaluative capabilities. The most frequent mistakes in RT6 were with respect to the use of the present conditional form (M10) (17) and the singular/plural of nouns (M25) (18):

(17) *Sur le chemin du retour, on s'arrêterait dans un petit village* [...] corrected by the student as, *on s'est arrêté dans un petit village* [...] but disapproved from AI and rectified as [...] *nous nous sommes arrêtés*

(18) [...] *et rencontrer un peuple de cultures différentes* [...] corrected as, [...] *des peuples de cultures différentes*, but disapproved from AI and rectified as [...] *des gens de cultures différentes* [...]

Regarding RT6, the corrections proposed by the AI for the French examples do not constitute the rectification of an incorrect answer but rather offer an alternative, equally valid formulation of the student’s response. Since both the student’s and the AI-generated answers are grammatically correct, the AI’s rejection of the student’s correction can be considered unfounded and unjustified.

Similarly, the analysis of 575 responses of NLO students from the Faculty of Information and Communication Technologies – Bitola showcased similar recurring patterns in students’ responses.

Table 2. *Response types of NLO students*
Students of Information and Communication Technologies
(23 mistakes x 25 students = 575 responses)

	RT1 (✓)	RT2 (/)	RT3 (✓)	RT4 (✓X)	RT5 (X/)	RT6 (X/X)
M3	6	19	/	/	/	/
M4	11	14	/	/	/	/
M5	17	6	2	/	/	/
M6	24	1	/	/	/	/
M7	2	22	1	/	/	/
M8	21	2	2	/	/	/
M9	10	12	1	1	1	/
M10	11	12	1	1	/	/
M11	3	21	1	/	/	/
M12	4	20	1	/	/	/
M13	21	3	1	/	/	/
M14	5	19	1	/	/	/
M15	5	18	/	1	1	/
M16	18	7	/	/	/	/
M17	17	8	/	/	/	/
M18	9	16	/	/	/	/
M19	7	8	2	6	2	/
M20	9	14	1	1	/	/
M21	23	1	1	/	/	/
M22	18	7	/	/	/	/
M23	18	7	/	/	/	/
M24	17	8	/	/	/	/
M25	15	10	/	/	/	/
Total	291 (50.6%)	255 (44.34%)	15 (2.6%)	10 (1.73%)	4 (0.69%)	/

The most frequent response type within this group of respondents was RT1 **(50.6%) as well**. This means that these *students too, for the most part, correctly identified and corrected the mistakes, and obtained AI approval of their corrections*. Put differently, this finding indicates that half of all responses of NLO students demonstrated student competence both in recognizing grammatical errors and in independently producing valid corrections, which were then confirmed by AI. This, in turn, might serve as a strong indicator of grammatical awareness and skill among these participants, despite the fact that their university studies were not language-focused. They were most successful in identifying and correcting the following mistakes: collocations (M6) (5), verb tense (M13) (19), and subject-verb agreement (M21) (1) (Chart 2).

(19) *I didn't knew [...]* was corrected as *I didn't know [...]*

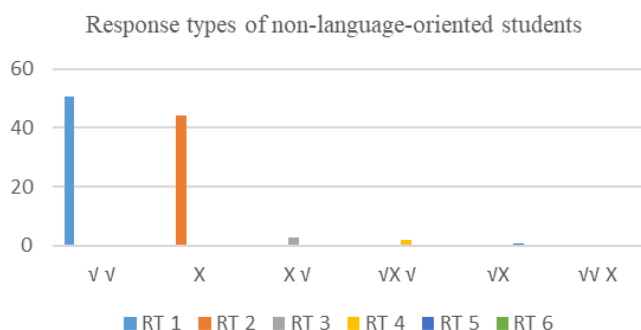


Chart 2. Response types of NLO students

Nevertheless, a significant number of student responses **(44.34%)** fell into the RT2 category, meaning *students failed to identify or correct some of the mistakes consistently, and then failed to consult AI to offer suggestions*. The students were least successful in identifying and correcting mistakes related to: the use of articles (M11, M14) (8), verb tenses (M7) (11), and singular/plural of nouns (M12) (20).

(20) [...] we explored the *counttrysides* [...], should have been corrected as, [...] we explored the *counttryside* [...]

A considerably smaller number of NLO students failed to identify or correct the mistake, but AI offered an appropriate correction (2.6%) (RT3). A few instances of this response type were noticed in relation to half of the mistakes present in the text.

An insignificant portion of these students **(1.73%)** demonstrated a partial success as they were able to spot the mistake but were unable to provide an appropriate correction (RT4). However, AI helped steer them toward the accurate solution, and this was the case with regards to the following mistakes: perfect infinitive (M9) (13), past habitual actions (M10) (21), prepositions (M15, M20) (9) and conditional clauses (M19) (14). **RT5** pattern, where *students identified the mistake and tried*

to correct it with an incorrect solution, and failed to consult AI, most probably, because they were sure that their correction was appropriate, was noted in a **few responses (0.69%)** related to the following mistakes: perfect infinitive (M9) (13), prepositions (M15) (9), and conditional sentences (M19) (14).

(21) [...] *we **would stop** at a small village [...]*, was corrected by AI as, [...] *we **stopped** at a small village [...]*

Interestingly, the analysis revealed **no responses in this group of students in the RT6** (*the students corrected the mistake, but AI didn't accept it*).

When comparing the performance of LO and NLO students, several striking parallels and distinctions emerge. Both groups showed a similar overall pattern: approximately half of their responses fell into RT1, where students successfully detected and corrected the errors, and their solutions were confirmed by AI. This finding suggests that grammatical awareness is not the exclusive domain of language majors; students from information technology studies also demonstrated a solid command of L2 grammar in many instances. The only difference here was that the range of mistakes that LO students handled well (verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, double negation, adjective vs. adverbs, participle, collocations, singular/plural of nouns) was wider than the range of mistakes that their NLO counterparts handled with a great deal of accuracy (verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, collocations). At the same time, RT2 responses (where neither the students nor AI corrected the errors) were frequent in both groups, but they were more frequent among the NLO group (about 44%), indicating a sharper sensitivity to grammatical detail on the part of the LO group (about 30% of their answers fell under this category). A comparison of the results with respect to RT2, reveals a common blind spots in both groups of students, especially with respect to the use of articles and prepositions. It is very likely that the students were convinced that there were no grammar mistakes at some points in the text, and, consequently, did not ask AI to validate their assumptions.

Where the groups differed most clearly was in their use of AI as a supportive tool. LO students were more inclined to seek confirmation when uncertain, which is reflected in their higher proportion of RT3 responses (12%), especially with respect to the use of perfect infinitive and conditional sentences. In these cases, AI often stepped in to supply the correction students had overlooked. As to the NLO students, the finding that only a small percentage (2.6%) asked for help when uncertain, suggests that while they have the grammatical competence to perform well, they may lack the habit of second-guessing their answers or actively engaging with AI to refine them.

A similar, small percentage of the students from both groups produced invalid corrections to different mistakes in the text (RT4 and RT5) (about 1-2%) but the comparison shows that this percentage was still slightly smaller in the case of the LO students, which reaffirms their tendency for more acute identification and correction of grammar mistakes.

Finally, the occasional instances of RT6 (valid student corrections rejected by AI), observed only in the LO group, highlight the limitations of technology as a learning partner. These mismatches, though rare, show that AI may sometimes classify a correct response as incorrect while suggesting an alternative that is equally acceptable. Such cases remind us that AI cannot fully replace human judgment and that students must learn to engage with it critically.

Results from students' self-reflection questionnaire (P3 of the experiment)

The most immediately evident finding that came out of the analysis of the students' self-reflection questionnaire was that nearly all students irrespective of their academic profiles rely on the same AI-driven tool for grammar assistance – ChatGPT. Occasionally, however, some of them mentioned using other tools such as Gemini, Perplexity, Deepseek, Copilot, Google Chat, Free AI, and GrammarCheck (see Table 3).

Table 3. *AI tool/s used by students for grammar assistance during the experiment*

	Language-oriented students		Non-language-oriented students
	Faculty of Education - Bitola	Faculty of Philology - Skopje	Faculty of Information and Communication Technologies - Bitola
ChatGPT	25 (83.3%)	9 (75%)	20 (80%)
Gemini	3	2	1
Free AI	1	/	/
Google Chat	1	/	/
Deepseek	/	/	1
Perplexity	/	/	2
GrammarCheck.ai	/	/	1
Copilot	/	1	/
total	30	12	25

More precisely, 79.2% of the LO students (the average percentage of LO students from the Faculty of Education – Bitola and the Faculty of Philology – Skopje) reported using ChatGPT, compared to 80% of the NLO students. Other AI tools were considerably less common, used by 20.8% of the LO and 20% of NLO students. Prior experience with AI tools was also widespread in both groups, though more pronounced in the group of NLO students (100%) than the group of their LO peers (90.5%). When asked about the reliability of AI-generated responses, levels of trust varied. Only 40.5% of LO students expressed full confidence in AI accuracy, while the majority (59.5%) remained skeptical or uncertain. In contrast, over half, i.e. 60% of NLO students reported full trust, and 40% expressed doubts (Table 4).

Table 4. *Students’ responses in the self-reflection questionnaire*

	Language-oriented students (total 42)		Non-language-oriented students (total 25)	
	Yes	No or Yes/No	Yes	No or Yes/No
1.AI tool used	ChatGPT 35	Others AI tools 7	ChatGpt 21	Other AI tools 4
2. Previous experience with this tool	38	4	25	/
3. Reliability of this AI tool	17	25	15	10
4. Acceptance of the AI’s corrections	33	9	17	8
5. Accessibility of the explanations provided by AI	38	4	23	2
6. Mistakes students noted only thanks to AI	33	9	11	14
7. Acquisition of new rules thanks to AI	16	26	11	14
8. Additional explanations from AI	8	34	3	22

In terms of acceptance of AI’s corrections, the two groups were closely aligned: 78.6% of the LO and 68% of the NLO students accepted all AI suggestions, while the rest accepted them only partially, reflecting an attempt to strike the right balance between openness to AI support and critical judgment. Both groups also found the explanations provided by AI accessible and clear, i.e., 90.5% of the LO and 92% of the NLO students agreed that the explanations were helpful. When asked about recognizing mistakes with AI assistance, the LO students reported a higher degree of discovery: 78.6% acknowledged noticing mistakes they would not have identified independently, compared to 44% of the NLO students.

Perceptions of learning new grammar rules through AI intervention differed only slightly in both groups – 38.1% of the LO students and 44% of the NLO students felt they had acquired new rules thanks to AI. Finally, both groups reported very low levels of requesting additional explanations from AI tools. A striking 81% of the LO and an even larger 88% of the NLO students stated they did not ask AI for further clarification of grammar rules. Only a few students from both groups offered additional comments at the end of the questionnaire, stating that AI tools are very useful in the context of grammar, but that still caution should be exercised in their usage, as they are sometimes prone to mistakes.

Overall, the findings reveal both convergences and divergences between the two groups. In many respects, the LO and the NLO students behaved similarly, particularly in their choice of AI tools for grammar support, their previous experience with AI tools, then, their tendency to accept most AI-generated

corrections as well as their shared appreciation of the clarity of AI explanations. Also, both groups rarely asked AI for additional explanations, which may point either to satisfaction with the initial feedback or to underdeveloped strategies for engaging in deeper interaction with AI tools. As to the differences, the LO students appeared more critical and cautious, as reflected in their lower trust in AI reliability. Interestingly, at the same time, this same cohort of LO students reported a higher rate of noticing previously overlooked mistakes thanks to AI's assistance. This finding suggests that their stronger grammatical background may make them more attentive to nuanced feedback from AI tools. Taken together, these results indicate that while AI feedback benefits all learners, its perceived value and impact may vary depending on learners' prior linguistic training and confidence with grammar.

Conclusion

The findings of this study confirmed that the LO students only slightly outperformed their NLO peers in independently identifying and correcting grammatical mistakes, thereby refuting H1. Furthermore, although in both groups improvement in accuracy was spotted when assisted by AI, still the improvement was much more substantial in the group of LO students. While this finding highlights the tool's value as a supportive aid in grammar learning, it validates H2 only partially, as the LO students, probably due to their slightly more acute focus on grammar learning, showed that they can use AI in grammar correction more persistently and strategically.

In response to the research questions, six recurring response patterns (RT1–RT6) were identified (RQ1), with RT1 (student correction approved by AI) being dominant, and RT2 (errors missed by both student and AI) being quite frequent in both groups. This indicates that both the LO and NLO students are capable of achieving a considerable degree of accuracy independently, which can then be improved as a result of consulting AI in both profiles of students. However, as already stated, more significantly in the LO group (RQ2), understandably, as they are by default language-oriented and that entails mastering L2 grammar, among other aspects of the foreign language. The experiment also reveals the existence of some blind spots in the grammar knowledge of both groups of students. Namely, while articles, prepositions, verb tenses, and perfect infinitive were the categories of mistakes most often overlooked or miscorrected (though specific error types varied slightly between groups), both groups did very well mainly with subject-verb agreement, some of the verb tenses and the use of collocations (RQ3).

Regarding AI usage (RQ4), students primarily employed widely available grammar-checking tools to support their work, with a clear predominance in that respect on the part of ChatGPT. Their attitudes toward AI's corrections and explanations were generally positive, with the majority of students from both groups unequivocally confirming that in their responses (RQ5). Finally, while AI

was largely accurate in confirming or correcting students' revisions, occasional mismatches were noted, which points to the tool's limitations and underscores the necessity of combining technological assistance with human oversight (RQ6).

Taken together, these results suggest that AI can serve as a powerful pedagogical partner for students across disciplines, enhancing their grammatical accuracy and awareness when thoughtfully integrated into the learning process. Consequently, further research is imperative to develop innovative pedagogical strategies that can fully harness AI's potential in supporting L2 grammar learning not just within the Macedonian higher educational context but on a global scale.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the preparation of this manuscript, ChatGPT (OpenAI) was used solely in the final stage of the writing process to review sentence structure and make minor linguistic refinements in order to improve clarity, coherence, and academic style. The prompts used included requests such as “*check and polish*”, “*refine academic style*”, and “*improve sentence structure*”. The AI tool was not used to generate the study's ideas, research design, data analysis, interpretation of findings, or conclusions. The authors accept full responsibility for the final content of the manuscript.

References

- Alharbi, W. (2023). AI in the Foreign Language Classroom: A Pedagogical Overview of Automated Writing Assistance Tools. *Education Research International*, 2023(1), 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2023/4253331>
- Anson, C. M. & Straume, S. I. (2022). Amazement and Trepidation: Implications of AI-based Naturla. Language Production for Teaching of Writing. *Journal of Academic Writing*, 12(1), 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.18552/joaw.v12i1.820>
- Dong, Y. (2023). Revolutionizing Academic English Writing through AI-Powered Pedagogy: Practical Exploration of Teaching Process and Assessment. *Journal of Higher Education Research*, 4(2), 52 –57. <https://doi.org/10.32629/jher.v4i2.1188>
- Haleem, A., Javaid, M., Qadri, M. A., & Suman, R. (2022). Understanding the role of digital technologies in education: A review. *Sustainable Operations and Computers*, 3, 275–285.
- Hoang, Q., Pham, T., Dang, Q., & Nguyen, T. (2021). Factors Influencing Vietnamese Teenagers' Intention to Use Mobile Devices for English Language Learning. In *18th International Conference of the Asia Association of Computer-assisted Language Learning* (AsiaCALL–2-2021) (pp. 230–245). Atlantis Press.
- Katsarou, V. D., Mantsos, E., Papadopoulou, S., Sofologi, M., Efthymiou, E., Vasileiou, I., Megari, K., Theodoratou, M., & Kougioumtzis, G., A. (2025). Exploring AI

- Technology in Grammar Performance Testing for Children with Learning Disabilities. *Educ. Sci.* 2025, 15(3), 351, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15030351>.
- Kawashima, T. (2023). Student Perceptions of Grammarly, Teacher's Indirect and Direct Feedback: Possibility of Machine Feedback. *The JALT CALL Journal*, 19(1), 113-139. <https://doi.org/10.29140/jaltcall.v19n1.1017>
- Kuznietsova, O., & Kulakova, I., (2024). Integration of AI Tools in Teaching Grammar. *Humanities Science Current Issues*, 75(2), pp. 225-230, ISSN 2308-4855 (Print), ISSN 2308-4863 (Online), <https://doi.org/10.24919/2308-4863/75-2-35>
- Nazari, N., Shabbir, M.S., & Setiawan, R. (2021). Application of Artificial Intelligence Powered Digital Writing Assistance in Higher Education: Randomized Controlled Trial. *Heliyon*, 7(5), e07014. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07014>
- Norton, J., & Buchanan, H. (Eds.) (2022). *The Routledge Handbook of Materials Development for Language Teaching*. Routledge: New York. ISBN: 9780815382577. <https://doi.org/10.4324/b22783>.
- Priya, C., & Vijayalakshmi, R. (2024). Grammar Correction AI Tools for English Language Teachers in Higher Education. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Technology*, 11(5), 380-384, ISSN: 2349-6002, IJIRT 168294 380. <https://doi.org/10.64643/IJIRTV11I5-168294-459>
- Selvi, V. T., & Vaishnavi. B., (2024). Comparison on Applications and Impact of AI in English Grammar Learning. *Recent Research Reviews Journal*, 3(2), 357-369, ISSN: 2583-7079, <https://irojournals.com/rrr>. <https://doi.org/10.36548/rrrj.2024.2.004>
- Stevens Jr., J. P. (2025). Artificial Intelligence in the Teaching of English Grammar. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science*, 10(6), 878-896. ISSN 2454-6194. <https://doi.org/10.51584/IJRIAS.2025.10060066>
- Tarhini, H. (2024). The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Enhancing Grammar Instruction for Intermediate Public School EFL Teachers in Nabatieh District. *Journal of Literature and Humanitarian Studies*, 259-275. Accessed at <https://www.awraqthaqafya.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%89-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%AD%D9%8A%D9%86%D9%8A.pdf>, on 22.8.2025.
- Vogt, K., & Flindt, N. (2023). Artificial intelligence and the future of language teacher education. A critical review of the use of AI tools in the foreign language classroom. In P. Hohaus & J.-F. Heeren (Eds.), *Innovating the future of teacher education*. (pp. 179-199). Brill. https://doi.org/10.1163.9789004678545_008

Appendix 1

A Traveler's Tale (*For the convenience of readers, the grammar mistakes are marked in the text; however, this was not the case during the actual experiment)	Phase 1 (Find and correct the grammatical mistakes without using any resources)	Phase 2 (Check your corrections by using AI tool/s)
Last summer, I have travelled (M1) to several countries in Europe with my cousins. We visited France, Germany, and Netherlands (M2), and it was an unforgettable experience. The weather in all these countries were (M3) perfect most of the time, except a few rainy days in Berlin. In France, we went to the top of Eiffel Tower (M4) and took a lot of photos. The view from there was absolutely stunning. I have never seen nothing (M5) like it before. We also tried many delicious local dishes, including escargots and different types of cheese. Surprisingly, none of us were got sick (M6) from trying unfamiliar food. While in Germany, we stayed with a family friend who is living (M7) in Munich. He was very kind and showed us around the city. One day, he take (M8) us to Neuschwanstein Castle, which is said to had inspired (M9) Disney's castles. On the way back, we would stop (M10) at a small village to try traditional German pastries. Netherlands (M11) was our final destination. We rented bikes and explored the countrysides (M12). I didn't knew (M13) that Dutch (M14) are so good with (M15) cycling! The canals in Amsterdam were beautifully (M16), and we even took a boat tour. Everyone in the group were (M17) impressed by how clean and organized was the city (M18). If I would travel (M19) again next summer, I'll probably choose to visit Spain or Portugal. I am already looking forward to plan (M20) the next adventure. My cousin said that she wants to go somewhere more exotic, like Morocco or Thailand, but I am not sure if we can afford it. Traveling are (M21) one of the best ways to learn about the world and meet new people. It allows you to step outside your comfort zone and experience different cultures. I thinks (M22) everyone should try to travel abroad at least once in their life. By the end of the trip, we had learned more than we expected — not only about other countries, but about ourselves (M23), too. I would definitely recommended (M24) this kind of experience to anyone who loves adventure, learning, and meeting peoples (M25) from different backgrounds.	Ex.1 Mistake: have travelled Correction: travelled Explanation: tense Ex.2 Mistake: Netherlands Correction: the Netherlands Explanation: the article <i>the</i> should be used Ex.3 Mistake: an unforgettable experience Correction: unforgettable experience Explanation: the article <i>an</i> should not be used before	Ex.1 AI's response: Correct Ex.2 AI's response: Correct. Ex.3 AI's response: Incorrect. The article should be used because experience is a countable noun.

Appendix 2

Titre du texte Récit d'un voyageur	Étape 1 (Identifiez et corrigez les erreurs grammaticales sans utiliser d'autres ressources)	Étape 2 (Vérifiez les erreurs que vous avez identifiées en utilisant des outils d'intelligence artificielle)
L'été dernier, j'avais voyagé (M1) dans plusieurs pays d'Europe avec mes cousins. Nous avons visité la France, l'Allemagne et Pays-Bas (M2), et c'était une expérience inoubliable. La météo dans tous ces pays étaient (M3) parfaite la plupart du temps, sauf quelques jours de pluie à Berlin.	Exemple 1: Erreur: j'avais voyagé Correction: j'ai voyagé Explication: temps verbal incorrect	Correct
En France, nous sommes montés en haut de Tour Eiffel (M4) et nous avons pris beaucoup de photos. La vue de là-haut était absolument magnifique. Je n'ai pas jamais vu de (M5) pareil avant. Nous avons aussi goûté de nombreux plats locaux délicieux, y compris des escargots et différents types de fromages. Étonnamment, personne n'a été tombé (M6) malade en essayant de la nourriture inconnue.	Exemple 2: Erreur: Pays-Bas Correction: Les Pays-Bas	Correct
Pendant notre séjour en Allemagne, nous avons logé chez un ami de la famille qui est en train de vivre (M7) à Munich. Il était très gentil et nous a montré la ville. Un jour, il nous prend (M8) au château de Neuschwanstein, qui est dit d'avoir eu inspiré (M9) les châteaux de Disney. Sur le chemin du retour, on s'arrêterait (M10) dans un petit village pour goûter aux pâtisseries allemandes.	Exemple 3: Erreur: beaucoup de photos Correction: <i>beaucoup des photos</i> Explication: Il ne faut pas utiliser l'article <i>de</i> mais l'article <i>des</i>.	Incorrect. Il faut utiliser l'article <i>de</i> à cause de l'emploi de l'adverbe <i>beaucoup</i>
Pays-Bas (M11) étaient notre dernière destination. Nous avons loué des vélos et exploré les campagne. (M12). Je n'ai pas sû (M13) que Néerlandais (M14) sont si doués avec (M15) le vélo ! Les canaux d'Amsterdam étaient magnifiquement (16), et nous avons même fait un tour en bateau. Tout le monde dans le groupe étaient (M17) impressionnés à quel point était la ville propre (M18) et organisé.		

Titre du texte Récit d'un voyageur	Étape 1 (Identifiez et corrigez les erreurs grammaticales sans utiliser d'autres ressources)	Étape 2 (Vérifiez les erreurs que vous avez identifiées en utilisant des outils d'intelligence artificielle)
Si je voyagerais (M19) l'été prochain, je choisais probablement de visiter l'Espagne ou le Portugal. Je me réjouis déjà à l'idée de plani-fié (M20) la prochaine aventure. Voyager sont (M21) une des meilleures façons d'apprendre sur le monde et de rencontrer de nouvelles personnes. Cela vous permet de sortir de votre zone de confort et d'expérimenter différentes cultures. Je penses (M22) que tout le monde devrait voyager à l'étranger au moins une fois dans leur vie. À la fin du voyage, nous avons appris plus que nous l'avions prévu — non seulement sur les autres pays, mais aussi sur nous-même (M23). Je recommandais (M24) certainement ce genre d'expérience à toute personne qui aime l'aventure, apprendre, et rencontrer un peuple (M25) de cultures différentes.		

Appendix 3

Self-reflection questionnaire:

1. Which AI tool/tools did you use for this assignment?
2. Why did you choose this AI tool/tools? Have you used it/them before?
3. Do you find this AI tool/tools reliable for grammar? Does it always give correct answers and explanations?
4. Did you accept all AI's corrections or just some of them in the text you analysed?
5. Did AI explain the grammar rules clearly for the corrections it proposed? If not, what was unclear?
6. Were there any mistakes in the text that you detected only because of AI's help?
7. Did you learn any new grammar rules because of this activity and the help of AI?
8. Did you ask AI for additional explanations about some of the mistakes detected in the text?

Other comments:

About the author: Dr. Milena Kasaposka-Chadlovska is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Philology “Blaže Koneski”, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, where she teaches French language and conference interpreting and leads practical classes in Morphosyntax and Syntax. She is a trained conference interpreter working from French into Macedonian, and her research focuses on French language and linguistics. She is the author of numerous academic publications and has participated in several national and international projects.

e-mail: milena.kasaposka@flf.ukim.edu.mk

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1617-3750>

About the author: Dr. Lela Ivanovska, PhD is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Information and Communication Technologies, University “St. Kliment Ohridski” – Bitola, where she teaches English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Her research interests include ESP, listening skills, creativity, and critical thinking in language education. Lela is the author and co-author of numerous scholarly publications in these fields and has actively participated in a number of national and international research and educational projects.

e-mail: lela.andreevska@uklo.edu.mk.

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-3915-334X>

INQUIRY-ORIENTED AUGMENTED REALITY AS A TOOL FOR BOOSTING READING PROFICIENCY AND MOTIVATION AMONG SECONDARY EFL STUDENTS

Manna Dey

University of Portsmouth, UK

Abstract: *The present study examined the effectiveness of using the inquiry-based augmented reality (AR) activities to improve reading comprehension and learner engagement of Rani Dayamoyee Secondary School students in Bangladesh. Twenty secondary school students were selected through purposive sampling and subsequently randomly assigned to an experimental group (n = 10) and a control group (n = 10). Over the intervention period, the experimental group engaged in a structured series of inquiry-based AR activities, designed to encourage active exploration, contextual meaning-making, and collaborative problem-solving, whereas the control group received conventional reading instruction following the national curriculum. Reading comprehension was tested with standardized pre- and post-tests and cognitive and affective engagement in learning tasks was measured with a validated engagement scale. Results revealed that there was a significant difference in favor of the experimental group with regard to reading comprehension and engagement scores. The results emphasize the feasibility of inquiry-based AR as a pedagogical tool in the context of EFL secondary education, as it is a student-centred, immersive learning technology that holds the promise of connecting older education models and approaches with the new digital learning spaces.*

Keywords: *inquiry, augmented reality, reading proficiency, EFL, motivation*

About the author: Manna Dey is a Lecturer in the Department of English at World University of Bangladesh. His research interests include EFL, TESOL, second language acquisition, and sociolinguistics. He has published widely in international journals indexed by Scopus, EBSCO, DOAJ and Sinta, and contributed to several academic books and reviews.

e-mail: mannadey808@gmail.com

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-9415-141X>

Copyright © 2026 Manna Dey

Article history: Received: 14 August 2025; Reviewed: 16 May 2026; Revised: 3 June 2026; Accepted: 4 July 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Dey, M. (2026). Inquiry-Oriented Augmented Reality as a Tool for Boosting Reading Proficiency and Motivation Among Secondary EFL Students. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 120-134. <https://doi.org/10.46687/XVAG7600>

Introduction

Reading is an active cognitive process in which readers construct meaning from text through inference, reasoning, and integration of prior knowledge (Snow, 2002). It is the process of comprehending a written text and efficiently obtaining information. Reading entails the integration of textual information with the reader's pre-existing knowledge (Pressley et al., 2023). This indicates that readers are not merely absorbing information from text but actively integrating it with prior knowledge structures (Hattan et al., 2024). Various forms of reading comprehension are often categorized based on the reader's intent and the method of reading utilized (Mena et al., 2023). For students, a fundamental aspect of reading comprehension is constructing meaning from written text, as the primary goal of reading is to understand and integrate information presented in the material (Grabe, 2009; Kintsch, 1998).

Literature review and related studies

Reading comprehension is a cognitive process in which readers actively create meaning by making connections between what they read and what they already know and have experienced (Evans & Martin, 2020). Reading comprehension is an active process that involves building and changing understanding of a text (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). If a student does not derive meaning in his/her reading, he or she will not be able to make predictions, draw inferences, or critically evaluate information (Anderson, 2013). Thus, the ability to comprehend a text effectively requires certain skills such as skimming, scanning, summarising, predicting, making inferences and critical analysis. These skills help learners to read texts literally, interpretatively, and critically in order to gain understanding and better learning experiences. This helps them understand and think deeply about what they read (Oktaviah et al., 2021).

Studies that are related to strategy-based reading instruction

There is a lot of evidence that strategy-based instruction helps students understand what they learn. The reciprocal teaching method created by Palincsar and Brown in 1984, which includes predicting, asking, clarifying, and summarizing, has been shown to help students understand better (Oczkus, 2018). Vaughn et al. (2024) discovered that joint strategic reading helps all kinds of students, even those who are learning English as a second language, by encouraging active participation and learning from each other. It is also shown that guided conversations help high school students understand things more literally, inferentially, and critically. This shows how important it is to use interactive and scaffolded learning methods (McKeown et al., 2009).

Augmented reality

Since almost 20 years ago, education, and learning has taken a great twist globally with the fast pace at which information and communication technologies (ICTs) are developing (OECD, 2021). Now mobile learning has been gaining momentum due to its ability to increase student engagement, deepen understanding and reduce boredom in the classroom. Accessibility, appeal and effectiveness of learner content is greatly enhanced.

In order to allow for immersive experiences to be conducted without sets and models, some educators are opting for an augmented reality approach. Augmented Reality (AR) is a growing educational medium that unifies the physical and virtual worlds in real time and encompasses 3D experiences (Sam, 2024). Digital content's integration to real life places brings an interactive learning environment that aids the comprehension of concepts by students. One of the great advantages of the AR technology is that they can leverage popular devices like mobile phones and tablets, which eliminates the need for expensive device purchases. With a large number of adolescents having these devices, integrated AR applications can be applied to multi-level education and across multiple departments, providing students with enriched and immersive educational experiences (Cheng et al., 2025).

There are several studies that have investigated the efficacy of AR in the learning of a second language. Hsu (2019) investigated the impact of AR on vocabulary learning among secondary school students and found significant improvement in the students' retention and motivation. Ibáñez and Delgado-Kloos (2018) carried out a thorough literature review and found that AR facilitates the incorporation of content into contexts, and can increase the engagement level of learners. The data and analysis techniques used by this study were mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative ones. The outcomes proved that the mobile learning material by using such an augmented reality technology is able to offer very well both linguistic and content knowledge in English composition to participants. It discovered that the AR tools significantly increase the engagement and future technological skills of young learners in the early childhood environment, helping students to transition into more advanced technological learning spheres (Ullah et al., 2024). The results are consistent with the work of Dunleavy and Dede (2013), highlighting the importance of AR in transforming abstract concepts into tangible and accessible experiences for learners across various age groups.

Although previous studies have examined augmented reality in language learning and inquiry-based learning in EFL contexts separately, limited research has investigated the combined impact of inquiry-oriented augmented reality on secondary-level EFL reading comprehension and learner engagement, particularly in Bangladesh. Existing studies mainly focus on vocabulary

learning or general motivation, while little attention has been given to how AR-supported inquiry activities may develop literal, inferential, and critical reading comprehension simultaneously. Thus, the present study is concerned with this gap since it aims to examine the effectiveness of the inquiry based augmented reality activities on enhancing reading skills and motivation of Bangladeshi secondary EFL learners.

Inquiry-based learning and getting students involved

Although the inquiry cycle proposed by Harlen and Qualter (2004) was originally developed for primary science education, its core principles of exploration, questioning, and evidence-based learning are transferable to other disciplines. In the context of EFL reading instruction, these principles align with constructivist approaches that emphasize active meaning-making and learner-centered engagement. The next step is exploration, where students look into new ideas. Then, students explain ideas in their own words, get more experience to help them understand better, and finally, they think about their performance at school. Although Harlen and Qualter's inquiry cycle was originally developed for science education, its emphasis on questioning, exploration, and reflection is transferable to EFL learning contexts where students actively construct meaning from texts.

IBL (**Inquiry-based learning**) has been shown to be helpful in EFL settings. Olarte (2020) found that using inquiry-based methods got students more involved and made learning more relevant. Goldenberg (2011) saw that high school students who were learning recount texts had better reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. He noticed this because the students actively asked questions and found answers on their own. Students' engagement, defined as willingness to engage in class activities, complete assignments, listen to and participate with teachers, is an important aspect of learning success. Panagiotidis, Krystalli, and Arvanitis (2023) have identified three types of engagement: cognitive engagement, behavioral participation, and emotional involvement (Panagiotidis et al., 2023).

Studies on EFL participation show that it is important. Students engaged in their behaviors during interactive read-aloud sessions and they were actively participating in the process (Sandy & Mukti, 2020). In the same way, Snow (2002) found that emotional engagement, not behavioral or cognitive engagement, was the most important factor in Vietnamese students' ability to understand what they heard in English.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical basis for this study is constructivist learning theory which considers learning as an active learning process in which learning constructs meaning as a result of interaction, exploration and experience. The approach of inquiry-based learning is in congruence with constructivism, because students are actively investigating a problem, asking questions, and making meaning through exploration. In AR, the applications are learning environments made immersive and interactive, where abstract textual concepts are correlated with visual experiences in context.

The study further uses the framework of student engagement suggested by (Fredricks et al., 2004) that views engagement as a behavior, a feeling, and a thought that is exhibited in learning activities. It was hoped that the inquiry-oriented AR activities would make a positive contribution to these dimensions, as it was expected that these activities would have a positive impact on the interaction, motivation and cognitive engagement of the learners during their reading tasks.

Statement of the Problem

Although reading is fundamental to academic achievement, numerous middle school kids encounter considerable difficulties in understanding intricate informational texts, an issue thoroughly documented in educational research (Tong et al., 2025). Ongoing research shows that there exists a formidable achievement gap between students' reading performance and the complexity of the various school programmes in which they are required to read (Sutherland et al., 2024). Two whole-text reading methods were evaluated in a study in the UK with 413 students (44% struggling readers) over a 12-week period. Both groups improved comprehension, especially struggling readers who gained 16 months. Teachers' changed practices boosted reading, showing whole-text teaching works best inside classrooms. These challenges were frequently exacerbated by a widespread apathy for extensive, text-laden tasks. Therefore, there is an immediate necessity for novel pedagogical approaches that might foster greater involvement and improve reading comprehension. This study seeks to examine the efficacy of incorporating these techniques to enhance middle school students' reading comprehension of difficult informational texts. The study will examine particular inquiries concerning the influence of these tools on students' capacity to analyze, synthesize, and assess textual content.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does the use of inquiry-based augmented reality activities improve the reading comprehension abilities of secondary school students?

Sub-questions:

1.a. To what extent does the use of inquiry-based augmented reality activities improve students' **literal reading comprehension**?

1.b. To what extent does the use of inquiry-based augmented reality activities enhance students' **inferential reading comprehension**?

1.c. To what extent does the use of inquiry-based augmented reality activities develop students' **critical reading comprehension**?

Terms

Reading comprehension refers to the active, cognitive processes involved in constructing and extracting meaning from a text. It requires the reader to execute and integrate various mental processes to understand the material (Yapp et al., 2023).

Inquiry-Based Learning is a pedagogical approach that places students' own questions, observations, and ideas at the center of the learning experience, encouraging them to actively explore and investigate concepts. Engagement refers to a student's level of active participation, interest, and emotional investment in the learning process (Fredricks et al., 2004).

Significance of the research

Importance for Students

This study immediately benefits students by giving a fresh approach to improving their reading comprehension abilities. Participating in inquiry-based augmented reality (AR) activities will improve students' literal, inferential, and critical reading abilities while also cultivating a more positive attitude about reading. This strategy aims to increase student involvement and motivation, transforming reading from a passive to an engaged and purposeful activity. Ultimately, improved reading abilities will help them achieve academic achievement in all disciplines.

Importance for Educators and Administrators

This study's findings will equip teachers with a novel, practical instructional resource for tackling reading comprehension challenges. It presents a framework for the efficient integration of technology and inquiry-based learning in the

classroom, giving a tangible example of utilizing augmented reality to enhance student engagement. Moreover, the findings will be beneficial to supervisors and school administrators in their pursuit of evidence-based solutions to improve student learning outcomes. The research can guide professional development initiatives and resource distribution for implementing contemporary teaching methodologies.

Importance for Curriculum Development

This research enhances the field of educational innovation by offering empirical information regarding the efficacy of inquiry-based augmented reality activities. The insights acquired will be beneficial for curriculum creators in the construction of forthcoming reading programs. The study's findings can inform the development of more dynamic, technology-integrated courses that fit more effectively with the needs and interests of 21st-century learners. It can provide a basis for incorporating analogous technology-enhanced, student-centered learning approaches into educational standards (Duke & Pearson, 2009).

Participants

The study involved 20 secondary **school** students from class 10. Two groups were formed: a control group and an experimental group. The experimental group was purposefully selected from Rani Dayamoyee High School, Rangamati, focusing on students who demonstrated proficiency in using mobile phones and internet applications.

Instruments

Reading Comprehension Test

The reading comprehension test was researcher-developed based on the national secondary English curriculum and consisted of items measuring literal, inferential, and critical reading comprehension. The test was reviewed by two EFL specialists to ensure content validity.

Engagement Scale

Student engagement was measured using an adapted engagement scale based on Fredricks et al. (2004), covering behavioural, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

Implementation

The intervention comprised a couple of units from the textbook **English for Today** Secondary School Students supplemented with additional reading materials and activities. Examples include Unit 2: Climate Change, Unit 7: People Who Stand Out, Unit 8: World Heritage etc. The treatment was conducted over 20 sessions, each lasting 30 minutes. Upon completion of the programme, a post-test evaluating reading comprehension was administered.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the relevant school authority. Students and guardians were informed about the purpose of the study, and participation was voluntary. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants were maintained throughout the research process.

Data Analysis

Independent-samples and paired-samples t-tests were conducted to examine differences between groups and between pre- and post-test scores. Effect sizes (η^2) were also calculated to determine the practical significance of the findings. Prior to analysis, assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were checked.

Results and Discussion

The following hypotheses were tested to examine the impact of inquiry-based augmented reality activities on reading comprehension and engagement.

H¹: Inquiry-based augmented reality activities will significantly improve the post-test reading comprehension scores of the experimental group compared to the control group.

Table 1. *t-Test Comparison of Post-Reading Comprehension Mean Scores Between Experimental and Control Groups*

Test	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.	η^2	Effect Size
Reading Comprehension	Experimental	10	11.80	1.85	3.92	18	<0.001	0.30	Large
	Control	10	9.40	2.50					

Table 1 shows the experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group on the post-test reading comprehension ($t(18)=3.92, p< 0.001$) with a large effect size, supporting the hypothesis.

This table presents a comparison of the post-test reading comprehension scores for the experimental and control groups. The experimental group achieved a mean score of 11.80 (SD = 1.85), while the control group scored lower, with a mean of 9.40 (SD = 2.50). The independent samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($t(18) = 3.92, p = < 0.001$), indicating that students exposed to inquiry-based augmented reality activities demonstrated significantly better reading comprehension. The effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.30$) was large, highlighting the practical significance of the intervention. These findings support the hypothesis that augmented reality, integrated with inquiry-based learning, positively influences overall reading comprehension skills.

Constructivist learning principles, in which students actively generated meaning through inquiry and multimedia interaction, may account for the improvement in reading comprehension. These results support the claim made by Ibáñez and Delgado-Kloos (2018) that augmented reality improves contextualized and active learning.

H²: Inquiry-based augmented reality activities will significantly enhance reading comprehension sub-skills (literal, inferential, and critical) in the experimental group compared to the control group.

Table 2. *t-Test Results for Post-Test Reading Comprehension Sub-Skills in Experimental and Control Group*

Reading Sub-Skill	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.	η^2	Effect Size
Literal Reading	Experi-mental	10	4.45	0.70	1.90	18	0.07	0.16	Medium
	Control	10	4.05	0.85					
Inferential Reading	Experi-mental	10	3.95	0.65	3.80	18	<0.001	0.29	Large
	Control	10	3.10	0.90					
Critical Reading	Experi-mental	10	3.50	0.90	4.10	18	<0.001	0.32	Large
	Control	10	2.25	1.00					

Table 2 reveals significant improvements for inferential and critical reading sub-skills with large effect sizes. Literal reading showed improvement, though not statistically significant.

This table presents the post-intervention performance across three essential sub-skills of reading comprehension: literal, inferential, and critical reading. The experimental group demonstrated superior performance compared to the control group in all sub-skills. Improvements in inferential reading ($t(18) = 3.80$, $p = <0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.29$) and critical reading ($t(18) = 4.10$, $p = <0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.32$) were significant, with both exhibiting large effect sizes, indicating substantial practical relevance. A literal reading indicated a positive trend, yet it did not achieve statistical significance ($p = 0.07$), potentially attributable to the limited sample size or ceiling effects. The results show that inquiry-based augmented reality exercises greatly enhance learners' higher-order comprehension abilities, encouraging more in-depth comprehension and critical thinking.

H³: The total reading comprehension scores of the experimental group will significantly improve from pre-test to post-test following the intervention.

Table 3. *Paired t-Test Results for Pre- and Post-Test Reading Comprehension Scores (Total) in the Experimental Group*

Reading Comprehension	Application	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.	η^2	Effect Size
Total Score	Pre-test	10	8.60	2.60	7.85	9	<0.001	0.87	Large
	Post-test	10	11.80	1.85					

Table 3 indicates a statistically significant increase in reading comprehension scores from pre- to post-test ($t(9)=7.85$, $p=<0.001$, confirming the effectiveness of the intervention. It presents a comparison of total reading comprehension scores before and after the intervention within the experimental group to assess improvement. The mean score rose significantly from 8.60 (SD = 2.60) in the pre-test to 11.80 (SD = 1.85) in the post-test. The paired samples t-test indicated a statistically significant difference ($t(9) = 7.85$, $p < 0.001$) with a substantial effect size ($\eta^2 = 0.87$), implying that the intervention was effective in enhancing students' reading comprehension. This within-group comparison confirms the influence of inquiry-based AR activities on student learning outcomes. However, the exceptionally large effect size should be interpreted cautiously because small sample sizes may inflate effect estimates.

H⁴: Student engagement scores in the experimental group will significantly increase following the inquiry-based augmented reality activities.

Table 4. *Paired t-Test Results for Pre- and Post-Test Engagement Scores in the Experimental Group*

Reading Comprehension	Application	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.	η^2	Effect Size
Total Score	Pre-test	10	76.50	6.20	5.60	9	<0.001	0.65	Large
	Post-test	10	85.80	4.50					

Table 4 shows a significant increase in engagement following the intervention ($t(9)=5.60, p<0.001$). This table shows the engagement scores of students prior to and following the intervention. The mean engagement score rose from 76.50 (SD = 6.20) to 85.80 (SD = 4.50). A paired sample t-test revealed a statistically significant improvement ($t(9) = 5.60, p < 0.001$). The effect size was substantial ($\eta^2 = 0.65$), indicating a significant enhancement in students’ willingness to engage and exert effort in learning activities. The results show that inquiry-based augmented reality greatly raises student motivation and engagement while improving cognitive abilities.

H⁵: There will be significant improvements in the affective, behavioural, and cognitive sub-levels of student engagement after the intervention.

Table 5. *Paired t-Test Results for Pre- and Post-Test Engagement Sub-Level Scores in the Experimental Group*

Engagement Sub-Level	Application	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Sig.	η^2	Effect Size
Affective	Pre-test	10	27.50	2.00	4.90	9	<0.001	0.55	Large
	Post-test	10	30.20	1.80					
Behavioural	Pre-test	10	31.80	4.30	3.50	9	0.005	0.43	Large
	Post-test	10	34.50	2.50					
Cognitive	Pre-test	10	18.20	2.60	4.20	9	0.002	0.50	Large
	Post-test	10	20.30	2.10					

Table 5 categorises engagement into three sub-levels: affective, behavioural, and cognitive engagement, and displays pre- and post-intervention scores. Each sub-level exhibited statistically significant enhancements: Affective engagement increased from 27.50 (SD = 2.00) to 30.20 (SD = 1.80) ($t(9) = 4.90$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting an enhancement in students' emotional investment and positive feelings towards learning.

Behavioural Engagement: Increased from 31.80 (SD = 4.30) to 34.50 (SD = 2.50) ($t(9) = 3.50$, $p = 0.005$), indicating enhanced participation and active involvement in lessons.

Cognitive engagement showed improved mental effort and strategic application in learning tasks, rising from 18.20 (SD = 2.60) to 20.30 (SD = 2.10) ($t(9) = 4.20$, $p = 0.002$). All sub-levels had high effect sizes (η^2 ranging from 0.43 to 0.55), indicating that the intervention had a strong beneficial impact across several indicators of student involvement. The results highlight the diverse advantages of incorporating inquiry-based augmented reality into educational methodologies.

The use of AR multimedia components-such as pictures, videos, and audio-that enhance textbook content to help students understand and retain new language may be linked to an improvement in reading comprehension. Additionally, augmented reality makes it easier to interact with challenging material repeatedly, which improves deep understanding. Students' engagement with the reading process is greatly increased by the inquiry-based approach (Yapp et al., 2023).

The findings are consistent with Cheng et al. (2025), who found that by offering interactive and immersive learning experiences, augmented reality and mobile learning technologies greatly improve students' reading abilities and engagement.

Conclusion

This study examined how well inquiry-based augmented reality exercises enhanced the reading comprehension and engagement of secondary EFL students. Along with noteworthy gains in behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement, the results showed improvements in literal, inferential, and critical reading comprehension. These results imply that more engaging, student-centered, and inspiring reading environments can be produced through inquiry-oriented augmented reality activities.

The results show that AR-enhanced inquiry activities may assist students in making the connection between textual material and contextual comprehension, which is consistent with constructivist learning approaches. However, the study has several limitations. The sample size was relatively small and limited to one

school context, reducing the generalisability of the findings. In addition, the intervention duration was relatively short.

Future research should use longitudinal research designs, include larger and more varied participant groups, and look into how inquiry-based augmented reality affects other language abilities like speaking, writing, and listening. To increase student engagement and comprehension results, educators and curriculum designers are also urged to incorporate technology-supported inquiry activities into EFL classrooms.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to express our sincere gratitude to God, family and friends who helped us prepare and complete this paper.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

The author used OpenAI's ChatGPT (GPT-based model) to assist with language editing, grammar correction, and improving academic clarity in this manuscript. All content, analyses, and interpretations were developed and verified by the author, who takes full responsibility for the final work.

References

- Anderson, N. J. (2013). *Active skills for reading 3*. Cengage Learning.
- Cheng, A., Zhang, W., Feng, A., Wu, Y., & Li, W. (2025). Exploring psychological dimensions of augmented reality in education: A study on learning motivation and achievement in museums. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 16, 1514117. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1514117>
- Duke, N. K., & Pearson, P. D. (2009). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension. *Journal of Education*, 189(1–2), 107–122. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022057409189001-208>
- Dunleavy, M., & Dede, C. (2013). Augmented reality teaching and learning. In M. J. Spector, M. D. Merrill, J. Elen & M. J. Bishop (Eds.), *Handbook of research on educational communications and technology* (pp. 735–745). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-3185-5_59
- Evans, R., & Martin, D. (2020). Impact of augmented reality on secondary school reading skills. *Language Learning Journal*, 48(2), 180–195.
- Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(1), 59–109. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543074001059>

- Goldenberg, C. (2011). Reading instruction for English language learners. In M. L. Kamil, P. D. Pearson, E. B. Moje & P. P. Afflerbach (Eds.), *Handbook of reading research* (Vol. 4, pp. 684–710). Routledge.
- Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139150484>
- Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2019). *Teaching and researching reading*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315726274>
- Hattan, C., Alexander, P. A., & Lupo, S. M. (2024). Title of the article on reading comprehension and background knowledge. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 116(1), 1–20.
- Harlen, W., & Qualter, A. (2004). *The teaching of science in primary schools*. David Fulton Publishers.
- Hsu, T. C. (2019). Effects of gender and different augmented reality learning systems on English vocabulary learning of elementary school students. *Universal Access in the Information Society*, 18(2), 315–325. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10209-017-0593-1>
- Ibáñez, M. B., & Delgado-Kloos, C. (2018). Augmented reality for STEM learning: A systematic review. *Computers & Education*, 123, 109–123. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2018.05.002>
- Kintsch, W. (1998). *Comprehension: A paradigm for cognition*. Cambridge University Press.
- McKeown, M. G., Beck, I. L., & Blake, R. G. (2009). Rethinking reading comprehension instruction: A comparison of instruction for strategies and content approaches. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 44(3), 218–253. <https://doi.org/10.1598/RRQ.44.3.1>
- Mena, J., Estrada-Molina, O., & Pérez-Calvo, E. (2023). Teachers’ professional training through augmented reality: A literature review. *Education Sciences*, 13(5), 517. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13050517>
- Oczkus, L. D. (2018). *Reciprocal teaching at work: Powerful strategies and lessons for improving reading comprehension*. ASCD.
- OECD. (2021). *21st-century readers: Developing literacy skills in a digital world*. OECD Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1787/a83d84cb-en>
- Oktaviah, R., Rokhman, N. M., & Maulana, A. R. (2021). Inquiry-based teaching to develop EFL students’ critical thinking in reading comprehension. *Education of English as Foreign Language*, 4(1), 49–56. <https://doi.org/10.21776/ub.educafl.2021.004.01.05>
- Olarte, N. M. (2020). Exploring EFL rural students’ experiences through children’s rights as part of inquiry-based project (Master’s thesis, Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas).

- Panagiotidis, P., Krystalli, P., & Arvanitis, P. (2023). Technology as a motivational factor in foreign language learning. *European Journal of Education*, 6(1), 69–84. <https://doi.org/10.2478/ejed-2023-0007>
- Pressley, T., Allington, R. L., & Pressley, M. (2023). *Reading instruction that works: The case for balanced teaching*. Guilford Publications.
- Sam, R. (2024). Systematic review of inquiry-based learning: Assessing impact and best practices in education. *F1000Research*, 13, 1045. <https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.155367.1>
- Sandy, F., & Mukti, L. (2020). EFL students' engagement during interactive reading aloud. *ELT Echo: The Journal of English Language Teaching in Foreign Language Context*, 5(2), 108. <https://doi.org/10.24235/eltecho.v5i2.7245>
- Snow, C. (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension*. RAND Corporation.
- Sutherland, J., Westbrook, J., Oakhill, J., & Sullivan, S. (2024). An immersive 'Faster Read': A pilot mixed-method study developing whole-text reading comprehension and engagement with adolescent struggling readers. *Research Papers in Education*, 39(5), 774–796. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2023.2238285>
- Tong, X., Yu, L., & Deacon, S. H. (2025). A meta-analysis of the relation between syntactic skills and reading comprehension: A cross-linguistic and developmental investigation. *Review of Educational Research*, 95(3), 385–426. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543241228185>
- Ullah, A., Hamze Osman Gure, A. A., & Baber, M. (2024). Academic reading attitudes and format preferences among the students of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar. *Remittances Review*, 9(2), 2947–2970.
- Vaughn, S., Boardman, A., & Klingner, J. K. (2024). *Teaching reading comprehension to students with learning difficulties*. Guilford Publications.
- Yapp, D., de Graaff, R., & van den Bergh, H. (2023). Effects of reading strategy instruction in English as a second language on students' academic reading comprehension. *Language Teaching Research*, 27(6), 1456–1479. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820985236>

ENGLISH WRITING PERFORMANCE IN THE 2025 BULGARIAN MATURA EXAMINATION: EXAMINER OBSERVATIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Evgeni Stanchev

Medical University of Varna, Bulgaria

Abstract: *The Bulgarian English State Matriculation Examination (Matura) is taken by approximately 13,000 students each year and plays an important role in university admission. Despite its importance, little published research has examined authentic examination scripts from an examiner's perspective. This paper presents observations from the assessment of 506 anonymized scripts from the 2025 examination, focusing on open-ended reading-comprehension responses, formal email writing, and argumentative essays. The analysis identified clear differences across task types. Most candidates completed the email-writing task successfully, demonstrating appropriate genre conventions and communicative purpose. In contrast, reading-comprehension responses frequently relied on verbatim copying or only limited paraphrasing of the source text. The essay task proved more demanding, with common difficulties in developing ideas, maintaining coherence, and addressing all aspects of the writing instructions. A recurring pattern was that candidates who produced stronger essays and emails also tended to perform well on the open-ended reading-comprehension tasks, whereas the reverse was not consistently observed. The findings suggest that productive writing ability may provide a broader indication of communicative competence than reading-response performance alone. The paper concludes by discussing implications for English language teaching, writing assessment, and future research on the Bulgarian English Matura examination.*

Keywords: *Bulgarian English Matriculation, second language writing, writing assessment, paraphrasing, reading-to-write*

About the author: Evgeni Stanchev is a lecturer at the Department of Foreign Languages, Communication, and Sports at the Medical University of Varna. He holds an MA in English Philology with a focus on linguistics and translation. He is a member of the national grading committee for the Matura English exam and is currently pursuing a PhD in the methodology of teaching English at Shumen University. His research interests include linguistics, educational technology, and their practical integration into contemporary classroom settings.

e-mail: evgenistanchev.varna@gmail.com
evgeni.stanchev@mu-varna.bg

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-1108-1067>

Copyright © 2026 Evgeni Stanchev

Article history: Received: 10 June 2025; Reviewed: 19 March 2026; Revised: 3 June 2026; Accepted: 20 July 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Stanchev, E. (2026). English writing performance in the 2025 Bulgarian matura examination – examiner observations and pedagogical implications. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 135-162. <https://doi.org/10.46687/HMPE2041>

Introduction

Large-scale language examinations play an important role in educational systems because they provide evidence of learners' language proficiency and often influence access to higher education and future employment. Unlike classroom assessment, national examinations are expected to measure communicative competence reliably while maintaining consistent assessment standards across large numbers of candidates (Bachman, 1990; McNamara, 2000). For this reason, language testing has become a substantial area of research, focusing not only on what examinations measure but also on how validly and consistently they do so (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Weir, 2005).

Within Europe, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) provides the principal framework for describing language proficiency and has influenced the development of national foreign-language examinations in many countries (Council of Europe, 2020). The Bulgarian State Matriculation Examination (Matura) in English follows this framework and assesses candidates at various proficiency levels. Every year, thousands of Bulgarian secondary-school students choose English as their second compulsory state examination, and the results are frequently considered during university admissions (Ministry of Education and Science, 2025).

Although all language skills contribute to communicative competence, writing has traditionally been regarded as one of the most demanding abilities. Producing an effective written text requires learners not only to demonstrate grammatical accuracy and an adequate range of vocabulary, but also to organise ideas logically, maintain coherence, and adapt language to a particular communicative purpose (Silva, 1993; Raimes, 1983). As writing develops beyond sentence level, learners must also manage discourse organisation, audience awareness, and genre conventions, making successful written production considerably more complex than the accurate use of isolated language structures (Tribble, 1996; Hyland, 2022).

For this reason, writing occupies a central position in second-language assessment. Modern approaches to writing assessment recognise that successful texts cannot be evaluated solely according to grammatical accuracy. Instead, assessment increasingly considers content development, organisation, vocabulary, communicative effectiveness, and the appropriateness of language for the task being performed (Weigle, 2002; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). As Ferris (2011) and Ferris and Hedgcock (2013) argue, effective writing reflects the interaction of linguistic knowledge, rhetorical competence, and the ability to communicate meaningfully with an intended audience.

The assessment of writing presents particular challenges because writing itself is multidimensional. Unlike multiple-choice questions, written tasks

require human judgement, and examiners must evaluate several aspects of performance simultaneously. Research on language assessment has therefore devoted considerable attention to issues such as reliability, construct validity, scoring procedures, and the relationship between assessment criteria and communicative competence (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; McNamara, 2000). These considerations are particularly relevant in high-stakes examinations, where assessment outcomes may influence learners' future educational opportunities (Weir, 2005; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019).

Another important development in language assessment has been the increasing use of integrated tasks that combine receptive and productive language skills. Rather than treating reading and writing as completely separate abilities, many contemporary examinations require candidates to read a source text and respond by producing original written language (Hirvela, 2004; Grabe & Zhang, 2013). Such tasks are generally considered to reflect authentic language use more closely than traditional discrete-item testing because they require learners to process, select, and communicate information for a specific purpose (Plakans, 2015).

Research has shown, however, that these integrated tasks introduce additional challenges. Learners often understand the source material successfully but experience difficulty expressing the same information in their own words. Direct copying, limited lexical flexibility, and incomplete reformulation are among the most frequently reported problems in second-language writing research (Shi, 2012; Wette, 2017). More recent reviews have reached similar conclusions, suggesting that successful reading-to-write performance depends on the interaction of reading comprehension, discourse competence, paraphrasing ability, and writing proficiency rather than on comprehension alone (Gebril, 2009; Plakans & Lee, 2025).

Paraphrasing is particularly important because it requires learners to preserve meaning while modifying linguistic form. This involves lexical substitution, syntactic restructuring, and the ability to distinguish essential from non-essential information. Although these skills are fundamental to academic writing, they often remain difficult even for relatively proficient second-language learners (Hirvela, 2016; Shi, 2012). Consequently, reading-to-write tasks provide valuable insight into learners' productive language ability as well as their understanding of written texts.

Genre represents another important dimension of writing performance. Different writing tasks require different rhetorical structures, communicative purposes, and linguistic choices. A formal email, for example, follows relatively predictable organisational conventions and usually provides a clearly defined communicative goal. Argumentative essays, by contrast, require writers to develop ideas, justify opinions, organise extended discourse, and maintain

coherence across a longer text (Swales, 1990; Johns, 2008). Success in one genre therefore does not necessarily predict equally strong performance in another.

Genre-based approaches to writing instruction have increasingly emphasised the importance of understanding audience expectations and communicative purpose rather than relying on memorised templates. Studies have shown that learners who understand genre conventions are generally better able to adapt their language to specific writing situations and produce more effective texts (Swales & Feak, 2012; Hyland, 2018). Similarly, research on argumentative writing suggests that students frequently experience difficulties developing ideas and sustaining coherent arguments even when their grammatical control is relatively strong (Wingate, 2012).

Recent studies have also explored the linguistic characteristics associated with stronger writing performance. Higher-quality texts tend to demonstrate greater lexical sophistication, more varied syntactic structures, stronger cohesion, and more effective discourse organisation (Crossley & McNamara, 2012; Kyle & Crossley, 2018). Rather than reflecting isolated language skills, writing quality appears to result from the successful integration of multiple linguistic and rhetorical resources operating simultaneously (Crossley, 2020; Hyland, 2019).

Despite the educational importance of the Bulgarian English Matura examination, relatively little published research has examined candidates' actual written performance. Existing Bulgarian studies have focused primarily on students' attitudes towards the examination and the challenges they experience during their preparation for it (Ivanova & Geroва, 2020). Comparatively little attention has been given to the recurring patterns observed in authentic examination scripts or to the implications such observations may have for writing instruction and assessment.

The goal of this study is to contribute to this under-researched area by examining recurring patterns observed during the assessment of 506 anonymized English Matura examination scripts from the 2025 examination session. Drawing on the author's experience as an officially appointed examiner, the article focuses on three components of the examination: open-ended reading-comprehension responses, formal email writing, and argumentative essay writing. Rather than presenting a quantitative error analysis, the study adopts a qualitative observational perspective to identify common tendencies in student performance and to discuss their possible implications for English language teaching, writing assessment, and future research in the Bulgarian context.

The Bulgarian English State Matriculation Examination

The Bulgarian English State Matriculation Examination consists of two parts. Part One assesses listening comprehension and has a duration of 60 minutes,

during which candidates are not permitted to leave the examination room. It comprises five listening tasks based on different audio texts. Tasks 1 and 2 contain five True/False questions each (Questions 1–10), while Tasks 3, 4, and 5 each contain five multiple-choice questions with four response options (Questions 11–25).

Part Two lasts 180 minutes, and candidates may leave the examination room after the first hour. It begins with three reading-comprehension tasks. Task 1 consists of five True/False questions (Questions 26–30), Task 2 contains six multiple-choice questions (Questions 31–36), and Task 3 requires candidates to answer seven open-ended questions based on a reading passage (Questions 37–43). The examination concludes with two writing tasks: a formal email (Question 44) and an argumentative essay (Question 45). The complete examination tasks and marking criteria relevant to this study are provided in Appendices A and B.

Questions 1–36 are scored automatically by the national examination system. In contrast, the open-ended reading-comprehension responses (Questions 37–43) and the two writing tasks (Questions 44 and 45) require assessment by trained examiners using nationally standardised marking criteria. Because the present study draws on an examiner's observations, it focuses exclusively on these examiner-marked components of the examination.

Previous Research

Research on second-language writing has expanded considerably over the past three decades, reflecting a growing recognition that writing is a complex communicative activity rather than simply a demonstration of grammatical knowledge. Early work emphasised the distinctive nature of L2 writing, arguing that second-language learners face challenges that extend beyond those encountered by native speakers because they must simultaneously manage language form, discourse organisation, and rhetorical purpose (Silva, 1993). Subsequent research has reinforced this view by describing writing as a process involving planning, drafting, revision, and adaptation to audience and context rather than the production of grammatically correct sentences alone (Tribble, 1996; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2013).

More recent studies have further emphasised that successful writing depends on the integration of multiple linguistic and rhetorical resources. Hyland (2019; 2022) argues that effective writers must combine grammatical accuracy with genre awareness, discourse organisation, and communicative purpose. Similarly, Ferris (2011) notes that writing quality is shaped not only by the absence of linguistic errors but also by the writer's ability to develop ideas clearly and communicate them effectively. Together, these perspectives suggest that writing should be viewed as a multidimensional construct rather than a collection of isolated language skills.

These developments have influenced approaches to writing assessment. Rather than evaluating grammar and vocabulary independently, contemporary assessment frameworks generally consider a broader range of criteria, including content development, organisation, lexical range, coherence, and communicative effectiveness (Weigle, 2002; Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019). From a language-testing perspective, writing tasks are intended to measure learners' ability to communicate meaningfully in authentic contexts rather than simply demonstrate knowledge of linguistic forms (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Weir, 2005).

The growing emphasis on communicative competence has also encouraged examination designers to incorporate integrated language tasks. Instead of assessing reading and writing separately, many contemporary examinations require candidates to read one or more source texts before producing an original written response (Hirvela, 2004; Plakans, 2015). Such tasks are generally regarded as more representative of authentic language use because they reflect the kinds of activities learners encounter in academic and professional settings (Grabe & Zhang, 2013).

A substantial body of research has shown that integrated reading-to-write tasks present challenges that differ from those associated with either reading or writing in isolation. Even when learners understand the source material, they often struggle to reformulate information independently. Difficulties commonly include excessive reliance on source-text wording, limited lexical flexibility, and problems restructuring information while preserving the original meaning (Shi, 2012; Wette, 2017). Gebril (2009) likewise observed that integrated writing performance depends upon the successful interaction of multiple language skills rather than comprehension alone.

Paraphrasing has received particular attention because it represents one of the core abilities required in integrated writing tasks. Hirvela (2016) argues that successful paraphrasing requires learners to move beyond copying by selecting relevant information, reorganising ideas, and expressing them using their own linguistic resources. Reviews of second-language writing assessment have similarly concluded that paraphrasing remains one of the most persistent difficulties for L2 writers and continues to represent an important area for both classroom instruction and language assessment (Plakans & Lee, 2025).

Another strand of research has focused on genre and its influence on writing performance. Genre-based approaches assume that different writing tasks require different rhetorical structures, communicative purposes, and language choices. Swales (1990) was among the first to describe genres as socially recognised forms of communication governed by shared conventions and audience expectations. Later work has extended this perspective, arguing that

explicit awareness of genre can help learners adapt more effectively to different writing situations (Johns, 2008; Swales & Feak, 2012).

Genre differences are particularly relevant in educational assessment because examination tasks frequently require candidates to produce more than one type of text. Research has suggested that learners often perform differently across genres, with relatively structured tasks, such as emails or letters, generally producing stronger results than extended argumentative essays (Hyland, 2018; Wingate, 2012). Argumentative writing typically places greater demands on planning, idea development, coherence, and rhetorical organisation, making it one of the more challenging forms of written production for second-language learners.

Recent research has also attempted to identify the linguistic characteristics associated with stronger writing performance. Studies examining writing quality have reported positive relationships between lexical sophistication, syntactic complexity, cohesion, and overall writing proficiency (Crossley & McNamara, 2012; Kyle & Crossley, 2018). Crossley (2020) further argues that writing development should be viewed as the interaction of multiple linguistic features rather than improvement in any single aspect of language. Collectively, these findings suggest that stronger writers tend to demonstrate greater flexibility across several dimensions of written communication simultaneously.

Within the Bulgarian context, published research remains relatively limited. Ivanova and Gerova (2020) investigated students' perceptions of the English Matura examination and identified several challenges associated with examination preparation. Their study provides a valuable insight into learners' experiences but does not examine the characteristics of actual examination responses or the recurring patterns observed during the marking process. Consequently, relatively little published research has explored authentic Matura scripts from the perspective of examiners.

This work builds upon this body of research while addressing a gap in the Bulgarian literature. Rather than investigating students' attitudes or reporting examination scores, it presents qualitative observations drawn from the assessment of 506 anonymised examination scripts completed during the 2025 English Matura examination. Particular attention is given to recurring patterns in reading-comprehension responses, formal email writing, and argumentative essays, with the aim of relating examiner observations to broader research on second-language writing, integrated assessment, genre, and writing pedagogy.

Research Questions

1. What recurring patterns were observed in students' responses to the reading-comprehension, email-writing, and essay-writing tasks?
2. What implications might these observations have for English language teaching and assessment in Bulgaria?

Methods

Research Design

This article adopts a qualitative, observational approach to the analysis of written performance in the 2025 English Matura examination in Bulgaria. The study draws on the author's experience as an officially appointed examiner in the national assessment process and focuses on recurring patterns observed in students' responses to the open-ended reading-comprehension questions, email-writing tasks, and essay-writing tasks. Rather than providing a quantitative error analysis, the article seeks to identify common tendencies in student performance and discuss their potential implications for English language teaching and assessment.

Examination Context and Sample

The English Matura examination is offered at three CEFR-aligned proficiency levels: B1.1, B1, and B2. Scripts were assessed during the exam, which took place in May, 2025. A total of 12,877 examination papers were submitted nationally, including 8,735 at B2 level, 3,427 at B1.1 level, and 715 at B1 level.

The observations reported in this article are based on 506 anonymized examination scripts assigned to the author for assessment through the national electronic marking platform. Examination scripts are distributed electronically to examiners through the official assessment system, and the allocation process is independent of examiner preference or selection. The reviewed set consisted of 301 B2 scripts, 113 B1.1 scripts, and 92 B1 scripts.

Although all three proficiency levels were considered during the review process, the discussion focuses primarily on B2 responses. This decision was made for two reasons. First, B2 scripts constituted the largest proportion of the material reviewed. Second, the linguistic difficulties observed at B1.1 and B1 frequently overlapped with those found at B2, whereas the B2 level also revealed additional challenges related to paraphrasing, genre awareness, lexical range, and extended written production.

Data Sources

The data consisted of anonymized student examination scripts accessed through the official marking process. The analysis focuses on three components of the examination: open-ended reading-comprehension questions requiring students to formulate responses in their own words, an email-writing task, and an essay-writing task. Together, these sections provide insight into students' ability to comprehend, reformulate, organize, and communicate ideas in written English under examination conditions.

Analytical Procedure

The observations reported in this article were based on notes taken during the marking process and subsequently organized into recurring thematic categories. Particular attention was paid to common difficulties in paraphrasing information from source texts, maintaining appropriate register and genre conventions, developing extended written arguments, and demonstrating grammatical and lexical control.

The analysis was exploratory and qualitative in nature. Rather than quantifying individual error categories, it sought to identify tendencies that appeared repeatedly across scripts. Observations were grouped into broader themes, including difficulties with paraphrasing, limitations in lexical variation, genre-specific writing conventions, coherence and content development, and instances of first-language influence on English expression. These themes subsequently informed the discussion of findings and pedagogical implications.

Researcher Positionality

Because the author served as both an examiner and a researcher, the analysis inevitably reflects the examiner's perspective. The observations should therefore be understood as qualitative interpretations of recurring patterns rather than objective measurements of their frequency. Their purpose is to stimulate discussion and further research on student writing in the Bulgarian English Matura examination.

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in accordance with the procedures governing the Bulgarian national examination system and established ethical principles for educational research.

The Bulgarian Matura examination incorporates a multi-stage anonymization process designed to ensure the impartial assessment of candidates. On the day of the examination, students complete a separate identification form containing their personal information. This form is sealed in an envelope that is physically

separated from the examination script. The script is subsequently assigned a unique identification number and digitized for assessment through a secure national platform.

Examiners have access only to scanned examination responses and the randomly generated identification number associated with each script. No personal information, school affiliation, geographic location, or other identifying data are visible during the marking process. Following completion of assessment, the identification materials are matched to examination scripts through administrative procedures that remain inaccessible to examiners.

Consequently, the author had no means of identifying individual candidates, and no personal data were collected, stored, or processed for the purposes of this study. To further preserve confidentiality, no student responses are reproduced verbatim. The findings are presented in aggregate form and are intended solely to contribute to scholarly discussion and pedagogical reflection on English language teaching and assessment in Bulgaria.

Assessment Reliability and Quality Assurance

The Bulgarian Matura examination employs a multi-stage quality assurance process designed to promote consistency and reliability in scoring. Each examination script is independently assessed by two examiners who are randomly assigned through the national electronic marking platform. Examiners do not know the identity of the other assessor and complete their evaluations independently.

When discrepancies exceeding the permitted threshold occur between the two assessments, the script is referred to an arbiter. The arbiter reviews the examination response together with the scores and comments provided by both examiners and determines the final assessment. Where necessary, the arbiter may request clarification or provide feedback to examiners regarding the application of assessment criteria.

In addition to resolving discrepancies, arbiters conduct random quality-control reviews of a substantial number of scripts, including papers that have not been flagged for score disagreement. A further supervisory layer oversees the work of arbiters, conducting additional checks to ensure consistent application of national marking standards throughout the assessment process.

These procedures are intended to minimize individual examiner bias and promote reliability and standardization in the evaluation of examination performance.

Assessment Criteria and Scoring Procedures

The analysis presented in this study was informed by the official assessment criteria used in the Bulgarian Matura examination. Understanding these criteria is important because the recurring patterns discussed in the findings emerged within the framework of the national scoring system.

For the open-ended reading-comprehension questions, each response was evaluated on a scale from zero to two points. A score of zero was awarded when the response was incorrect, irrelevant, or consisted primarily of text copied directly from the source passage without sufficient reformulation. One point was awarded for partially correct responses or answers that contained relevant information but also included inaccuracies or unnecessary details. The maximum score of two points was granted when the response accurately addressed the question and demonstrated appropriate reformulation of information from the source text. At the B1.1 and B1 proficiency levels, however, verbatim reproduction of information from the source passage was generally accepted under the official assessment guidelines and was therefore not treated as an error.

The tests are marked by teachers who are given a key with sample answers. The instructions in this key state that any answer which is formulated in a different way and corresponds to the information in the text should be considered correct.

The two written-production tasks – the e-mail and the essay – were assessed using the same broad criteria: content, format, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling and punctuation. Although the weighting of these criteria differed between the two tasks, the underlying assessment principles remained consistent across proficiency levels.

Assessment focused not only on the presence of errors but also on the overall quality and effectiveness of the written response. Generally, a greater number of errors resulted in lower scores; however, the absence of errors did not automatically guarantee the maximum score for a particular criterion. Responses were also evaluated in terms of coherence, development of ideas, appropriateness to the communicative task, lexical range, grammatical complexity, and overall communicative effectiveness. Consequently, a text containing few linguistic errors could still receive a reduced score if it demonstrated limited content development, weak organization, restricted vocabulary, or an overreliance on simple grammatical structures.

Content scores reflected the extent to which candidates addressed all required prompts and developed their ideas logically and coherently. Format scores evaluated adherence to genre-specific conventions. For example, e-mails were expected to include an appropriate greeting, body, and closing signature, whereas essays were expected to contain a clear introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion. Grammar and vocabulary were assessed in terms of both accuracy

and range, while spelling and punctuation scores reflected the degree to which orthographic and mechanical errors affected readability and communication.

A detailed overview of the official assessment criteria and point-allocation system used in the 2025 English Matura examination is provided in Appendix C.

Because the present study examines recurring patterns in candidate performance, familiarity with these assessment criteria is essential for interpreting the distribution of scores and the types of responses that were rewarded or penalized.

Results

As outlined in the Methods section, the present study focuses exclusively on the examiner-marked components of the 2025 Bulgarian English State Matriculation Examination. Questions 1–36 consist of closed-ended listening- and reading-comprehension items that are scored automatically by the national examination system and therefore fall outside the scope of this study.

The analysis begins with Questions 37–43, which comprise the open-ended reading-comprehension task based on a text about the Mechanical Turk (see Appendix A for the full text). Candidates were required to answer seven questions by identifying and reformulating relevant information from the source text in accordance with the official assessment criteria (see Appendix B for the complete task and answer key). The questions posed were as follows:

37. Who invented the Mechanical Turk and when did that happen?

Most candidates identified the correct invention date and inventor. In many cases, the response closely followed the wording of the source text, but this did not pose a difficulty for scoring, since the item allowed little scope for reformulation.

38. Why did audiences believe the Mechanical Turk was capable of real intelligence?

A considerable number of students reproduced the source sentence almost verbatim. When reformulation did occur, it generally preserved the central idea that the machine appeared capable of playing chess like a human, making strategic decisions, correcting mistakes, and anticipating an opponent's moves.

39. What specific details about the Mechanical Turk's appearance and movements made people believe it was a real thinking machine?

Many students provided responses that highlighted only one part of the expected information. Some focused on the automaton's appearance, referring

to its human-like figure and Turkish clothing; others focused on its movements, especially the smooth and precise handling of chess pieces. A number of answers combined these elements unevenly, resulting in partial coverage of the task requirements.

40. How did Napoleon Bonaparte try to challenge the Mechanical Turk's intelligence during their match, and what was the machine's unexpected response?

Many candidates reproduced the relevant part of the source text very closely. Among those who attempted reformulation, the lexical item *swiped* was frequently retained, even where the remainder of the sentence had been altered. In the original passage, the action is described as follows: "*The Turk, unfazed, reached forward, swiped the offending piece off the board, and reset the game...*" This suggests that *swiped* was often perceived as a lexical item that candidates found difficult or unnecessary to replace.

41. How did the Mechanical Turk actually manage to defeat some of the best chess players of its time?

Most candidates identified the hidden human operator correctly. However, the wording varied considerably, and some responses stated that the operator was "in the shadows," "behind the scenes," or "in secret," rather than clearly locating him beneath the cabinet as required by the item.

42. How did the Mechanical Turk influence public perception of machines and their potential intelligence?

This item was answered correctly by many candidates. A substantial number of responses retained the key idea that people were fascinated by the notion of machines thinking like humans. Some answers also drew on wording from the surrounding text, which occasionally led to imprecise or blended formulations.

43. Why did Amazon choose to name its crowdsourcing AI platform "Mechanical Turk"?

A large proportion of students again reproduced the wording of the source text quite closely. Where reformulation was attempted, the answers often preserved the reference to the 18th-century automaton and the idea that apparently automated tasks may in fact depend on human involvement.

Across the reading-comprehension items, three recurring tendencies emerged: (1) reliance on verbatim copying from the source text, (2) difficulty paraphrasing lexical items and multiword expressions, and (3) partial reformulation that captured only some elements of the required information. These tendencies

appeared more frequently in items requiring candidates to combine or reorganize information than in items involving straightforward factual retrieval.

44. First Task – Formal Letter

Question 44 required candidates to write a formal letter in the form of an email to the Head Librarian requesting extended library opening hours during examination periods. In their letters, candidates were expected to explain why the current opening hours were inadequate, propose practical measures to address the issue, and express their willingness to assist in finding a solution. They were also instructed to sign their letter using the name *James Blake* or *Jane Blake* (see Appendix C for the complete examination prompt and assessment criteria).

Task 44 was completed successfully by the vast majority of candidates. Most responses followed the expected format, used a generally appropriate register, and maintained a clear and coherent structure throughout. The overall impression was that students were familiar with the conventions of this genre and could apply them effectively in an examination context.

The most frequent weakness concerned the salutation. Many candidates began with formulaic openings such as *To whom it may concern* or *Dear Mr/Mrs* instead of addressing the Head Librarian directly. Another recurring issue was the use of complaint-like language and structures, even though the task required a polite request for extended library opening hours rather than a complaint letter.

Most students justified the need for longer opening hours by referring to clashes between lecture schedules and library availability. Some responses also proposed extending the library to a 24-hour service. While such suggestions were understandable from the student perspective, they were not always well adapted to the institutional context implied by the task.

Additional deviations included inconsistent use of the prescribed signature name and, in a smaller number of scripts, paragraph spacing that appeared influenced by digital or screen-based writing habits. Even so, these issues were generally minor. The majority of letters met the content requirements, included the expected greeting, body, and closing, and contained only limited spelling and punctuation problems.

45. Second Task – Argumentative Essay Expressing an Opinion on a Given Question

Question 45 required candidates to write a 200–220-word argumentative essay expressing their opinion on the topic *The Future of Work*. Candidates were invited to discuss how workplaces might change over the next decade by considering the advantages and disadvantages of technological advancement,

workplace dynamics, and professional skills development (see Appendix C for the complete examination prompt and assessment criteria).

The essay task proved considerably more demanding than the formal letter task. Although most candidates produced texts with a recognizable introduction, body, and conclusion, many essays remained general and underdeveloped. Responses often stayed at the level of broad statements, with limited use of examples, explanation, or elaboration.

A recurring pattern was the uneven treatment of the three required content points. Many students focused on one aspect of the topic, such as technological advancement or professional skills development, while giving little or no attention to workplace dynamics. In several scripts, the essay therefore developed as a partial response rather than a balanced discussion of the full task.

The coherence of the essays varied widely. Stronger responses used thesis statements and basic signposting to guide the reader, while weaker essays moved from one idea to another with little explicit connection. Differences were also visible in vocabulary and grammar. Some students used a reasonably varied range of structures and topic-related expressions, whereas others relied on short, repetitive, and syntactically simple sentences. Orthographic and punctuation errors were more frequent in this task than in the reading-comprehension or formal-letter tasks, particularly in longer responses that required sustained independent production.

Taken together, the findings suggest notable variation across task types. The open-ended reading-comprehension items frequently exposed difficulties in reformulating source-text information, whereas the formal-letter task was generally completed successfully and in accordance with genre conventions. The argumentative essay proved more demanding, particularly with respect to content development, coherence, and sustained written production. In addition, a recurring cross-task pattern was observed: candidates who produced stronger essays and letters also tended to perform well on the open-ended reading-comprehension items, whereas strong performance on the reading tasks alone did not consistently coincide with higher-quality written production. The following discussion considers these patterns in relation to previous research on second-language writing, reading-to-write tasks, and genre-based instruction.

Discussion

The findings of the present study suggest that the reading-comprehension, email-writing, and essay-writing components of the 2025 English Matura examination drew on different aspects of learners' communicative competence. Although all three tasks required the use of written English, they appeared to place different demands on candidates with respect to lexical flexibility, genre

awareness, discourse organization, and independent language production. The item-by-item analysis therefore indicates not only variation in performance, but also variation in the kinds of competence that each task made visible.

The open-ended reading-comprehension questions showed that comprehension and reformulation are not the same skill. In many scripts, the relevant information was apparently understood, yet candidates still relied on direct copying or on very close retention of source-text wording. This was especially visible in items 38, 40, and 43, where key lexical items and phrase patterns were often preserved with minimal modification. Such responses suggest that the principal challenge lay less in understanding the source text than in converting understood content into independent English expression. In other words, successful performance depended not only on reading comprehension but also on sufficient lexical and syntactic flexibility to reformulate information while preserving its meaning. This finding supports previous research on integrated reading-to-write tasks, which has consistently shown that paraphrasing remains one of the most demanding aspects of second-language writing because it requires learners to integrate receptive understanding with productive language skills rather than rely on comprehension alone (Wette, 2017; Plakans & Lee, 2025; Shi, 2012; Hirvela, 2016).

The same tendency also helps explain why some responses were only partially successful. In items such as 39 and 41, students often captured one dimension of the information but not the full relation required by the question. In these cases, the problem was not necessarily a failure to understand the text, but difficulty expressing complex or multi-part information with sufficient precision. The challenge of distinguishing between appearance, movement, and function in Question 39, or of specifying the operator's exact spatial position in Question 41, suggests that candidates experienced greater difficulty when they were required to select, integrate, and reorganise information rather than reproduce it. These observations reinforce the view that open-ended reading-comprehension tasks assess more than comprehension alone: they also require candidates to demonstrate discourse-level writing skills, including the ability to synthesise information and communicate it concisely in their own words.

The email task, by contrast, suggests a relatively secure command of a highly familiar genre. Most candidates knew how to organize the text, maintain an appropriate register, and present the request in a conventional manner. This is encouraging, but it may also reflect the structured nature of the task itself. Formal emails follow relatively predictable organisational conventions and communicative purposes, allowing many candidates to rely on familiar discourse patterns when constructing their responses. In addition to this common genre scaffolding, the examination task itself provides further support by specifying both the recipient and the required signature, together with three clearly defined

content points that candidates must address: the reason for writing, the proposed solution, and the writer's willingness to assist. Combined with memorised formulaic expressions frequently used in formal correspondence, this level of guidance substantially reduces the demands associated with planning and organising content and limits the opportunities for major deviations from the expected response. The recurring salutation problems and occasional shift toward complaint-letter conventions nevertheless suggest that some candidates defaulted to memorised templates rather than adapting fully to the specific communicative situation presented in the prompt. In genre terms, this is not necessarily a sign of failure; rather, it indicates that the transactional email format provides substantial rhetorical scaffolding, which may mask weaknesses that become more visible in less structured writing tasks. Consequently, competence in this genre should not necessarily be interpreted as evidence of equally strong performance in less structured forms of writing, a distinction that is consistent with genre-based approaches to second-language writing (Hyland, 2018; Hyland, 2022).

The essay task revealed a different set of challenges. Here, the main difficulty was not simply linguistic accuracy, but the ability to sustain an extended line of thought across a longer text. Many responses remained thinly developed, and some addressed only one of the required bullet points. This pattern suggests that argumentative writing places demands extending beyond grammatical control or vocabulary knowledge. Candidates were required to establish a clear position, develop and connect ideas, integrate all elements of the prompt, and maintain coherence within a relatively restricted word limit. When these demands were not successfully managed, the result was often a text that was structurally recognisable but rhetorically underdeveloped (Wingate, 2012). The findings therefore reinforce the view that successful argumentative writing depends upon the integration of multiple dimensions of writing competence, including discourse organisation, content development, and audience awareness, rather than linguistic accuracy alone. They also suggest that students who can produce effective transactional texts may nevertheless require further support in developing the higher-order planning and organisational skills associated with extended argumentative writing.

The frequent neglect of workplace dynamics is particularly noteworthy. One possible explanation is that the topic of "The Future of Work" required students to move beyond familiar school-related contexts and engage with a broader, more abstract subject that may have been less frequently encountered in classroom writing. While many candidates were able to discuss technological developments or professional skills in general terms, comparatively fewer developed ideas concerning interpersonal relationships and collaboration in future workplaces. This may suggest that generating and expanding ideas presented as great a challenge as expressing them linguistically. The findings therefore reinforce

the view that successful argumentative writing depends not only on language proficiency but also on the ability to select, organise, and elaborate content in response to a complex prompt (Wingate, 2012; Hyland, 2019). They also suggest that regular practice with highly structured transactional writing may not, by itself, provide sufficient preparation for the more open-ended discourse required by argumentative essay tasks.

Another important observation concerns the cross-task pattern. Candidates who produced coherent, well-developed essays and effective emails also tended to perform well on the open-ended reading-comprehension items, whereas the reverse pattern was considerably less consistent. Although the present study does not permit causal conclusions, this recurring observation suggests that stronger productive writing ability may reflect a broader and more integrated command of English than is apparent from receptive-response tasks alone. Candidates who demonstrated greater control over organisation, content development, and communicative purpose in the writing tasks also appeared better able to reformulate information from source texts, indicating that lexical flexibility and discourse-level writing skills may support performance across different components of the examination. This interpretation is consistent with research suggesting that higher-quality writing reflects the successful integration of multiple linguistic and rhetorical resources rather than isolated language skills (Kyle & Crossley, 2018; Crossley, 2020; Hyland, 2022). Although this observation remains tentative and requires verification through larger quantitative studies, it represents one of the more consistent patterns observed across the examination scripts and therefore merits further investigation.

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study is based on a sample of 506 randomly assigned examination scripts, assigned to a single examiner through the national marking platform. Although the assigned scripts included papers from all three proficiency levels, the analysis and discussion focus primarily on B2 responses because these constituted the largest proportion of the material reviewed. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted principally as observations relating to B2 performance rather than equally to all proficiency levels and it cannot be considered fully representative of national performance. Second, the analysis is qualitative and observational rather than quantitative, focusing on recurring tendencies rather than measuring the frequency of individual error categories. Third, because the study relies exclusively on examination scripts, it cannot account for factors such as school type, instructional practices, or students' educational backgrounds.

At the same time, the study highlights a significant gap in Bulgarian research on the English Matura examination. Future research could build on these

preliminary observations by examining larger datasets, incorporating quantitative error analysis, and comparing performance across proficiency levels, school types, and examination years. Comparative studies involving examiner observations, student interviews, and classroom practices could also provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing writing performance. Access to a national corpus of anonymized examination scripts would further enable researchers to identify broader trends and provide stronger empirical foundations for curriculum development, assessment practices, and teacher training.

Conclusion

This article has offered a modest examiner-based account of recurring patterns observed in the 2025 Bulgarian English Matura examination, with particular attention to open-ended reading-comprehension responses, email writing, and essay writing. The observations suggest that student performance varied markedly across task types. The email task was generally completed with relative success, indicating that many candidates had acquired a functional command of the transactional genre and its formal conventions. By contrast, the reading-comprehension tasks and the essay task revealed more persistent difficulties, particularly in paraphrasing, lexical flexibility, coherence, and the development of extended written discourse.

Taken together, these patterns suggest that learners often possess sufficient linguistic knowledge to perform successfully on more structured tasks but encounter greater challenges when required to reformulate information independently or sustain a longer written argument. In particular, the frequent reliance on verbatim copying in the reading-comprehension section and the limited development of ideas in the essay task indicate that students may benefit from more systematic practice in paraphrasing, organizing content, and adapting language to communicative purpose. The findings also point to a possible imbalance in classroom preparation, with highly structured transactional writing receiving greater emphasis than extended forms of written production.

While the present study is limited in scope and based on the observations of a single examiner, it nevertheless highlights several areas that may warrant further pedagogical attention. The findings tentatively suggest that more explicit instruction in paraphrasing, genre awareness, and extended writing may better support students' performance in the English Matura examination. At university level, and particularly in ESP contexts, continued attention to summarizing, reformulating, and communicating information across genres may further strengthen learners' academic writing abilities. Future research involving larger collections of anonymized examination scripts and more systematic analytical procedures would help determine the extent to which the patterns described

here reflect broader tendencies in English language learning and assessment within the Bulgarian educational context.

Pedagogical Implications

The observations reported in this study suggest several practical implications for English language teaching in Bulgaria.

First, greater attention should be devoted to the explicit teaching of paraphrasing strategies. Many students appeared able to understand source texts but experienced difficulty reformulating information independently. Classroom activities that focus on lexical substitution, syntactic transformation, summarising, and reformulation may help learners develop greater flexibility in expressing meaning while preserving accuracy.

Second, students would benefit from more frequent opportunities to produce extended written texts. Although most candidates demonstrated familiarity with the conventions of email writing, many struggled to develop ideas in sufficient depth within the essay task. Regular practice with argumentative essays, opinion pieces, and other forms of extended writing may help learners strengthen planning, organization, and content-development skills.

Third, writing instruction should continue to emphasize genre awareness while also encouraging adaptation to specific communicative contexts. Several responses demonstrated reliance on memorized templates rather than careful analysis of task requirements. Activities that require students to compare genres and modify language according to audience and purpose may help address this tendency.

At university level, particularly within ESP courses, instruction should continue to support students' ability to summarize, paraphrase, and communicate information across discipline-specific genres. Process-oriented writing approaches that incorporate drafting, feedback, and revision may further strengthen students' academic writing abilities.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

The author acknowledges the use of AI-assisted tools for linguistic refinement and paraphrasing during the preparation of the manuscript – ChatGPT5 and QuillBot. All outputs were critically reviewed and edited, and the author assumes full responsibility for the content and integrity of the final manuscript.

References

- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. Oxford University Press.
- Bachman, L. F., & Palmer, A. S. (1996). *Language Testing in Practice*. Oxford University Press.
- Brown, H. D., & Abeywickrama, P. (2019). *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices* (3rd ed.). Pearson.
- Council of Europe (2020). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Companion Volume*. Council of Europe Publishing.
- Crossley, S. (2020). Linguistic features in writing quality and development: An overview. *Journal of Writing Research*, 11, 415–443. <https://doi.org/10.17239/jowr-2020.11.03.01>
- Crossley, S. A., & McNamara, D. S. (2012). Predicting second language writing proficiency: The roles of cohesion and linguistic sophistication. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 35(2), 115–135. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9817.2010.01449.x>
- Ferris, D. R. (2011). *Treatment of Error in Second Language Student Writing* (2nd ed.). University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.1016/J.JSLW.2012.05.001>
- Ferris, D. R., & Hedgcock, J. S. (2013). *Teaching L2 Composition: Purpose, Process, and Practice* (3rd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203813003>
- Gebril, A. (2009). Score generalizability of academic writing tasks integrating reading and listening sources. *Language Testing*, 26(4), 507–531. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265532209340188>
- Grabe, W., & Zhang, C. (2013). Reading and writing together: A critical component of English for academic purposes teaching and learning. *TESOL Journal*, 4(1), 9–24. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesj.65>
- Hirvela, A. (2004). *Connecting Reading and Writing in Second Language Writing Instruction*. University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.23736>
- Hirvela, A. (2016). *Connecting Reading & Writing in Second Language Writing Instruction* (2nd ed.). University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.8122864>
- Hyland, K. (2018). Genre and Second Language Writing. In J. I. Lontas, T. International Association, & M. DelliCarpini (Eds.), *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118784235.eelt0535>
- Hyland, K. (2019). *Second Language Writing*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108635547>

- Hyland, K. (2022). *Second Language Writing* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Ivanova, I., & Gerova, A. (2020). Bulgarian students' perceptions of issues and challenges in preparing for the English language maturity exam. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture and FLT*, 8(3), 48–68. <https://doi.org/10.46687/SILC.2020.v08i03.004>
- Johns, A. M. (2008). Genre awareness for the novice academic student: An ongoing quest. *Language Teaching*, 41(2), 237–252. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444807004892>
- Kyle, K., & Crossley, S. A. (2018). Measuring syntactic complexity in L2 writing using fine-grained clausal and phrasal indices. *The Modern Language Journal*, 102(2), 333–349. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12468>
- McNamara, T. (2000). *Language Testing*. Oxford University Press.
- Ministry of Education and Science (2025). *State Matriculation Examination Specifications and Assessment Documentation for Foreign Languages*. Sofia: MES.
- Plakans, L. (2015). Integrated second language writing assessment: Why? What? How? *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 9, 159–167. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lnc3.12124>
- Plakans, L., & Lee, K. (2025). Fairness, justice, and criticality: Reviewing second language writing assessment. *Language Teaching*, 59(1), 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444825100876>
- Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in Teaching Writing*. Oxford University Press.
- Shi, L. (2012). Paraphrasing in second language academic writing: A systematic review. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 21(2), 134–148. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2012.03.003>
- Silva, T. (1993). Toward an understanding of the distinct nature of L2 writing: The ESL research and its implications. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(4), 657–677. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3587400>
- Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Research Settings*. Cambridge University Press.
- Swales, J. M., & Feak, C. B. (2012). *Academic Writing for Graduate Students* (3rd ed.). University of Michigan Press. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.2173936>
- Tribble, C. (1996). *Writing*. Oxford University Press.
- Weigle, S. C. (2002). *Assessing Writing*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511732997>
- Weir, C. J. (2005). *Language Testing and Validation*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230514577>

- Wette, R. (2017). Source text use by undergraduate post-novice L2 writers in disciplinary assignments: Progress and ongoing challenges. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 37, 46–58. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2017.05.015>
- Wingate, U. (2012). ‘Argument!’ helping students understand what essay writing is about. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 11(2), 145–154. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2011.11.001>

Appendix A

Task Three – Full Reading Passage (Questions 37–43)

Read the text below. Then read the questions that follow it and answer each question with a sentence of your own. Write your answers on your answer sheet. Sentences copied word for word from the text will get 0 points

The Mechanical Turk: An 18th-Century “AI” Sensation

In 1769, a Hungarian inventor named Wolfgang von Kempelen unveiled what seemed like a miracle of human ingenuity – a mechanical man, dressed in elegant Turkish robes, capable of playing chess against the greatest minds of Europe. The automaton, known as the Mechanical Turk, could move pieces with precision, anticipate its opponent’s strategies, and even correct mistakes. It wasn’t just a machine; it was a spectacle, a glimpse into a future where intelligence wasn’t confined to flesh and blood but could exist within gears and cogs.

The Turk quickly became a sensation. It travelled across royal courts and grand salons, challenging the most brilliant players of the time. Even Napoleon Bonaparte himself couldn’t resist testing his wits against it. The legend goes that during their match, Napoleon tried to trick the machine by making an illegal move. The Turk, unfazed, reached forward, swiped the offending piece off the board, and reset the game – a reaction so lifelike that the emperor burst into laughter. The world marvelled at the idea of a machine that could think, strategise, and even outsmart humans.

For nearly a century, the Mechanical Turk roamed the world, mesmerising crowds and humiliating overconfident challengers. But behind its impressive façade there was a secret that no one in the audience could have imagined. Beneath the wooden cabinet that supposedly housed the machine’s gears and mechanisms, a human chess master sat hidden in the shadows, controlling every move. The brilliant automaton was nothing more than an elaborate illusion, a carefully orchestrated hoax that played into humanity’s deepest desires – a belief that intelligence could be created, that machines could rival the human mind.

Despite being a deception, the Mechanical Turk ignited something powerful: a fascination with the idea of artificial intelligence long before the term even existed. It wasn’t just a party trick; it was a promise of what the future could hold. More than 200 years later, the dream of a thinking machine is no longer an illusion. Today, AI-powered systems can outplay grandmasters, diagnose diseases, compose music, and hold conversations indistinguishable from those

of a human. What once was a trick designed to entertain royalty has evolved into one of the greatest scientific revolutions in history.

The irony is that AI, in many ways, still carries traces of its old deception. Just as the Turk required a hidden human to function, much of modern artificial intelligence still relies on human intervention, data, and programming to appear truly intelligent. In fact, Amazon named its crowdsourcing AI platform “Mechanical Turk” as a sign of recognition of the 18th-century trickster, acknowledging that even today, some tasks that seem automated still require human involvement behind the scenes.

The Mechanical Turk may not have been real, but the dream it represented – the dream of artificial intelligence – was. And as machines continue to learn, evolve, and even surpass human intelligence in certain fields, we are finally living in the future that 18th-century audiences once only imagined. The illusion is no longer necessary because reality has caught up.

Appendix B

Questions and answer key provided for the examiner.

37. Who invented the Mechanical Turk and when did that happen?

The Mechanical Turk was invented in 1769 (1 p.) by Wolfgang von Kempelen, a Hungarian inventor. (1 p.)

38. Why did audiences believe the Mechanical Turk was capable of real intelligence?

Because of its ability to play chess like a human (1 p.), making strategic decisions, correcting mistakes, and even anticipating its opponent's moves. (1 p.)

39. What specific details about the Mechanical Turk's appearance and movements made people believe it was a real thinking machine?

Its impressive façade / it looked like a real man dressed in elegant Turkish clothes. (1 p.)

The automaton's lifelike arm movements, and its ability to pick up chess pieces smoothly and move them with precision (1 p.)

40. How did Napoleon Bonaparte try to challenge the Mechanical Turk's intelligence during their match, and what was the machine's unexpected response?

Napoleon attempted to outsmart the Mechanical Turk by deliberately making an illegal move (1 p.), but the machine swiftly removed the incorrect piece off the board and reset the game. (1 p.)

41. How did the Mechanical Turk actually manage to defeat some of the best chess players of its time?

A human chess master sat hidden beneath its wooden cabinet (1 p.) and secretly controlled its moves, (ensuring that it always played with skill and precision). (1 p.)

42. How did the Mechanical Turk influence public perception of machines and their potential intelligence?

People were fascinated by the idea that machines could think like humans. (2 p.)

43. Why did Amazon choose to name its crowdsourcing AI platform "Mechanical Turk"?

Amazon named its platform "Mechanical Turk" as a sign of acknowledgement of the 18th-century chess-playing automaton, (1 p.) and also to highlight that (like the original hoax) tasks that seem automated (performed by AI) are actually performed by human workers (who develop the AI). (1 p.)

Appendix C

Text Assessment Criteria

44. First Task – Formal Letter

The instructions are as follows:

44. Read the task and write a formal letter (120 – 130 words), including the suggested prompts

You are a university student and have observed that the library's operating hours in your university are insufficient to meet the needs of students, especially during examination periods. Write a letter to the Head Librarian in which you:

- *explain why the current library hours are inadequate;*
- *propose practical measures to address the issue;*
- *express willingness and ways to assist.*

*Sign your letter with **James Blake / Jane Blake**.*

A written text containing fewer than 65 words, or a text that is entirely unrelated to the topic, will be awarded 0 (zero) points.

The grading is as follows:

0–5 points: Content relevance to the topic, coherence, and logical sequence of ideas (including appropriate register/style);

0–3 points: Text structure (including compliance with the required length and format);

0–5 points: Correct and appropriate use of vocabulary, lexical richness;

0–5 points: Grammatical accuracy (morphological and syntactic correctness);

0–2 points: Spelling.

45. Second Task – Argumentative Essay Expressing an Opinion on a Given Question

The instructions are as follows:

45. Read the task and write an essay (200 – 220 words), expressing your opinion on the set topic.

The Future of Work. *How will workplaces change in the next decade?**Consider the following:*

- *pros and cons of technological advancement;*
- *workplace dynamics, i.e. the way people interact when they work together;*
- *professional skills development.*

0–8 points: Content relevance to the topic, coherence, and logical sequence of ideas (ability to present facts and formulate a position);

0–2 points: Text structure (including compliance with the required length and format);

0–9 points: Correct and appropriate use of vocabulary, lexical richness;

0–9 points: Grammatical accuracy (morphological and syntactic correctness);

0–2 points: Spelling.

A written text containing fewer than 110 words, or a text that is entirely unrelated to the topic, will be awarded 0 (zero) points.

EXPLORING GLOBAL EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES ON WORLD ENGLISHES: THE VOICES FROM NON-NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Retno Wulan¹, Urip Sulistiyo², Eddy Haryanto³, Marsandi Manar⁴,
Muhammad Kristiawan⁵

^{1,4}Universitas Bangka Belitung, Indonesia, ^{2,3}Universitas Jambi, Indonesia,

⁵Universitas Bengkulu, Indonesia

Abstract: *The purpose of this paper is to increase the awareness of the implication of World Englishes (WEs) for classroom practices and teacher training program policy. The researchers employed a phenomenological approach using semi-structured interviews. All participants defined English not as their native language. This research was a small-scale study involving ten participants from both outer and expanding circle countries with heterogenous educational and professional backgrounds. The originality of this research lies in the phenomenological lens used to explore how individuals from diverse educational and professional backgrounds use WEs in real-life communication. Rather than approaching English from a theoretical perspective, this study anchors its findings in personal narratives, highlighting the shift from traditional, standardized notions of English toward a more inclusive and global understanding of language. The results emphasized inclusivity of Word Englishes, limitations, and the relationship among participants' voices. In addition, it suggested that textbooks and teaching materials should incorporate different varieties of Englishes. Teachers should present English as a flexible and multicultural tool emphasizing clear communication. Meanwhile, pre-service and in-service teachers training should include sociolinguistic education on global English diversity. This study's findings have implications for classroom practices in terms of curriculum development and materials, teaching approaches or pedagogy, and teacher training policy.*

Keywords: *World Englishes, English as International Language, Lingua Franca, English as Foreign Language, Lingua Franca Core*

About the author: *Retno Wulan is affiliated with Universitas Bangka Belitung. Her expertise focuses on world Englishes, teaching English to young learners, and translation studies. She is currently teaching in an English education study program at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Bangka Belitung, Indonesia. Retno's scholarly publications are indexed in major academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, and SINTA.*

e-mail: retnowulan@ubb.ac.id

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7923-5440>

Copyright © 2026 Retno Wulan, Urip Sulistiyo, Eddy Haryanto, Marsandi Manar, Muhammad Kristiawan

Article history: Received: 6 August 2025; Reviewed: 21 April 2026; Revised: 29 April 2026; Accepted: 4 June 2026; Published: 21 August 2026



This open access article is published and distributed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

Citation (APA): Wulan, R., Sulistiyo, U., Haryanto, E., Manar, M., & Kristiawan, M. (2026). Exploring Global Experiences and Perspectives on World Englishes: The Voices from Non-Native English Speakers. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 14(2), 163-187. <https://doi.org/10.46687/OVOS1288>

Introduction

The concept of Standard or legitimized English and Varieties of World Englishes has led to a shift in how English is perceived, taught, and used globally. Nowadays, people have been exposed to English all over the world and use it to communicate with different interlocutors (Veliz & Véliz-Campos, 2021) through communication technologies and social movement across territories (Maranga, 2018). UNESCO (2009) estimated between 6,000 and 8,000 languages in existence today are spoken by less than 10,000 people in which cultural diversity takes place and influences the development of linguistic diversity, cultural identity, and social structures. In addition, people believe learning a language cannot be separated from its culture (Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011). Furthermore, as Graddol (2006), Piel, et al. (2014), and Llul (2016) claimed, the total number of international migrants had doubled to 175 million, which represented about 3% of the total population in the world from 1960 up to 2000. Additionally, most of the international tourists came from a non-English speaking country to a non-English speaking country. Thus, these two major factors best describe the development of English varieties all over the world.

Kachru (2000) proposed his three circles model of global spread and use of English, mostly known as World Englishes, including an inner circle (native English speakers), an outer circle (post-colonial English), and an expanding circle (non-native English speakers). In addition, the varieties of English are shaped by different societies, cultures, and contexts. These communities localized and internalized their own unique accent and cultural expressions embracing the different varieties of English (Napratilora & Devianti, 2019; Park, 2021; Guzzetti, 2022). Matsuda (2003) and Passakornkarn and Vibulphol (2020) proposed that in the classroom, particularly in terms of pedagogy, teachers and educators must expose and acknowledge the development of English to students and not to limit students to certain native models. This paradigm should be considered also in the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes where a balanced approach to teaching non-standard variants of English is required (Stefanovic et al., 2022). Moreover, Pulatova (2024), Aoyama (2023), Lasito (2024), Morrison and White (2005), Green (2015), Ambele (2022), Lim (2019), Sa'd (2018), Monfared (2018), Rezaei, Khosravizadeh, and Mottaghi (2018), Alasmari (2018), Harris (2012), Ishaque (2018), and Fang (2011) also examined the perspective of World Englishes in the classroom during the teaching and learning process and how important it is to introduce World Englishes to students.

In line with the views, Bamgbo'e (2001), Park (2021), Sadaf and Sheraz (2024), Tran, et al. (2025), and Pholying, (2025) emphasized that World Englishes is derived from the development of English influenced by social, economic, and cultural diversity globally. However, identifying and defining the varieties of English (World Englishes) might be different when it comes to the real situation

globally. Previous research indeed defined the definition of World Englishes and its use in pedagogy and classroom. Although many studies have addressed the conceptual and pedagogical dimensions of World Englishes, there remains a critical gap in understanding how individuals from non-native English-speaking countries perceive and interact with diverse English varieties in authentic, international contexts. In particular, there is a need to explore the lived experiences of individuals who have been professionally and socially exposed to World Englishes across various countries. In order to fill this gap, the current research focuses on the perceptions of World Englishes from the perspective of participants originating from non-native English countries. These participants are individuals who have worked and communicated internationally, and who have been exposed to diverse English varieties across multiple cultural and professional settings. The study investigates their real-life experiences, their opinions on the advantages and limitations of World Englishes, and how these affect their communicative practices and language ideologies. Therefore, this research attempted to investigate two main questions, namely (1) How do the participants relate and understand the concept of World Englishes in their daily interactions? and (2) How does intercultural interaction highlight both the strengths and limitations of World Englishes?

Status and Function of English

According to Kachru and Smith (2008, pp. 5-6), “English is the official and dominant language of the Inner circle areas”. However, its status varies over the outer and expanding circles. For instance, although there is no constitutional provision for an official language either in the American or the British system of government, English is in reality the official language. Standard American or British English, of course, co-exists with other varieties (e.g., Scottish in Britain, Welsh English in Wales, Cornish English in Cornwall, Irish English in Ireland, and African-American in America), as well as indigenous and immigrant languages/dialects/creoles in America and in Britain. Moreover, in the Anglophone Caribbean, English is the official language and is used in addition to the English-based creole and immigrant languages. Meanwhile, in Canada, English is the co-official language along with French, and co-exists with indigenous (Native American) languages and settler/ immigrant languages (e.g. Scottish, Gaelic, Ukrainian, Punjabi, and Cantonese).

On the other hand, in Kenya, English is the second national language with a status lower than Swahili, which is the official language while in the Scandinavian countries, English is the second language that practically everyone learns. In the EU, English and French are the two working languages, though there are nine other languages also in the list of official languages. In India, English is an associate official language with Hindi, which is the official language. It co-exists with national languages (e.g. Hindi, Marathi, Tamil) of the vast territory and has the status of a national language, for instance, serving the literary awards by the

national academy of letters. In addition, it is the official language of eight Union Territories directly controlled from New Delhi.

The number of people who speak English grows faster over time (Graddol, 2000; Pacheco-Franco, 2023). Thus, the second language speakers will shift into the inner circle areas in which English might be their first language while the foreign language speakers will be drawn to the outer circle where English is their second language (Dhami & Prabjandee, 2023; Pan & Seargeant, 2023). Graddol (2006) witnessed about 1.3 billion English speakers in which 330 million are the native speakers and had long been regarded as people who are providing authoritative standards and are the best teachers of English. It showed us that English is used and spoken by most English non-native speakers outnumbering the English native speakers bringing their own culture and accent.

English as International Language (EIL), English as Lingua Franca (ELF), English as Foreign Language (EFL), Lingua Franca Core (LFC)

Although a concept of standard English has been explained, other terminology issues come up including English as International Language (EIL), English as Foreign Language (EFL), and English as Lingua Franca (ELF). Yonata et al., (2022), Palese et al. (2022), D'Angelo (2012), Crystal (2008), and Seidlhofer (2004) refer EIL to the English use in an international context, including its Native speakers (Expanding Circle, Outer Circle, and Inner circle contexts), while referring EFL to the use of standard English among the non-native speakers only to achieve global communication. In addition, ELF is the medium of communication among people whose first language is different (Seidlhofer, 2004; Seidlhofer, 2011; Kirkpatrick, 2014). At this point, there is a close relationship between EIL and ELF in which they both refer to the language use and its context.

In addition, English as Lingua Franca (ELF) focuses not only on the English use but also on the pragmatic aspects of different cultures in global communication and intelligibility (Cierpich-Kozieł, 2023; Deli, 2024; Hiasa, 2025; and Graddol, 2006). It emphasizes the fluent bilingual speaker and the identity in terms of accent, accommodation and skills to negotiate understanding with other non-native speakers. Meanwhile, English as Foreign Language (EFL) emphasizes more the native culture and society/context in English classroom or education aspect (Azis, 2023; Grijalva et al., 2025; Preis et al., 2023; Wu & Shafait, 2024). It focuses on the centrality of methodology in effective teaching and learning process and tends to have a native-like behavior and attitudes. Thus, English as Foreign Language (EFL) frames the societies as non-native speakers oriented toward native-speaker models, privileging the norms of Inner Circle standards in language use and evaluation.

Although Lingua Franca Core (LFC) closely relates to the English as Lingua Franca (ELF), it also shares similar concepts and paradigm for World Englishes

(Wang, 2022). Graddol (2006) asserted that LFC does not put any concern on native-like accuracy. Thus, teaching pronunciation is considered a waste of time for the English teaching classroom. Moreover, Jenkins (2000) proposed that varieties of the pronunciation may occur and she believed that Lingua Franca Core (LFC) provides individual freedom to the English speakers so they can express their message and show their identities. In addition, it accommodates the receivers to understand the speech leading to successful communication. Therefore, it was meant to serve as a guideline for instruction of pronunciation including consonant sounds except voiced/voiceless *th* and dark *l*, vowel quantity, consonant deletion, and nuclear stress.

On the other hand, Jenkins (2009) also proposed three terms of English speakers, they are English as Native Language, Second Language, and Foreign Language. She also stated that “English as Native Language (ENL) or English as a mother tongue, as it is sometimes called, is the language of those born and raised in one of the countries where English is historically the first language to be spoken, meanwhile, English as Second Language (ESL) refers to the language spoken in a large number of territories such as India, Bangladesh, Nigeria, and Singapore, which were once colonized by the English. Meanwhile, English as Foreign Language (EFL) is the English of outer and expanding circles used for certain purposes within their own countries, for instance, historically, to speak with native speakers in the US and UK, though this is no longer the case (Graddol, 2006).

Materials and Methods

This qualitative study employing the phenomenological approach investigated the voices of ten participants from different countries towards the varieties of English found and used during their interaction with other interlocutors from other nations with heterogeneous educational backgrounds and professions.

Participants in the research

A total of ten participants comprising 6 females and 4 males were included in this research emphasizing their experiences in interacting and mingling with their colleagues from different cultures and nations. They did not share the same first language and English is not their first language. However, they used English to interact with each of the interlocutors.

To reach the aim of this study, all the participants were contacted personally through a popular conferencing platform such as Zoom (Tagliamonte, 2012). The researchers contacted the participants and asked for their willingness to be involved in this research. The researchers also presented in detail the information about and the objective of the research ensuring the identities of all the participants under this current research remain anonymous. After receiving

their consent, the researchers set the interview schedule and made an agreement with each participant.

All the participants were contacted and selected based on several criteria or purposive sampling (Cohen et al., 2011) such as coming from either outer or expanding circle countries where English is not their first language, having close interaction for some months or years with different interlocutors from different circles, using English mostly for communication, and exposing themselves to varieties of English.

Regarding research ethics, the researchers distributed an informed consent form which the participants read thoroughly, completed, and signed indicating their voluntary engagement. They were also granted the right to withdraw their participation in any phase of this study. In addition, each participant’s name was substituted with a pseudonym and was labelled with an “M” for male participants and an “F” for female participants. The following table shows the demographic characteristics of all ten participants (Table 1).

Table 1. *Profile of the participants*

Participants’ Code	Native Country	First Language	Age (Years)	Occupation
M1	Indonesia	Malay Language	30	Lecturer
M2	Singapore	Chinese	32	Community development facilitator
M3	Philippines	Filipino/Tagalog	40	Midwife
M4	Indonesia	Malay Language	26	Teacher
F1	Indonesia	Malay Language	27	Staff Administration
F2	Spain	Spanish	34	PhD student and freelance writer
F3	France	French	32	CSR Officer
F4	Thailand	Thai	32	Community Engagement Specialist
F5	Myanmar	Karen language	33	Law and Policy Specialist
F6	Myanmar	Karen language	33	Agriculture Specialist

Data instrument and analysis

This research employed interpretative phenomenological approach by using a semi-structured interview which lasted for about 60 - 120 minutes with each participant to explore the experiences with and opinion of World Englishes (WEs). The Phenomenological research focuses on exploring individual's lived experiences regarding a specific concept or phenomenon (Creswell et al., 2007; Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009). Meanwhile, collecting the data through semi-structured interviews is essential and effective to understand the attitudes and voices of the research subjects where questionnaires and simple observation cannot match. Furthermore, it enables the researchers to gain more insights, thoughts, and views of the participants (Dörnyei, 2007). Furthermore, the researchers designed and developed 29 questions to best describe and answer the research questions proposed in this study. During its implementation, the researchers addressed and asked all the questions in a specific order to each of the interviewees while allowing any elaboration and clarification to the answers received to ensure all the data and information were appropriate.

The first step of the data analysis was directly transcribing the data obtained from each participant. Second, the result of the transcription was kept in a secured file while conducting other interviews. When all the interviews were completed, the researchers ensured all the transcriptions were in line with each participant's answer and distributed the transcriptions to each participant requiring them to check the statement provided. The researchers also clustered these statements into themes. The next phase of analysis was coding in which the researchers described, structured, and interpreted all the data. The researchers edited and reorganized the codes, and structured the codes into categories, eliminating data considered irrelevant to the research objectives.

During the theming and coding sections, the researchers realized that there was a hint relationship among participants' statement in terms of their voices and attitudes towards World Englishes, the limitations of World Englishes, and how they defined the advantages of the World Englishes. To see this relationship more clearly, the researchers made three mermaid maps consisting of perceptions, limitations, and advantages of WEs based on the interview results. Each map is presented in the discussion section.

Results

The findings revealed several key themes under the data analysis of this research. The themes were presented in the following tables including the participants' perspective towards World Englishes (see Table 2), limitations of World Englishes (Table 3), and advantages of World Englishes (Table 4). The statement of each participant was depicted under the category "interview result"

and was marked for their gender and number. For instance, M1 stands for a male participant, number 1 and F1 stands for a female participant, number 1.

Participants’ Perspective towards World Englishes

The following table shows each answer given by the participants when the researchers asked them one and the same question regarding their views on World Englishes based on their personal experiences. Principally, the statements of each participant were gained from the interview question number 18 (Could you tell me what you think of different varieties of English?).

Table 2. *The Participants’ Perspectives towards WEs*

Participant	Theme	Statements ¹
F2	Normalization of diversity	“Alright.. but World Englishes is not new because I found myself been exposed to those kind of ... you know .. different accent, pronunciation, even though .. we know, use same English, but it heard differently” (F2)
M1, M4, and F5	Phonological variations	“You know, it’s only different style of English, like pronunciation. For instance, when I say “today” [tə’dā] some might say [tə’dāi]. But ... well.. I do understand” (M1) “hmm .. you know sometimes we use English but in different sound or pronunciation or vocab” (M4) “I think World Englishes is English used by different people in different country. They probably use English because .. based on where they live, probably different tongue also influenced their pronunciation or sound or lexical choice but the meaning is still the same, yeaah .. different but same” (F5)
M3 dan F4	Lexical and syntactic diversity	“hmm.. it’s only varieties of English like Singlish, Chinglish, or Indian” (M3) “just like song, you know... there are some terms made from the singer, but overall it is still English song” (F4)
F1, M2, F3, and F6	Cultural hybridity	“Well, you know, I don’t have specific idea but I think .. hmmm.. World Englishes is English derived from different culture” (F1) “Hmm... you know, the... sometimes we can mix a language to another language when we talk, right? Like code-switching maybe, for instance I often say “it’s okay, lah!”” (M2) “I often speak to different people sometimes I intentionally use different term .. like I switch my language. I think that’s part of World Englishes” (F3) “Well, World Englishes .. not sure tho, but I often use English and my own language overlapping, but my interlocutor can understand” [laugh] (F6)

1. The statements in table 2, table 3, and table 4 reflect the original responses provided by the informants under this research.

Limitation of World Englishes

The following table presents the answers collected to question number 27: Based on your experiences, what are the limitations of the varieties of English?

Table 3. *Limitation of World Englishes*

Participant	Theme	Statements
M1, M3, F4, and F5	Language barriers	“The limitation is that ...it can limit the communication between two persons because of the language barrier, I think that’s all” (M1) “Yeah, it’s limiting. Sometimes when I want to tell something, to tell stories, my own experience but I can’t express my self to them, and then may be they feel the same also with me. So, like language barriers. Maybe the only limitation is that if you are really particular with one specific English, it is hard to understand other varieties” (M3) “Just a little bit more difficult to understand each other sometimes” (F4) “May be the limitation I would say is... I think one good indicator on how well you know language is when people will laugh at your jokes. I mean, for me it was like always something that if people can laugh to my jokes, like I could tell my self that actually I have a good level of English because sometimes, we have different level of humor and how we understand what the humor is. So, that’s the limitation... How deep you can actually go into different, different interaction like you just not like just not the basic but yaa go into actually that level of humor and understand each other’s humor yaa” (F5)
F1 and F2	Accent challenges	“Maybe ... when speaking in formal English discussion for example in mmm seminars where you can not use your the varieties that we have especially if it is in international level because some participants might not be able to understand and also because also in varieties of English the accent is actually also blended in the accent that we use in our country so some other limitation because when we speak in international level some participants will not understand because of the language that we use in which they are not familiar with” (F1) “Actually, that is the ...downside because there are words that are difficult to pronounce and we do not have the reference to help pronounce that word that’s why the problem arise when we just mmm put the pronunciation to that words because we do not have reference...” (F2)

Advantages of World Englishes

Each participant showed their opinion regarding the advantages of World Englishes in the following table. Principally, their answers were collected from

the interview question number 28: Based on your experiences, what are the advantages of the varieties of English?

Table 4. *Advantages of World Englishes*

Participant	Theme	Statements
M1 and M4	English as Lingua Franca	“The advantages is that two people from different countries can... they can still talk to each other because of the use of English even though we have different Englishes but the meaning is still the same so I think we can still communicate because of that” (M1) “well, particularly in professional context, it benefits if you use it for work like that and then if you are a traveler, you easily can adapt and understand wherever you go, like that” (M4)
M2, M3, and F6	Valuing linguistic diversity	“Mmm... I like to speak to people from different cultures I don’t really think it is kind of Single English or like correct type of English, so I think it’s interesting to know how different people use the language. I mean even people from the same country speak English differently, right? So it is just type of mmm... like, mmm... people individually” (M2) “Ya... it is just see how people use English in different ways, I guess” (M3) “Mmm I think mmm they can make a language richer, because you have more expressions, more words, if you have you know ... like different ways to express the same, that makes a language richer. I think English is one of the richest languages in the world meaning it one of ... the one that has more words... it has more words than in Spanish, more words in use than in Spanish. So, perhaps, I don’t know ... it could be because it’s such a widely spoken language and it has received the influences from so many places, mmm it makes ya ... very rich language” (F6)
F1 and F5	Adaptive communication strategy	“Maybe... one thing is at least we have a good starting point on the formal English or the American English or British English and also it is good for non formal communication or for ... if you want to communicate mmm English in your fellow continent and for example when I teach talking with students that do not know much about English, do not know much about formal English I could use the variety of English in my country they could understand it better” (F1) “I think, I mean the probably the only advantages is if you are aware of different varieties I think it’s probably easier to actually go and talk to those different other representative of those... yaa, I think we are a lot more open to actually discuss with anyone” (F5)

Participant	Theme	Statements
F3 and F4	Inter-cultural growth	“I think it’s enrich our knowledge and it’s a media for us to be more mature something like that, like we try to understand people more I think” (F3) “Yeah... to be open-minded to understand people more which is I think it’s not that easy to understand people right? And it helps us to appreciate people more, accept the diversity and appreciate the way they are” (F4)
F2	Power dynamics in communication	“Of course it has advantages because it enrich our knowledge that we are different and this advantages like seriously for instance just say that I am Thailand, I’m Thai lady and you are American and I talk differently to you and it brings disadvantages to you that we can’t share our thought to each other. So, what will you do to me? Will you force me to speak the way you talk? Of course you are the one who responsible to the problem you face, since you already accept this you can’t change any single thing here. It is as it is” (F2)

Discussion

Participants’ view of World Englishes

Nine participants (M1, M2, M3, M4, F1, F3, F4, F5, and F6) believe that the varieties or World Englishes are the result of language blending coming from different countries. They believe that these varieties come from different pronunciation, accent, and lexical diversity affected significantly by each culture (Jitpaiboon et al., 2025). Meanwhile, one participant (F2) emphasized strongly that World Englishes (WEs) is not something new as she has been exposed to it. Despite defining it as lexical diversity, she emphasized WEs as normal English.

The following chart shows how simply the cultural hybridity drives phonological and lexical diversities. After number of exposures, most participants agreed to embrace the different varieties of English. Thus, they normalized the use of World Englishes to communicate with other interlocutors.

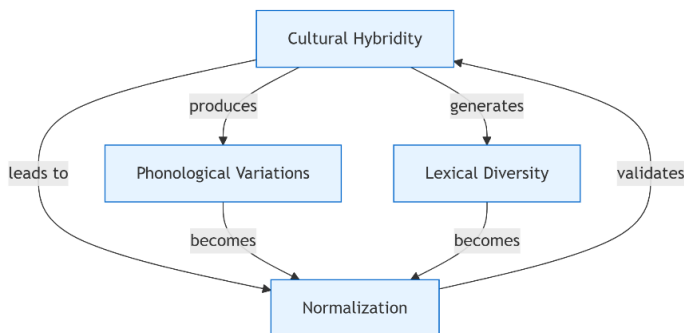


Figure 1. *The relationship of participants’ voices with WEs*

Rooted in cultural hybridity, M2 (from Singapore), often used the word “*lah*” at the end of his sentence during the interview. For instance, instead of saying “*I can understand this*”, he said “*I can understand lah*”. M2 further observed that his interlocutor coming from Indonesia uses typically Indonesian English or the so-called Indo-English. English-speaking Indonesians often use “*nah*” and simplify the vowel sound. For instance, one of his friends said “it’s your watch, *nah!*”. M2 was aware that the additional word “*nah*” at the end of the sentences is similar to what he defined as his “Singlish – “*lah*” as the closing word of his sentences. M2 also elaborated that his Indonesian friend often simplified the vowel sound. For instance, the word *pen* (/pen/) in Indonesian English is pronounced as /pen/ which shows that in Indo-English there is no distinction between /e/ and /ɛ/.

In addition, during the interview, the researchers also noticed that M1, an Indonesian lecturer mentioned the word “*sofa*” when he spoke about his office. Instead of saying *sofa* (/ˈsoʊ.fə/), he said /ˈsoʊ.fə/, which is a case of mispronunciation of the Schwa sound (/ə/). This instance reflects how local phonological systems may influence English pronunciation. The pronunciation distinctions in WEs can be understood as emerging from the phonological characteristics of the local language. Jenkins (2000) in her well-known theory of Lingua Franca Core (LFC) emphasized features that are important for mutual intelligibility in international settings. Thus, Lingua Franca Core (LFC) emphasizes functional communication rather than native-like pronunciation to have an effective interaction and communication. From this perspective, deviations such as schwa mispronunciation may not necessarily hinder intelligibility but instead reflect localized use of English.

Although language shapes people’s identity, it becomes a marker of both individual and group identity (Matsuda & Friedrich, 2011); each speaker uses English in ways shaped and affected by their society and culture (Napratilora & Devianti, 2019; Park, 2021; Guzzetti, 2022; Bamgbo’e, 2001; Graddol, 2006; Seidhlofer, 2004). In multilingual contexts, speakers often engage in what can be depicted as linguistic blending where the elements of their first language and English interact dynamically during communication. Rather than being viewed as an interference, this blending can be interpreted as an adaptive communication strategy that facilitates meaning-making and mutual intelligibility. As noted by Farrel and Martin (2009), such practices allow the speakers to draw on their full linguistic repertoire to negotiate meaning more effectively. Therefore, the observed pronunciation variation should not be seen as an error but as a part of a broader sociolinguistic process in which English is adapted locally to suit communicative needs. Meanwhile, M2 and F3 proposed that World Englishes relate closely to the code-switching phenomenon. Their perspectives further reinforce the dynamic and adaptive nature of English use in multilingual contexts. Although Kachru and Smith (2008) stated that code-switching might not successfully happen in different countries during the

international communication as the code being switched appeared from each different local language, the participants' views in this study suggest that code-switching still plays a functional role at the local or classroom level, particularly in facilitating comprehension and easing communication barriers.

On the other hand, accent reflects speakers' linguistic features (Doloricon & Langga, 2022). For instance, Indian English features retroflex sounds influenced by the native language, meanwhile Nigerian English integrates certain tonal elements. These accents are not "errors", rather they are legitimate linguistic adaptations that enrich the diversity of the English language (Matsuda, 2003). In addition, M3 from the Philippines witnessed that unlike the Indonesians, most of his Thai friends or colleagues he has been interacting with often simplify the consonant. This observation is consistent with the findings of Rogers (2013) and Phuengpitipornchai and Teo (2021), who reported that consonant simplification is a common feature among non-native English speakers. For instance, M3's Thai colleagues often said "*test* → /tɛt/". The accent element was in line with the previous research conducted by Jitpaiboon et al. (2025), where one of the interview's results denoted accent as a significant element in Native English Speakers and Native English-Speaking Teachers. In addition, both F5 and F6 from Myanmar said that at first, they were confused and did not grasp the meaning of the exchange when they were interacting with their French friends. Sometimes, F6 used her first language overlapped with English. However, at the end of the conversation, they achieved a high degree of mutual intelligibility and shared understanding by the end of the conversation.

Based on the findings, World Englishes embraces the nuances and legitimacy of English development and the varieties of English from non-native speakers (Botha & Bernaisch, 2025; Ambele, 2022). In addition, it is not solely about linguistic diversity but also rejecting the hegemony of "standard English" or the "native speaker" norms (Kachru, 2000). It is indeed, accents, pronunciation, and cultural elements that play a vital and significant role in the development of World Englishes (Jitpaiboon et al., 2025). Accents relate closely to the adaptation of local phonology made by some societies or groups while pronunciation affects intelligibility (Doloricon & Langga, 2022; Chung & Bong, 2023) and understanding during the interaction and communication. Culture, on the other hand, embeds itself in the syntax, vocabulary, and pragmatics of English. Thus, it creates hybrid forms unique to specific communities.

The relationship between language and culture is very close. Language is not only a medium for communication, but also a medium for cultural identity, values, and worldview. In the context of WE, English developed to encode the cultural scheme and metaphors of its speakers, thus making it a universal and inclusive medium (Ritsema et al, 2024; Sharifian, 2006). For instance, Philippine

English uses *comfort room* instead of *restroom*, reflecting the influence of local Spanish-derived terms (Kirkpatrick, 2014).

Advantages of World Englishes

All the participants voiced that the varieties of English brought several advantages for them. Based on the results from the interview, there is a strong relationship between one voice and others as presented in the following diagram:

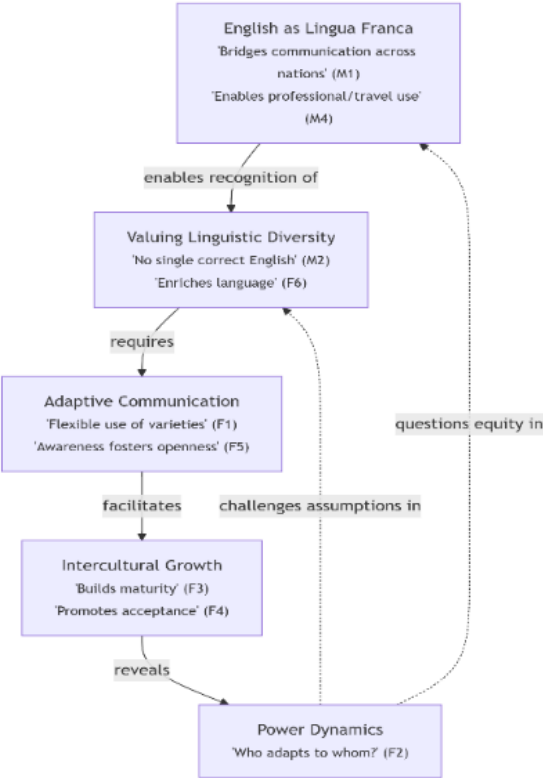


Figure 2. The relationship of advantages of WEs

The notion of using English to communicate globally with different individuals or groups or English as Lingua Franca supports the value of linguistic diversity. In line with this, M2 and F6 commented that there is no single correct form of English, and that its varieties enrich the language. In addition, the intercultural growth was facilitated by adaptive communication strategies revealing the power dynamics.

Specifically, M1 and M2 loved talking to different individuals whose cultures and first languages are different. They both acknowledged clearly the varieties of Englishes and found them fascinating to embrace. Thus, English varieties accommodate their interaction overseas as the meaning of the World Englishes

would persistently be the same. This case was supported by Boonmoh and Kulavichian (2024) who claim that CEFR-based activities in Thailand strengthen communicative skills and acculturation awareness through diverse practices of English communication with interlocutors from different backgrounds.

However, M3 who has been living in Indonesia for the past three years outlined that there is only one English but it is spoken by people in different ways to achieve intelligibility. His view is similar to M4's opinion that different types of English could benefit people particularly in a professional context, for instance, those working abroad or simply traveling to other countries (Kubota, 2001; McKay, 2003). M2, M3, and F6 consistently argued for accepting and embracing the differences as well as valuing linguistic diversity. They shared similar attitude that there is no single variety of English which should be imposed as the sole standard of English use. Consequently, when some misunderstanding occurs, the responsibility to negotiate meaning and work toward mutual understanding lies with the individuals involved. Rather than blaming others or attempting to control certain situation, speakers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds should adapt, accommodate, and engage collaboratively. F3 and F4 denoted that World Englishes could make one language develop through different variations within, such as vocabularies, expressions, and so on. They claimed that English is one of the richest languages in the world as it has many different varieties which is in line with the findings of Graddol (2006), Kirkpatrick (2014) and Seidlhofer (2004). The advantages of WEs proposed by the participants coincided with the research by other scholars. Specifically, the participants recognized that WEs facilitate communication with people of different nationalities across different contexts or cultures, which confirms the observation made by Kachru and Smith (2008). They also perceived WEs as beneficial for travellers, international students, or workers who went to other non-native English-speaking countries emphasizing clearer communication rather than correct grammatical sentences (Zeng, 2024; Kubota, 2001; McKay, 2003). To sum up, the advantages proposed by the participants were bridging the communication among different interlocutors from different countries, valuing linguistic diversity, leading to adaptive communication, enriching people's knowledge and intercultural growth, varying the language, and leading people to be more open minded. All these conclusions were obtained from their personal experiences mingling and interacting with different nationalities.

Limitation of World Englishes

All the participants agreed that language barriers and accent challenges are two key limitations of World Englishes. The following map illustrates a clear relationship between each element.

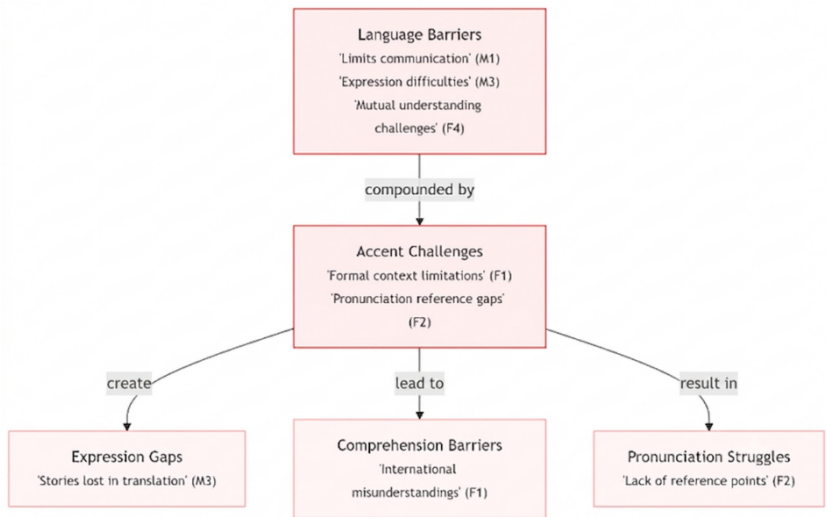


Figure 3. *Limitation of World Englishes*

Four participants (M1, M3, F4, and F5) combined limited communication, expression difficulties, and mutual understanding challenges under one key point – language barriers. Furthermore, the language barriers were compounded by accent challenges which created expression gaps, leading to comprehension barriers, and resulting in pronunciation struggles.

All the participants agreed that what matters during their interaction and communication are intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability over the standard language features. Their perception aligns with the previous research conducted by Doloricon and Langga (2022), Chung and Bong (2023), and Kachru and Smith (2008). They confessed that it was hard to express their ideas, opinions or thoughts to their conversation partners, yet, it was not a big deal as people tried to adapt to the different Englishes practiced. The latter confirms the observations made by Salmon Pandarangga (2015). Furthermore, F1 and F2 emphasized that accent limits the World Englishes. Both participants claimed that different accents or pronunciation, particularly the language blend phenomenon (Kachru & Smith, 2008; Leimgruber, 2013) among the varieties of Englishes could not be easily understood in certain situations, especially in formal context. Furthermore, the language barriers (evidenced by M1’s general limitations, M3’s expression gaps, and F4’s comprehension issues) are compounded by accent challenges, which include F1’s need for neutral accents in formal settings and F2’s pronunciation reference gaps. These accent challenges further deepen language barriers by creating specific problems: pronunciation gaps lead to expression difficulties (M3’s inability to share stories fully), while formal context requirements exacerbate recognition issues (F4’s occasional misunderstandings). Together, these interconnected factors create a cycle

where linguistic diversity, although beneficial for global communication, may foster communication challenges when speakers have only limited exposure to varieties of English.

Similarly, to M3's stories lost in translation, F5 confirmed that different varieties of World Englishes could limit someone's interaction in terms of telling a joke. Thus, it might lead to an 'error' transfer and interlanguage patterns (Meierkord, 2004; Jitpaiboon et al., 2025) which can limit intelligibility and mutual understanding. F5 also indicated a good gauge on how good someone's English was by telling other people a joke in English and judging by the result: if they laughed at the joke, the English used could be considered as good, yet, if they did not, the English-speaking skills had to be improved. The participant seemed to measure intelligibility in terms of not only academic situation or academic information but also in casual interaction such as telling someone a joke. Finally, F6 did not state much about the limitation of World Englishes. She justified that the drawback came from the people instead, not merely the variety itself. She implied that an ability to try to understand the varieties of English help people see if the varieties pose any difficulties for them or not.

Conclusion

This research explored the concept of World Englishes as a reflection of diverse cultural, linguistic, and phonological realities embedded in daily communication. Speakers across various contexts tend to prioritize intelligibility and meaning-making over native-like accuracy. Different pronunciations, accents, and local expressions were seen not as barriers, but as adaptive tools that reflect unique identities. Despite occasional delays in understanding, the interaction flows and comprehension were eventually achieved through mutual adaptation and pragmatic negotiation.

The concept of World Englishes highlights both strengths and challenges during intercultural communication. However, the different English varieties provide and foster inclusivity, openness, linguistic richness, pragmatic negotiation, and adaptability. On the other hand, the varieties cause misunderstanding especially in formal contexts where shared references and common knowledge may be lacking. Ultimately, the success of communication lies not solely on uniform language norms, but on the effort and willingness to navigate and embrace linguistic nuances as well.

Implications for Classroom Practices

Exploring World Englishes does not only align with the real world setting but also supports the education systems and classroom practices in terms of curriculum development and materials, teaching approaches or pedagogy, and teacher training policy.

Integrating World Englishes into education is a crucial step in ensuring that language instruction aligns with real-world usage. Textbooks and teaching materials should include diverse English varieties to prepare learners for global interaction. This set of varieties serves dual purpose: it affirms cultural identity while simultaneously enhancing language awareness.

Meanwhile, in terms of teaching approaches and pedagogy, teachers should promote clarity, flexibility, and metalinguistic awareness instead of enforcing native-speaker norms. By embracing English as a multicultural tool, educators can foster inclusive classroom environments where different English varieties are valued equally.

Furthermore, the programs or training of pre-service and in-service teachers should include sociolinguistic education on global English diversity. By embracing World Englishes in education, classrooms can become more inclusive, equitable, and reflective of real-world language use. This shift will better prepare students for global communication while respecting linguistic and cultural diversity.

This small-scale study provided significant insights from a relatively small group. This phenomenon underscores the notion that English no longer functions as a homogeneous linguistic entity, but rather as a global medium for cultural expression. Thus, future research should encompass larger and more diverse populations using surveys, corpus analysis, or comparative analysis across multiple nations to provide comprehensive description of how WEs influence global interaction and to examine how each variety is expressed by different cultures. This would contribute to identifying the trends, variations, and dominant features across different nations.

Acknowledgement

The authors gratefully acknowledge Universitas Bangka Belitung for the current institutional affiliation and the academic environment that supported the completion of this work. They further extend their gratitude to Universitas Jambi as their former institution for the educational foundation provided during earlier studies.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process

During the writing process, the authors used Mendeley to help organize citation and references, Turnitin to evaluate text similarity, and search engine to find the related sources like articles, books, and relevant websites. The authors independently verified, revised, and approved all content and are fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the manuscript.

References

- Alasmari, A. (2018). World Englishes and English as a lingua franca: Approaches in teaching Saudi EFL learners. *International Journal of English Language Education*, 6(2), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijelev.v6i2.13785>
- Ambele, E. A. (2022). Thai English? Non-Thai English lecturers' perceptions of Thai English and world Englishes. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, 15(2), 724-750.
- Aoyama, R. (2023). World Englishes as a pedagogical stance: Principles for ELT. *The Language Teacher*. <https://doi.org/10.37546/jalttl47.2-3>
- Azis, M. A. (2023). Assessing the impact of integrated skill teaching on EFL learners' motivation and engagement. *Tomorrow's Education Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.58660/tej.v1i2.47>
- Bamgbo'e, A. (2001). World Englishes and globalization. *World Englishes*, 20(3), 357-363. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-971X.t01-1-00220>
- Boonmoh, A., & Kulavichian, I. (2024). Enhancing online and intercultural communication skills through an online training program for Thai undergraduates in the New Normal. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 12(2), 123-143. <https://doi.org/10.46687/QNLU9495>
- Botha, W., & Bernaisch, T. (2025). World Englishes and sociolinguistic variation. *World Englishes*, 44, 2-11. <https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12695>
- Chung, B., & Bong, H. (2023). The Intelligibility of Korean-Accented English in the Lingua Franca Context. *The English Teachers Association in Korea*. <https://doi.org/10.35828/etak.2023.29.2.1>
- Cierpich-Kozieł, A. (2023). From the fall of Babel tower to the global rise of English. *Perspektywy Kultury*. <https://doi.org/10.35765/pk.2024.4502.07>
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*, (7th ed.). PLACE: Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Clark Plano, V. L., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative Research Designs: Selection and Implementation. *The counseling psychologist*, 35(2), 236-264. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000006287390>
- Crystal, D. (2008). Two thousand million? *English today*, 24(1), 3-6. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078408000023>
- D'Angelo, J. (2012). WE-informed EIL curriculum at Chukyo: Towards a functional, educated, multilingual outcome. *Principles and practices of teaching English as an international language*, 121-139. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781847697042-010>
- Deli, Z. P. (2024). Representing American culture in teaching English as a global language. *AMERICANA: E-journal of American Studies in Hungary*. <https://doi.org/10.14232/americana.2024.2.14-28>

- Dhami, B., & Prabjandee, D. (2023). Exploring TESOL graduate students' perceptions towards Global Englishes in Nepal. *Asian Englishes*, 26(3), 460-474. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2023.2251742>
- Doloricon, J., & Langga, P. M. (2022). Intelligibility of Select World Englishes and the Factors Affecting It. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 5(8), 58-67. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijlt.2022.5.8.8>
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). *Research methods in applied linguistics*. PLACE: Oxford University Press
- Fang, F. (2011). International cultures in the framework of world Englishes: What should EFL teachers do? *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 8(1), 111-137.
- Farrel, S. C., & Martin, S. (2009). To teach standard English or world Englishes? A balanced approach to instruction. *English Teaching Forum*, 47(2), 1-7.
- Graddol, D. (2000). *The future of English? A guide to forecasting the popularity of the English language in the 21st century*. PLACE: The British Council.
- Graddol, D. (2006). *English next: Why global English may mean the end of English as a foreign language*. PLACE: The British Council.
- Green, R. (2015). Incorporating World Englishes into the Korean EFL classroom. *English Language Teaching World Online*, 73, 249-270
- Grijalva, A. K. A., Herrera, C. C. D., Carrera, M. I. M., & Palacios, É. I. (2025). Cultivating global citizens: Shifting the focus from grammar to communication in English as a Foreign Language. *LATAM Revista Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades*. <https://doi.org/10.56712/latam.v6i1.3413>
- Guzzetti, M. (2022). Exploring cultural conceptualisations in two online Singlish dictionaries. *Altre Modernità*. <https://doi.org/10.54103/2035-7680/18773>
- Harris, J. (2012). World Englishes and English as a lingua franca: Application in the English classroom in Japan. *Kyoto Sangyo University: General Education Center*.
- Hiasa, A. (2025). Multilingual English teachers in Asian Expanding Circle ELT. *English Today*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078424000427>
- Ishaque Mohammed, R. K. (2018). Empowering English speakers through diversification and promotion of world Englishes. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 9(6), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.all.v9n.6p.1>
- Jenkins, J. (2000). *The phonology of English as an international language*. PLACE: Oxford University Press.
- Jenkins, J. (2009). Who speaks English today? In *World Englishes: A resource book for students* (2nd ed., pp. 33-60). PLACE: Routledge.
- Jitpaiboon, J., Rungswang, A., & Pin-ngern, A. (2025). What exactly are NESTs in Thailand? Understanding among Thai students regarding the concept of 'Native English Speaking Teachers' in EFL classrooms. *LEARN Journal*:

- Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, 18(1), 79-109. <https://doi.org/10.70730/KHTC7295>
- Kachru, B. B. (2000). Asia's Englishes and World Englishes. *English Today*, 16(1), 17-22. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078400011391>
- Kachru, Y., & Smith, L. E. (2008). *Cultures, contexts, and world Englishes*. PLACE: Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203891346>
- Kirkpatrick, A. (2014). *World Englishes*. In J. Flowerdew & R. W. Li (Eds.). *The Routledge companion to English studies* (pp. 175-189). PLACE: Routledge.
- Kubota, R. (2001). Learning diversity from world Englishes. *The Social Studies*, 92(2), 69-72. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00377990109603980>
- Lasito, L. (2024). Analysis of World English features in government English textbooks. *Journal of English Educational Study (JEES)*. <https://doi.org/10.31932/jees.v7i1.2955>
- Leimgruber, J. R. (2013). The trouble with world Englishes. *English Today*, 29(3), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078413000242>
- Lim, S. (2019). A critical analysis of Cambodian teachers' cognition about World Englishes and English language teaching. *Asian Englishes*, 25(3), 242-257. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2019.1645994>
- Llull, J. (2016). Understanding international migration: evidence from a new dataset of bilateral stocks (1960–2000). *SERIEs*, 7, 221-255. <https://doi.org/10.1007/S13209-016-0138-5>
- Maranga, K. (2018). Globalization and its implications for global leadership. *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, 19(2). <https://doi.org/10.33423/jmpp.v19i2.1278>
- Matsuda, A. (2003). Incorporating World Englishes in teaching English as an international language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(4), 719-729. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3588220>
- Matsuda, A., & Friedrich, P. (2011). English as an international language: A curriculum blueprint. *World Englishes*, 30(3), 332-344. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-971X.2011.01717.x>
- McKay, S. (2003). Teaching English as an international language: The role of culture in Asian contexts. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 1(1), 1-22.
- Meierkord, C. (2004). Syntactic variation in interactions across international Englishes. *English World-Wide*, 25(1), 109-132. <https://doi.org/10.1075/eww.25.1.06mei>
- Monfared, A. (2018). Ownership of English in the outer and expanding circles: Teachers' attitudes toward pronunciation in ESL/EFL teaching contexts. *Asian Englishes*, 20(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2018.1554303>

- Morrison, R., & White, M. (2005). Nurturing global listeners: Increasing familiarity and appreciation for World Englishes. *World Englishes*, 24(3), 361-370. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0083-2919.2005.00417.x>
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. PLACE: Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412995658>
- Napratilora, M., & Devianti, R. (2019). Understanding of World Englishes. *MITRA ASH-SHIBYAN: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling*.
- Pacheco-Franco, M. (2023). Spelling variation in inner-circle Englishes. *Atlantis Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.28914/Atlantis-2023-45.1.10>
- Palese, E., LaMance, R., & Tardy, C. (2022). Internationally mobile students' language views in an Inner Circle English writing course. *System*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102950>
- Pan, L., & Seargeant, P. (2023). China English and Chinese culture. *English Today*, 39(3), 174-177. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266078423000202>
- Park, J. (2021). Konglish as cultural practice: Reconsidering the English language in South Korea. *International Journal of TESOL Studies*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.46451/ijts.2021.10.05>
- Passakornkarn, S., & Vibulphol, J. (2020). Development of World Englishes-Based Listening Materials to Raise the Awareness of the Varieties of English for Thai EFL Upper Secondary School Students. *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, 13(1), 225- 246.
- Pholying, T. (2025). Embracing Global Englishes in Thailand: Linguistic diversity and cultural integration. *Asian Journal of Arts and Culture*. <https://doi.org/10.48048/ajac.2025.275099>
- Phuengpitipornchai, K., & Teo, A. (2021). Thai English, acceptable or just likable? A study of foreign tourists' perception of Thai English. *Journal of Studies in the English Language*, 16(1), 86-118.
- Piel, F., Tatem, A.J., Huang, Z., Gupta S., Williams, T.N., & Weatherall, D.J. (2014). Global migration and the changing distribution of sickle haemoglobin: A quantitative study of temporal trends between 1960 and 2000. *The Lancet Global Health*, 2, e80-e89. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(13\)70150-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(13)70150-5)
- Preis, R., Bećirović, S., & Geyer, B. (2023). EFL teaching in a digital environment. *MAP Education and Humanities*. <https://doi.org/10.53880/2744-2373.2023.3.1.56>
- Pulatova, Z. A. (2024). Global perspectives in English teaching: Navigating intercultural communication. *Current Research Journal of Pedagogics*. <https://doi.org/10.37547/pedagogics-crjp-05-05-10>
- Rezaei, S., Parvaneh, K., & Zahra, M. (2018). Attitudes toward world Englishes among Iranian English language learners. *Asian Englishes*, 20(1), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2018.1440367>

- Ritsema, V., Workye, R., & Weatherhead, D. E. (2024). Language Experience and Accent Processing. *Brain Sciences*, 14(10). <https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci14101028>
- Rogers, U. (2013). *Thai English as a variety*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Arizona State University.
- Sa'd, S. T. (2018). World English and World Englishes: Perspectives from English language learners in Iran. *Journal of World Languages*, 4(1), 24-41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21698252.2018.1476022>
- Sadaf, M. Z., & Sheraz, A. (2024). English linguistics in the nexus of economic growth and cultural evolution. *Global Social Sciences Review*. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2024\(ix-iii\).11](https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2024(ix-iii).11)
- Salmon Pandarangga, S. (2015). The transformation of English as a global language in the world. *Lingua: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa dan Sastra*, 10(2), 90-96. <https://doi.org/10.18860/LING.V10I2.3132>
- Seidlhofer, B. (2004). Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 24, 209-239. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190504000145>
- Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. PLACE: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405198431.wbeal0243>
- Sharifian, F. (2006). A cultural-conceptual approach and world Englishes: The case of Aboriginal English. *World Englishes*, 25(1), 11-22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0083-2919.2006.00444.x>
- Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method, and research*. PLACE: Sage.
- Stefanovic, T., Kazanegra-Velickovic, A., & Nikolic, N. (2022). Language Competences amidst Corporatization, Digital Technologies, and Learning English for Specific Purposes. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*, 10(1), 62-81. <https://doi.org/10.46687/XKOM9595>
- Tagliamonte, S. A. (2012). *Variationist Sociolinguistics: Change, Observation, Interpretation*. Blackwell Publishing.
- Tran, D. K., Tran, K. L., & Huynh, N. T. (2025). Global Englishes: Formation, development and implications for English language education. *EIKI Journal of Effective Teaching Methods*. <https://doi.org/10.59652/jetm.v3i1.403>
- UNESCO. (2009). *UNESCO World Report: Investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue*. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- Veliz, L., & Véliz-Campos, M. (2021). International students' perceptions of and attitudes towards their Chinese accented English. *Mextesol Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.61871/mj.v45n2-11>

- Wang, Q. (2022). An instrumental investigation of the vowel inventory of China English. *Asian Englishes*, 25(2), 111-132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13488678.2022.2158265>
- Wu, S., & Shafait, Z. (2024). Assessing EFL (English as Foreign Language) education for sustainable development: Exploring the cultural teaching literature. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 14(8), 2282-2299. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ejihpe14080152>
- Yonata, F., Rukmini, D., Suwandi, S., & Fitriati, S. (2022). The Routledge handbook of World Englishes: A book review. *Journal of Language and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.17323/jle.2022.13785>
- Zeng, Y. (2024). Linguistic Diversity and Inclusion: Exploring International Students' Attitudes Towards Their Own Accents. *Communications in Humanities Research*. <https://doi.org/10.54254/2753-7064/44/20240085>

About the author: Urip Sulistiyo is affiliated with Universitas Jambi. His expertise focuses on Language Pedagogy, TEFL, and Language Policy. He is currently a professor teaching Teacher Education, Curriculum, and Teacher Professional Development at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Indonesia. His updated research profile records 36 Scopus-indexed articles with a Scopus h-index of 13 and 405 citations. Prof. Urip Sulistiyo has served in various editorial and peer-review capacities for international journals published by Taylor & Francis, Wiley, Springer Nature, SAGE Publishing, HSE University, and Academic Journals.

e-mail: urip.sulistiyo@unja.ac.id

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3270-1261>

About the author: Eddy Haryanto, is affiliated with Universitas Jambi. His expertise focuses on Language Policy, and Language Teaching. He holds Ph.D and is currently teaching Teacher Education, Curriculum, and Teacher Professional Development at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Jambi, Indonesia. His scholarly publications are indexed in major academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, and SINTA.

e-mail: eharyanto@unja.ac.id

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2393-4055>

About the author: Marsandi Manar is affiliated with Universitas Bangka Belitung. His expertise focuses on Systemic Functional Linguistics or Grammar. He holds a doctoral degree and is currently teaching an English education study program at the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Bangka Belitung, Indonesia. Marsandi's scholarly publications are indexed in major academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar and SINTA.

e-mail: marsandimanar@ubb.ac.id

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-9273-9817>

About the author: Muhammad Kristiawan is affiliated with Universitas Bengkulu. His expertise focuses on Education management, and administration system. He is an Associate Professor of Education in Universitas Bengkulu. Currently he serves as a lecturer in Master of Educational Administration Study Program of Universitas Bengkulu. He has reviewed a lot of articles for reputable international journals published by Sage, Frontiers, Springer Nature, Taylor & Francis, Humanities & Social Sciences Communications, Npj Climate Action, Intelektual Pustaka Media Utama, Journal of Learning for Development, International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research among others.

e-mail: muhammadkristiawan@unib.ac.id

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1077-4013>