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Mediation in Family Cases across the EU: Is a New Harmonized Approach to EU Policy for Solving Family Conflicts Needed?

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Abstract: Mediation plays a significant role in resolving family conflicts across the European Union (EU), with each EU member state adopting numerous variations on the exact methodology that is being adopted. While there are commonalities across states, there is no harmonized approach specifically tailored to family cases and the EU Mediation Directive (2008/52/EC) does not tackle this issue specifically. On the contrary, the only two places where family mediation is explicitly mentioned are Recital 10 and Recital 21 of the Mediation Directive, which now opens the debate as to whether a new, uniform approach to addressing such conflicts may not be beneficial. The author of this paper suggests that there is a need for standardization in the field of family disputes and that this should be done on a European level through the adoption of a collaborative and inclusive process involving relevant stakeholders. Such a new approach would seek to effectively address the unique dynamics of family conflicts while promoting access to justice and facilitating the resolution of cross-border disputes. Separately, this would seek to synchronize any procedural challenges that exist on a national basis, unify mediators' qualification and ethical requirements, case referrals to mediation and enforceability of family mediation settlement agreements.

Keywords: Family dispute, Family mediation, Mediation directive, Mandatory mediation

Introduction

Mediation has been part of Europe's policy on cooperation on civil and commercial matters since the beginning of the 21st century mainly as a tool for improving the general access to justice in daily life, including in the field of family cases. Various measures have been adopted in lieu of this political will to promote new ways of quasi-judicial mechanisms for settling conflict. One such example is Directive 2008/52/EC on certain aspects of mediation in civil and commercial matters (the "Mediation Directive") which can rightfully be considered as the pillar that has led to the spread of mediation across the Union. Since the adoption of the Mediation Directive though the EU Parliament has recognized in its resolution of 12 September 2017 that the key goals of the Mediation Directive remain far from being achieved and that on average mediation is used in less than 1% of

cases reaching court, except for Italy.

Based on the above findings the EU Parliament in its Briefing Note "Achieving a Balanced Relationship between Mediation and Judicial Proceedings" proposed two possible options for ameliorating the situation. One was a rewrite of art. 5.2 of the Mediation Directive that grants Member States with the option to make mediation mandatory. The proposed revision would require parties to go through an initial mediation session with a mediator before a dispute could be filed with the courts in all new civil and commercial cases, including certain family and labour disputes. This "opt-out" approach was recommended because of its track record for an uptake in the cases that reach mediation through it. Alternatively, the Briefing Note proposed more precise use of Article 5.2 requiring the Member States to measure whether they are achieving the balanced relationship between court cases and mediation, and if not, to determine why not. Regardless of the specific recommendations given, it cannot be but noticed that they fail to specifically tackle family cases and address those in ways that are specifically designed to meet the different needs encountered therein. This article shall focus on the latter with an argument that the Mediation Directive in the field of family disputes no longer (if ever) fulfills the needs for solving the growing number of national and transnational disputes and a new, unified EU methodology is needed to handle such disputes.

Legal Framework of Family Mediation in the EU

The Mediation Directive has been adopted as part of the EU's policy for improving access to justice, lowering the court costs and addressing the backlog of cases. Its roots are foreseen in the Tampere European Council of 15 and 16 October 1999 and the conclusions reached that the EU Member States should create "alternative, extrajudicial procedures" for dispute resolution. However, at the time of its adoption the Directive did not address specifically family conflicts as they are considered part of the civil cases. On the contrary, the only two places where family mediation is explicitly mentioned are Recital 10 and Recital 21 of the Mediation Directive which provide as follows:

> *(10) This Directive should apply to processes whereby two or more parties to a cross-border dispute attempt by themselves, on a voluntary basis, to reach an amicable agreement on the settlement of their dispute with the assistance of a mediator. It should apply in civil and commercial matters. However, it should not apply to rights and obligations on which the parties are not free to decide themselves under the relevant applicable law. Such rights and obligations are particularly frequent in family law and employment law.*
>
> *(21) Consequently, if the content of an agreement resulting from mediation in a family law matter is not enforceable in the Member State where the agreement was concluded and where the request for enforceability is made, this Directive should not encourage the parties to circumvent the law of that Member State by having their agreement made enforceable in another Member State.*

As depicted above, family mediation is merely referenced to in the Mediation Directive, without providing for

any specific regulations in it. This is indicative of the wide discretion Member States are given in the field of such intimate relations as family ones. At the same time, the latter serves as a basis for the different models adopted across the Union ranging from full voluntary or merely voluntary mediation through categorical mandatory mediation or discretionary mandatory mediation (Helen Rhoades, 2010, p. 183-194.). Not only those models are implemented differently in the Member States, but many countries apply various system designs depending on the nature of the dispute. In light of such multiplicity and variations in the regulatory models, it may well be concluded that family mediation is not being implemented as a single process, and as such - it fails to reach its objectives in particular in the realm of family cases.

Notwithstanding the above, the Mediation Directive serves as a basis for establishing the following guiding rules that bear an impact on the way family mediation should be practiced across the Union:

- Voluntary nature of the process, whereby special attention is paid to the initial consent to participate along with the need for ensuring its presence throughout the procedure until such time that the parties either reach a settlement or decide to discontinue the process. This principle is of particular importance in the field of family disputes due to the highly-emotional and personal aspects of the latter. This is further exacerbated in cases where there are grounds to believe there is a risk from domestic violence and/or a child being put at risk;

- The principle of „equidistance" is deemed of special importance in cases of family disputes, which empowers the mediator with the right to indicate incompleteness of information, serious deviations from applicable legislation, and raising concerns on the fairness of the process outcome (Carolina Riveros and Waltjen Coester, 2019, p. 1914.);

- Respect of the right of the children involved and special focus being granted to them in lieu of the potential settlement being considered between the parties;

- Imposing additional safeguards whereby the mediator requests from parties a confirmation of their informed voluntary consent to the terms of the settlement agreed;

- Limitations on the confidentiality principle with reference to possible criminal proceedings that may be launched against either of the parties or endangerment of a child.

The above principles are not outlined in a unified methodology or single code of conduct that all mediators should abide by. In this respect, art. 4 of the Mediation Directive should be further acknowledged which addresses the issue of quality and encourages Member States to adopt or adhere to voluntary codes of conduct applicable to mediators and organizations providing mediation services, as well as to ensure quality control over mediation training and control over the mediation conduct. However, not all countries have exercised their discretion in the adoption of such codes and currently, the regulation is patched and ranges from self-regulation to the introduction of statutory requirements towards mediators, whereby only rarely there are specific provisions applying to family mediators. All of the above leads to the creation of a kaleidoscope of different systems for family dispute mediation that function locally and hence, hinders the free practice of the mediation profession across the Union and the different perceptions of mediation in cross-border family disputes.

Best Practices for Solving Family Conflicts

As a general global development, it can be noted that family disputes are persistently being referred to mandatory mediation as a pre-condition to their oral court hearing on the merits of the dispute. This movement by far exceeds the borders of t   he Union and has its roots overseas starting from Australia and the US, where ADR was adjudicated as a procedural requirement in a range of legal contexts, family disputes being one of them (Tania Sourdin, 2012.; Belinda Fehlberg, Rachael Carson and Colin Millward, 2014, p. 406 -424). However, where mandatory ADR has been applied in family law, there is considerable variety between and within countries in the rationale for enacting the provisions, the processes through which parties arrive at ADR, the types of ADR available, and the impacts on families and the broader legal systems. The following few sample models of the application of mediation in family disputes have been selected due to the good results they have shown for a substantial number of years during which they have been practiced. As such, they may serve as a source of inspiration when adopting or specifying the relevant legal framework on family mediation and could also base the grounds for the adoption of a uniform methodology applicable across the EU.

US State-adopted Models

Same good practices that are rolled out in several states across the US include the adoption of a mediation screening process applicable to family disputes in order to establish which of them may be eligible to proceed to mediation and which should be terminated. One sample of such a screening tool is depicted in the table below.

The prime goal of such screening is to establish whether there are any real or perceived risks with respect to the safety of participants that may hinder the conduct of the mediation process by compromising true voluntary participation and equality between the parties. The manner through which such screening is conducted is two-folds: 1) a confidential interview questionnaire is circulated with the participants ahead of their mediation meeting, followed-up with a more detailed questionnaire aligned with the respective domestic violence protocol as means for eliciting more information on the type of violence, its gravity and duration preceding the mediation process. If the screening indicates potential threat of domestic violence, then the mediator would, depending on the type of violence, either refer the parties to counseling, substance abuse treatment, DV programs and delay the process until such time that the measures suggested have been adopted or terminate the procedure. Mediation shall be deemed permissible in all cases if it has been established that the parties can freely negotiate in their best interests. Notwithstanding the above, all family cases shall be subject to continuous assessment for possible impediments throughout the proceedings. That being said though, some family mediations may indicate at the outset coercion concerns which would warrant that the mediation proceedings be organized as co-mediation with additional security measures adopted and in the presence of attorneys. All of the above may apply separately or in parallel and highly depend on the specificity of the case at hand and the severity degree of the violence.

MEDIATION SCREENING PROCESS
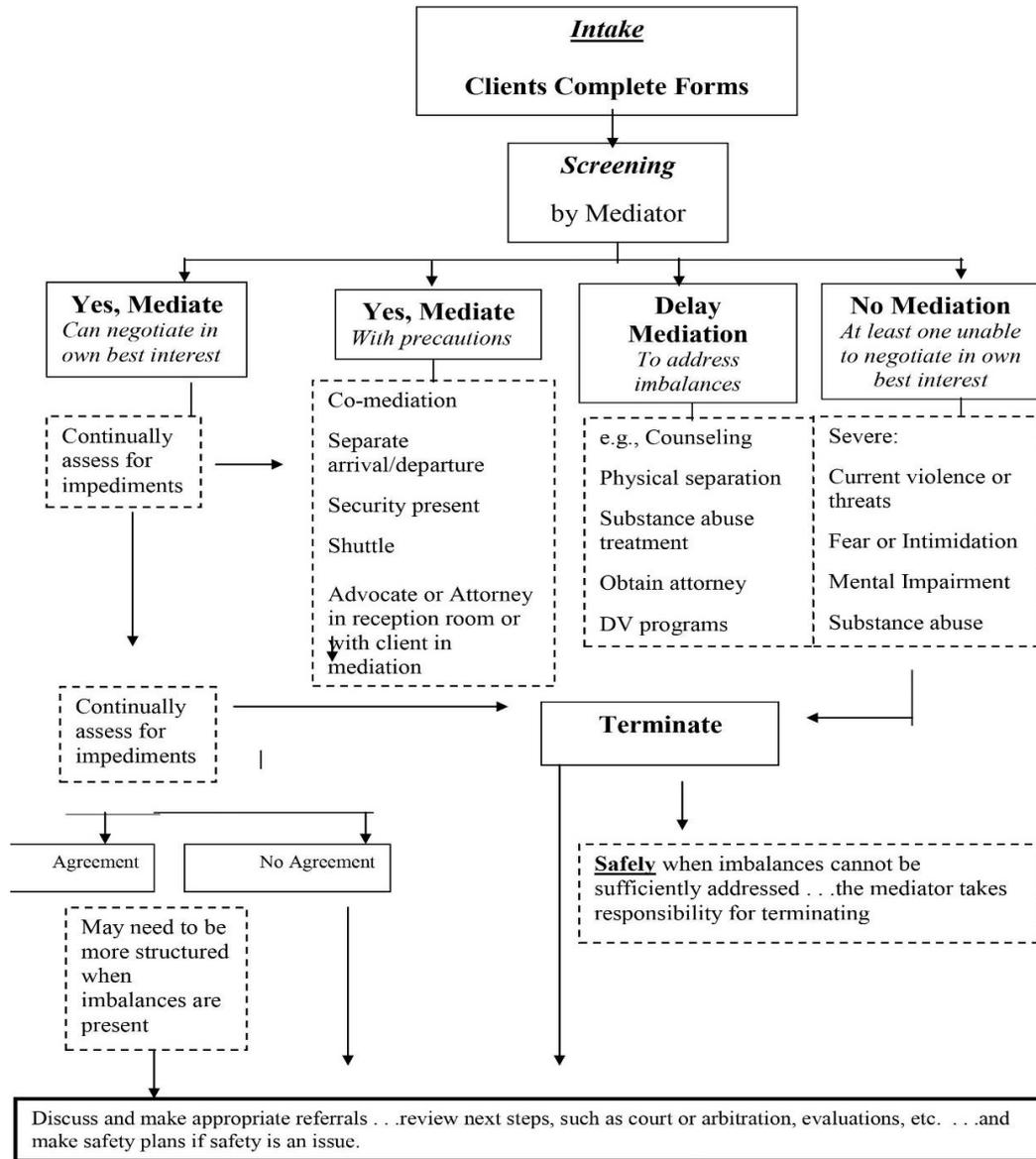
Corinne (Cookie) Levitz, cookie.levitz@alumni.carleton.edu. © 2000   Graphics by Sharon Zingery

(Note: Author of the above diagram is adjunct professor Corinne (Cookie) Levitz, Supervisor/Mediator, Family Mediation Services, Circuit Court of Cook County, Domestic Relations Division)

The results that have been shown through the application of this model lie in the improvement of the following court or arbitration proceedings, the making of safety plans and ultimately result in the improvement of safety.

Canada

Canada has been selected as this country has developed some good practices in the field of family mediation due to its long history in promoting ADR, including through forming conciliation courts back in 1974 (Audrey

Devlin and Judith P. Ryan, 1986). Separately, family mediation has received the vast support of the state through the extensive funding it received to promote the spread of the procedure. The reason for this state support may be explained in the fact that family law matters due to relationship breakdown are the sixth most common type of "everyday legal problem" that Canadians encounter (Trevor C.W. Farrow, Ab Currie, Nicole Aylwin, Les Jacobs, David Northrup and Lisa Moore, (2016).

A research report calculated the costs associated with different types of dispute resolution methods for family law matters (Joanne Paetsch, J.J., Lorne D. Bertrand and John-Paul E. Boyd, 2017) with the following findings included:

1) Mediation was viewed as the most useful alternative dispute process for cases of low conflict, and where the disputes were focused on children and parenting, child or spousal support, and the division of property and debt;

2) Lawyers estimated that low-conflict files take an average of 4.8 months to resolve through mediation, whereas high-conflict files take an average of 13.7 months through mediation;

3) Lawyers reported high client satisfaction with the mediation process;

4) Mediation was viewed as very useful for low-conflict disputes (but less so for high-conflict disputes where litigation was more likely to be viewed as useful);

5) Mediation was viewed as generating longer-lasting resolution between the parties than litigation or arbitration;

6) Lawyer's bills for services for low-conflict cases were roughly half the cost for those resolved through arbitration or litigation.

To stimulate the mediation process in the country at the same time legislative provisions allow judges to order parties into mediation intake such as the below:

(i) Ordering parties to mediation intake: Pursuant to the Family Law Rules a…judge hearing a family law conference may order parties to mediation intake pursuant to 17(8)(b)(iii).

(8) At a case conference, settlement conference or trial management conference the judge may, if it is appropriate to do so,

(b) make an order requiring one or more parties to attend,

(iii) an intake meeting with a court-affiliated mediation service,

Such mediation intake meetings are deemed to be a positive model for the coercing party into a discussion about the potential beneficial aspects of mediation while at the same time retaining party's voluntary participation. In this respect, the intake is preliminary to an actual start to mediation and generally includes a presentation to parties about the mediation process, an individualized initial screening for intimate partner violence and/or abuse, and a discussion with each party as to the issues with which they would like assistance.

The above is additionally complemented by the legislative provisions allowing for judges to make an "order" for mediation pursuant to s. 3 of the Family Law Act, and to appoint a mediator pursuant to s. 31 of the Children's

Law Reform Act, where children's rights are affected by the corresponding dispute. Such practices should be deemed to be positive in their obliging nature to impose on parties participation in the actual mediation process beyond the initial intake, without though the need to reach to a settlement agreement of any nature.

Another positive practices that has been rolled out in Canada is the spread of uniform Standards for Assessing Whether Mediation May be Appropriate as adopted by the Ontario Association for Family Mediation. Those standards include:

1) Prior to commencing mediation, all clients must be screened for any occurrences of abuse and/or power imbalance to determine which cases are inappropriate for mediation, which require additional safeguards, in addition to, or instead of mediation, and which should be referred to other resources.

2) The issue of voluntary participation is critical when it comes to creating a safe place for couples to meet and negotiate.

3) Clients should be strongly encouraged to consult with lawyers prior to mediation and certainly before an agreement is finalized.

4) Mediators must be knowledgeable about abuse. Training for mediators needs to include the following:

5) Issues related to physical and psychological abuse and its effect on family members;

6) The impact that abuse (including witnessing abuse) has on children;

7) Effective techniques for screening, implementing safety measures, and safe termination;

8) Referral to appropriate resources, in addition to, or instead of mediation;

9) Sensitivity to cultural, racial and ethnic differences that can impact the mediation process that may be relevant to domestic violence.

10) Where a decision is made that mediation may proceed, mediators need to meet standards of safety, voluntariness, and fairness. When mediators have concerns, they should inform their clients that they are not neutral about violence or safety.

The imposition of such uniform standards should be positively perceived as a good model whose adoption on EU level may be advisable.

Australia

In Australia, mandatory ADR is prescribed in the legal provisions of the Native Title Act, 1993 (Cth), the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975 (Cth), and the Civil Procedure Act 2005 (NSW), for instance. Some state supreme courts in Australia have statutory power to refer litigants to mediation, with or without the parties' consent. Mediation and other ADR modalities have been available as alternatives to litigation in family law disputes for many years. The family dispute area constitutes by far the largest pre-litigation scheme that mandates attendance in a dispute resolution process in Australia (Tania Sourdin, 2012). This trend has evolved from the mere promotion and active encouragement of parties to participate in the family dispute process (FDR) to mandating their attendance to an FDR (Andrew Bickerdike, 2007, p. 20–25). A specific feature of this obligatory participation is the fact that parties are not required to take part stictu sensu in a mediation process,

but rather to attend a dispute resolution process which does not necessarily mean only mediation. Such FDR services are usually administered by community-based service centres, which are state-funded and hence, free for the parties (Patrick Parkinson, 2015). Those centers issue at the end of the dispute process certificates for completion which are then distributed to the parties for their subsequent use when applying to court for a parenting court order under Section 60I (7) of the Australian Family Law Act. One positive feature of those certificates that has been praised by participants is the fact that they do not include the scope of the FDR process that has taken place or the decisions that determined its outcome. This scheme as depicted in the law can be qualified as "categorical" as it requires attaching to the court claim a certificate from a family dispute resolution practitioner attesting compliance with the procedure or an affidavit outlining the grounds on which exemption from FDR attendance is sought (Dorcas Quek, 2009, p. 479–509).

Notwithstanding the above and regardless of whether a certificate of attendance is presented in evidence of an amicable attempt to settle the dispute or not, judges still retain the control to order parties into mediation in an attempt to resolve the matter out-of-court. Such discretion though has been retained for cases where it is established that the parties have failed to make a genuine effort in the ordinary meaning of the word. Survey from 2013 (Lawrie Moloney, Ruth Weston and Lixia Qu, 2013) on the manner through which family mandatory mediation is practiced in Australia established that 80 % of the users of FDR services as offered by the community centers were satisfied with the help received in reaching a parenting agreement and improving family members' capacity to manage the relationship. Specifically, the survey indicated that the biggest clients' dissatisfaction was from the use of lawyers and the court system, which served as a reconfirmation of benefits from using FDR.

However, those findings differed when it comes to cases of family violence or child abuse. A study from 2010 (Dale Bagshaw, Thea Brown, Sarah Wendt, Alan Campbell, Elspeth McInnes, Beth Tinning, Becky Batagol, Adiva Sifris, Danielle Tyson, Joanne Baker and Paula Fernandez Arias, 2010) indicated that concerns about family violence were not properly addressed during the ensuing mediation process. Importantly, concerns about power imbalances and participants' feeling of not being believed in by the mediator were reported, though the greater majority though flags satisfaction with the content of the overall process. Those concerns are tackled partially by the Family Violence Bill and the subsequently approved Coordinated Family Dispute Resolution Model (CFDR). CFDR (Rachael Field, 2016) was piloted between 2010 and 2012 and was highly evaluated by prominent researchers and users of the model. Even though the model has thus far not been rolled out through the country due to political and economic issues, a number of key takeaways are worth to be outlined and considered for future FDR process designs. One of the major positive features having proved as efficient is the use of a multidisciplinary teams for handling such cases. Such teams would include close collaboration between the following professionals all working on a single case: mediators, lawyers for each parent, domestic violence (DV) workers conducting the screening ahead of the FDR and providing counselling and support, gender violence analysis experts supporting perpetrators and, on an ah hoc basis, specialist children's practitioner or other experts specifically designed to support the needs of the family.

The CFDR model includes 4 (four) phases, namely:

Phase 1 Intake process: which depending on the specifics of the case can be conducted by the mediator or the DV worker. This phase includes an assessment of the suitability of the case for CFDR and information provision about the nature of the proceedings, the commitment level that is expected and the roles of the numerous professionals included in the process and parties agreement thereto. Should the intake be conducted in a situation where concerns are raised about DV, the perpetrator shall be required specifically to acknowledge that a family member believes DV has impacted the family;

Phase 2 Preparation for mediation: this phase includes parties' attendance to preliminary meetings including legal advice and counselling sessions and a mediation workshop. The various professionals that ultimately conduct those preparatory meetings and workshops then meet for a case management meeting where parties' readiness for participation is discussed and the case leader ultimately decides whether to proceed towards the actual process;

Phase 3 Attendance in the mediation: the model includes as a requirement that only facilitative co-mediation is conducted with a gender balance on the side of the mediators and legal representation of both parties. Additionally, non-legal advisors, such as social workers, family violence specialist, counsellor or psychologist, are also permissible to take part in the mediation process. Given that the process is being conducted within the circumstances of an ongoing DV, the meetings may be conducted virtually and more caucuses may be required. Phase 4 Post CFDR follow-up: upon obtaining parties' consent, a formal follow-up is conducted within 1 to 3 months from the final meeting and a second one within 9 to 10 months from process completion. This phase of the procedure is conducted by the DV expert and involves an ongoing specialist risk-assessment to ensure family safety and an in-depth discussion on the family needs. Subject to it, additional considerations may be raised whether the process needs to return to CFDR and if ongoing support and counselling may be required to any or either of the parties.

Given the high number of professionals involved in the process, its intensity in terms of the resources required is high. Hence, the multiplicity of this model, as much as its positive features are beyond doubt, is questionable. However, the beneficial outcomes and high rate of settlements achieved through this procedure would serve as basis for advocating for qits potential adoption and multiplication across the EU may be advisable.

Challenges for Family Dispute Resolution Processes in the EU and Possible Solutions

Indisputably, family mediation is widely spread across the globe in multiple jurisdictions and is also one of the priorities in the current EU policy development agenda, especially in cross-border family disputes and parental child abduction cases. In these, the parties must deal with complex relationships, not merely a dispute, and should take responsibility in respect to their family affairs in the long run. Hence, the need for solutions more legitimate and durable than the redress to be obtained from the judicial system in traditional processes.

Considering the patterns arising from the data reported on family disputes and mediation cases (Chereji 2016; Roberts 2014), and the statements of policy (a special section of the European e-Justice Portal is dedicated to cross-border mediation in family matters and to informing on the Member States' mediation systems. Consult the Portal Online at: https://e-justice.europa.eu/home. do?plang=en&action=home), strengthening the ADR culture and increasing the use of Mediation in family matters will continue to be among the chief goals of the EU. In proceedings involving children, mediation is expected to create an especially constructive atmosphere conducive to amicable outcomes. At the same time, the European Principles of Family Mediation limit the scope of application to disputes between family members that are related by consanguinity or by reason of marriage, and others who live or have lived as family according to the domestic laws (Recommendation NP R (98)1 1998). Family mediation may apply to more specific cases, also to be determined in the laws (Requena 2000, 53). Research has established that the most common family disputes are related to the custody of children and division and handling of property after divorce, and for the resolution of such disagreements and other complex or multifaceted disputes, mediation is explicitly encouraged. Family disputes are uniquely difficult because they take place between people whose relationship is supposed to be ongoing, in spite of the distress experienced, and should last regardless of the dysfunctionalities underlying the conflict, a separation and/or a divorce. The resolution of personal or emotional disagreements lies beyond the capacities of the legal standards. Hietanen-Kunwald argues that while decisions based on authoritative, substantive and procedural norms usually apply a fair and reasoned interpretation of the rights of the parties, in mediation the same approach often produces unsatisfactory results.

Based on the above overview of the existing EU legislation on family mediation and the outlined best practices currently existing in the field, the family dispute resolution (FDR) practice may be summarized as challenging due to the lack of a single policy on its unanimous multiplication. Firstly, the lack of a single definition of the process of family mediation that is being practiced in the various member states render the numerous differences and nuances to the role of the mediator in such proceedings and forms different parties' expectations thereto. Thus, a new and unified definition may be advisable to be adopted which would standardize the process and ensure its uniform character throughout the different states. One such definition may be the following:

- Family mediation is a process in which those involved in family breakdown, whether or not they are a couple, have married, formed a common-law partnership or other family members, appoint an impartial third person to assist them to communicate better and reach their own agreed and informed decisions concerning some, or all, of the issues relating to separation, divorce, children, finance or property by negotiation

The term family mediation, especially when included in a new EU Directive, would ensure that there is consistency in parties' expectations from the procedure and common understanding on the role of mediators and the requirements they have to adhere to. The adoption of such definition alone though would not address fully the discrepancies that exist today in the manner that FDR is practised. The latter should be considered jointly with the need for adoption of a single methodology on the manner through which mediation should be exercised in the specific field of family relation. Such methodology has be coupled with the uptake of unified standards

for the practice of EU family mediation, which include the manner though which children are involved in the process and the requirements towards family mediators. This would help address the existing gaps and inconsistencies in applying various mediation process models and ensure that there is a unified standard for all processes. The standard should be rooted in the unified requirements towards the training and specialization of family mediators – a field that is currently highly patched by the differing requirements that exist which also impacts the free movement of mediators within the EU. It is hereby submitted that self-regulatory codes of conduct and ethical standards for the professionals are no longer sufficient in ensuring harmonization of qualification requirements and the necessary standards for process conduct should be regulated differently in an uniform binding manner. Therefore, going forward the following principle approaches should be considered for the purposes of achieving robust regulation of family mediation on a EU level. It is suggested that these include the below key principles:

- Voluntariety and self-reliance. Family mediators respect and promote the principle of self-determination of the participants as the corner-stone principle of mediation, promulgating that no third party should coerce results or even the completion of mediation proceedings because the efficacy of the methods relies upon empowerment and personal agency, which should lead the parties to reach decisions they can relate to.

- The main role of a family mediator is to help the parties understand the needs and interests at stake, to facilitate a more creative and less confrontational agreement to the satisfaction of all participants; -

- Mediators should have the education, training, experience and commitment that the responsibilities of Family mediation processes require. It is not enough for mediators to be acquainted with technicalities, and to have enough knowledge of Family law and related civil matters such as property law and the law of obligations. It is equally important that they have cross-cultural training, and are well informed about the social and psychological impact of conflicts on the Family members and close relatives, about child development, domestic abuse and neglect, etc.

- Family mediators should be able to assess the disposition and capacity of the parties to participate in the process and facilitate their understanding of the process and the implications of reaching or not a mutually satisfactory agreement. To this end, mediators usually try to educate the parties about the characteristics and purposes of ADR and this method in particular, and the way the procedures will take place.

- To preserve the impartiality of mediation, all grounds of actual or potential bias such as conflicts of interest should be disclosed in advance to the parties. If the mediators' impartiality appears to be gravely affected, they should resign.

- Confidentiality and discreteness are some of the benefits of direct negotiations. The information arising during the mediation should not be revealed, to increase the trust of the parties in the process and protect it from undue scrutiny. Only by express agreement of the participants, or when the law requires so, the confidentiality of mediation may be lifted. This is one of most sought-after features of mediation which sharply differentiate this method from adjudication.

Separate to this, a new approach should be taken with respect to the role of children in the mediation process.

Currently, the patched legal map of Europe allows for variations in the integration manner of children in the procedure and renders it impossible for professionals to practice mediation across Member States. Therefore, it is advisable a uniform model to be developed that includes children as intrinsic participants to the procedure. A suggested way for this would include informative conversation with both children and parents present where the procedures and intentions of the meetings are described. Subsequently, the conversation would proceed between parents and children for approximately 20–25 min, whose purpose is:

- helping children understand the transition through which the family is passing;
- allowing space for children's feelings and reactions; and
- enabling participation of the child in the process as an emanation of Article 12 of the UN Child Convention.

The above should not be deemed to imply actual participation of children in the procedure or the decision-making process. On the contrary, its premise lie in including children in joint conversations between children, parents and mediators, separate child conversations with the mediator and subsequent evaluation of the potentially agreed upon co-operation agreement within 6 (six) month afterwards. Such model has been proven to show good results (Jennifer McIntosh, 2000, p. 55 – 69, Jennifer McIntosh, Yvonne D. Wells, Bruce M. Smyth and Caroline M. Long, 2008, p. 105 – 124, Bernard Mayer, 2004, p. 29 – 52) and thus, their uptake and roll-out across the EU is advisable.

Conclusion

Besides mediation's intrinsic benefits like flexibility of the process and its outcomes that preserve and strengthen relationships, there is a paradox that ADR and mediation, in particular, remains underused in the field of family law. Part of the existing challenges lie in the lack of uniform legal regulation across the various Member States and the inconsistences in the policies adopted for this on a national basis. These tendencies in no way were addressed by the Mediation Directive, which neither tackles family mediation specifically, nor offers concrete solutions in this specific field. Still there are numerous best practices for solving family conflicts that are emerging in various jurisdictions and which should be acknowledged for the positive results that they produce. Based on this a new, uniform methodology is suggested to be adopted with reference to the conduct of family mediation and the standards that have to be warrantied across the Union and ensures high quality of the services rendered. To truly achieve the goal of this, the author of this article calls for convening a wider pan-European discussion to consider the need of a new Mediation Directive in the field of family disputes that addresses the challenges from the growing number of national and transnational disputes and a new, unified EU methodology is needed to handle such disputes.

Recommendations

This paper ends with the recommendations to consider the adoption of a new binding EU legal instrument that

harmonizes the field of family mediation and to additionally work on a model law on family mediation that is put forward to policy-makers for further consideration and implementation in the applicable regulatory.

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Unveiling the Numbers: Statistical Analysis of Infectious Diseases and Their Consequences on Society and Public Health

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Abstract: The statistical approach has been an important tool in disease transmission analysis. This study discussed the survival analysis tool of the Cox proportional hazard regression model to measure the impact of the explanatory variables, i.e. temperature, rainfall, and relative humidity. A 10-year hand-foot-mouth disease data from 2009 – 2019 is considered in this study. The analysis shows all explanatory variables have a significant impact on hand-foot-mouth disease transmission except for a few cases of study. Among the explanatory variables, the factor of temperature has a higher role taken in transmission for all regions especially Northern and Borneo regions. Interestingly, the opposite observation is gained for the Southern region, where rainfall has a 1.4% higher influence compared to other variables. This study contributed some useful insights for preventive measures, where in Malaysia, the temperature is the main factor for hand-foot-mouth disease incidence. The findings filled up the research gap by analyzing the hand-foot-mouth disease with survival analysis and also suggesting that the application is feasible for illustrative purposes.

Keywords: Hand-foot-mouth disease, Survival analysis, Climate factor, Cox proportional hazards regression model.

Introduction

Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD), a common infectious disease mainly caused by Coxsackievirus A16

(Cox A16) and Enterovirus 71 (EV 71), commonly poses painful sores in the mouth, and a rash with blisters on hands, feet, and buttocks of children below 5 years old. It happens also in adolescents and sometimes in adults. More severe symptoms such as meningitis, encephalitis, and polio-like paralysis are possible in hand-foot-mouth disease (HFMD) which may eventually cause death. It is believed that the main routes of HFMD transmission are due to direct contact with contaminated discharges and objects, or blister fluid. Public playgrounds and kindergartens become the breeding ground to accelerate the spread of the disease. The Malaysian government has initiated various preventive measures. For example, disseminating knowledge and information via media and public health talks to parents who play a crucial role in controlling the transmission. Encouraging the use of disinfectant at home, kindergarten, or any shared places such as indoor playgrounds may be effective to reduce contamination. Besides that, washing hands regularly and avoiding food sharing among children are common for hygiene purposes.

Over the past seven decades, Malaysia has continuous research developments in medical science and mathematical and statistical modelling for HFMD. Podin et al. (2006) collected a total of seven years of sentinel surveillance data since the first outbreak in Sarawak in the year 1997. Various causative agents were tested and the authors found that the genogroup B infections are tightly clustered in Sarawak, with cases rising and falling quickly. The study concluded that the outbreaks are believed to occur every 3 years. Continuous investigation for HFMD has been carried out throughout the years. In the clinical study, Chan et al. (2000) studied the deaths of children due to the HFMD outbreak in Sarawak. It is believed that the fatality is due to the deterioration of the central nervous system infection. Chua and Kasri (2011) studied the disease pathogens. Comparison has been carried out for EV 71 and Cox A16. The temporal relationship between the isolation of the pathogens is studied during the outbreak in 2010. Recently, Lee et al. (2021) established a robust identification method to detect the enteroviruses, namely RT-qPCR and COSEHOP PCR. This analysis found that Cox A16 infection is ubiquity in children less than 12 months.

While the world is eyeing the Covid-19 confirmed cases, there are 47,209 HFMD cases reported as of June 2022. There have been 1,174 cases reported in Perlis state, on the northwest coast of Peninsular Malaysia, where the density is considerably low at 350/km^2. Selangor hits the highest number of cases with 13,640, equivalent to about 30%, followed by Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya with 6,206 cases. Perak, Kelantan, and Sabah recorded 4,099, 3,726, and 3,352 cases respectively, which the transmission rate is rather worrying as it is found 20-fold increase compared to the year 2021. Malaysia is not facing alone for HFMD transmission. In Singapore, the average daily cases hit the highest of about 35 in week 32 of 2022. It is also reported that China demonstrated more than 90% of HFMD cases occurred in children less than five years old, and the mortality is around 0.03%, with which late spring and early summer becomes the tendency month of occurrence. French surveillance found a rapid increase with more than 3,400 cases in 2021 (Guerra et al., 2022).

Climate factors have been constantly considered as the main reason for HFMD transmission. Huang et al. (2013) believed that it is a correlation between temperature and the frequency of HFMD outbreaks. Virus reproduction and spread may be influenced by the temperature, particularly, the HFMD virus and pathogen can

only survive under certain optimal temperatures (Xu et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2016). Numerous studies have also demonstrated that the seasons have an impact on HFMD incidence. It has been disclosed that HFMD transmission has a distinct seasonal pattern in temperate regions with an annual peak in the summer, while many peaks may occur throughout a year in tropical and subtropical regions, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore (Yang et al., 2016). Luo et al. (2022) revealed that the infection may due to air pollutants and meteorological factors, such as temperature and relative humidity but no concrete evidence to support long-term effects. Chen et al. (2020) concluded that temperature and humidity are the main factors contributing to HFMD incidence in Guangzhou, China.

Nurmarni et al. (2021) discussed a systematic review of the statistical methods used in establishing the link between climate factors and HFMD incidence. However, the study focused solely on the impact study of climate factors on HFMD. Not many statistical approaches have been used to analyze the data, furthermore, the analysis is not comprehensive enough to cover all states in Malaysia. Thus, this paper aims to highlight the research gap that exists in the statistical tools, the survival analysis which is proposed as an approach to further measuring the impact of the climate factors of HFMD in Malaysia.

We discover the impact level of climate factors with survival analysis, for example, Cox proportional hazards (Cox PH) regression models which enable us to explore the role of the explanatory variables played in HFMD. The use of mathematical and statistical approaches over the past few decades has also been discussed further. To the best of our knowledge, none of the studies apply survival analysis, and this study contributed a new tool for the HFMD community. This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 elaborates on the data resources of HFMD. Some variables are involved in the analysis such as temperature, rainfall, and relative humidity. The number of confirmed cases is categorized according to the region, i.e. Borneo, Central, East Coast, Southern, and Northern. Fundamental descriptive statistics are shown. Section 3 explained the methodology. Survival analysis is applied to analyze the impact of the explanatory variables. Section 4 covers the results and discussion. A comparison study has been carried out as well. Section 5 concludes.

Methods

Data Resources

The secondary HFMD data in Malaysia is obtained from the surveillance system at the Disease Control Division, Ministry of Health. The 10 years of HFMD data was collected from 2009 to 2019 in a daily unit localized to the district level, It consists of several variables such as age, gender, locality, date of onset, and a few other parameters required for the HFMD surveillance database. The weather effects on HFMD were assessed in this study. Daily meteorological data consisting of temperature, rainfall, and relative humidity are obtained from Malaysia Meteorological Department (MMD) in the daily unit. These data have been filtered and merged accordingly to fulfill the objective of the study. The following meteorological parameters are defined as follows:

i.   Temperature - the measure of hotness or coldness expressed in terms of Celsius.

ii.   Rainfall - the amount of water falling in rain within a given time and area, usually expressed as a hypothetical depth of coverage.

iii.   Relative Humidity - a measure of the actual amount of water vapor in the air compared to the total amount of vapor that can exist in the air at its current temperature.

The geographical location is also taken into consideration as the states in Malaysia have been grouped into five regions namely Borneo, Central, East Coast, Northern, and Southern which is shown in Figure 1.
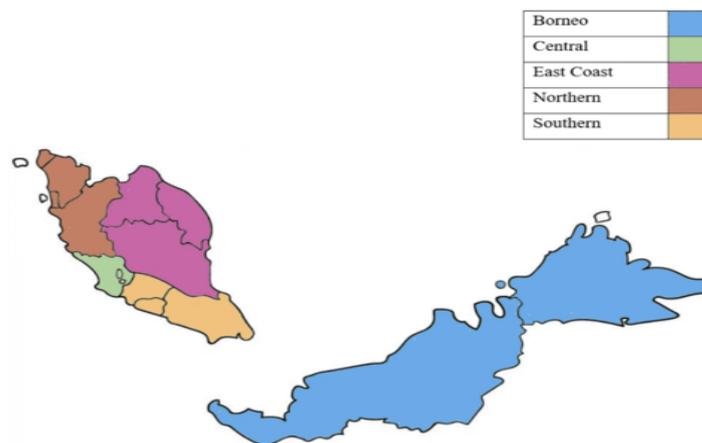
Figure 1. Five regions of Malaysia

A descriptive statistic is carried out, and the result is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of HFMD Cases according to a Region in Malaysia

Descriptive statistics	Southern	Northern	Central	East Coast	Borneo
Mean	12	9	34	5	30
Mode	2	3	4	0	4
Median	7	6	20	2	21
1st quartile	3	3	8	1	9
3rd quartile	15	12	45	6	40
Maximum	158	148	511	81	301
Minimum	0	0	0	0	0

It is observed that the Central region has the highest HFMD cases for the 10-year study period with an average of 34 cases followed by the Borneo region at 30 cases daily. The maximum daily HFMD cases also showed a peak in both regions, Central and Borneo with 511 and 301 respectively. The highest observation of the daily average HFMD cases in this study is sensible, for the Central region, which comprises the nation Capital of Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur and the high population density of Selangor, the state of Sarawak has been

notorious for high confirmed cases of HFMD, and lack of medical services and hygiene awareness. However, when it comes to the minimum number of reported cases, all regions showed zero cases.

Table 2 provides a summary of descriptive statistics of all explanatory variables for all regions considered in this paper. It can be seen that the central region has a slightly higher average temperature of 28.03°C compared to other regions, and East Coast gives a minimum temperature of 26.57°C. This is because the Central region comprises the states of Selangor and Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur, which is the capital of Malaysia, therefore, it is understandable that usually city regions are warmer comparatively. A similar observation is obtained for the rainfall variable. The results show relatively lower rainfall in the Central region, i.e. 77.66mm, compared to the East Coast region which has 83.82mm and is usually affected by the monsoon season from November to February. Borneo region has the highest relative humidity as the region is surrounded by the South China sea and Sulu sea.

The descriptive statistics provides an indicator to show that the explanatory variables may be the reason for confirmed HFMD cases. Despite the geographical location of Malaysia being near the equator, where the climate is known as equatorial, however, the slight difference in the climate factors for different regions may yield a significant effect on disease spreading, especially with the recent climate drastic changes. It is worth looking into the HFMD with climate factors.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Explanatory Variables for Respective Regions

	Southern			Northern			Central			East Coast			Borneo		
	T	R	RH	T	R	RH	T	R	RH	T	R	RH	T	R	RH
Mean	27.1	81.5	5.5	27.6	80.1	6.1	28.0	77.7	7.8	26.6	83.8	7.7	27.2	82.9	8.8
Median	27.1	81.7	2.7	27.7	81.3	3.0	28.0	78.1	2.3	26.6	83.6	4.4	27.2	82.9	5.7
Maximum	30.3	96.1	95.1	30.8	92.8	96.5	31.5	97.1	92.0	29.5	95.6	109.4	29.5	93.0	103.8
Minimum	22.3	63.7	0.0	19.6	51.5	0.0	23.0	50.3	0.0	22.6	72.5	0.0	23.7	54.8	0.0
1st quartile	26.5	78.7	0.4	27.1	77.9	0.4	27.3	73.5	0.0	26.0	81.7	1.4	26.7	80.8	2.5
3rd quartile	27.8	84.5	7.5	28.4	84.0	8.4	28.8	82.2	11.3	27.2	85.8	9.8	27.7	85.1	11.7

Survival Analysis

The survival analysis, the Cox PH regression model is proposed in this study for impact analysis, which expects to establish a promising association of climate factors for all regions in Malaysia. The impact level of each explanatory variable concerning HFMD daily cases in the regions was conclusively studied. The proposed Cox PH model equation is given below. Let $X_i = \left(X_{i1},..., X_{ip} \right)$ be the observations of the covariates for subject.

$$\lambda\left(t \mid X_i\right) = \lambda_0(t)\exp\left(\beta_1 X_{i1} + ... + \beta_p X_{ip}\right)$$

where $\lambda_0(t)$ is the baseline hazards function, and β is the coefficients of the explanatory variables. While the hazard ratios are expressed as follows:

$$\frac{\lambda(t\,|\,X_t)}{\lambda_0(t)} = \exp\left(\beta_1 X_{i1} + \ldots + \beta_k X_{ik}\right)$$

In this study, the values of $i = 1, \ldots, n$, n is the sample size and $k = 1, 2, 3$, where X_{i1} is temperature, X_{i2} is rainfall and X_{i3} is relative humidity. A single and combination of two meteorological variables were also tested for likelihood ratio. For interpretation wise, the hazard ratios measure the risk association of the explanatory variables. A hazard ratio of 1 means that lack of association. Hence, both groups are having similar risks. A hazard ratio greater than 1 suggests an increased risk, while a hazard ratio below 1 suggests a smaller risk. The computation is carried by the R package, *coxph* function in the survival package analysis.

The likelihood ratio test is carried out to examine the significance of the coefficients (β). Let the hypothesis is set as such,

$$H_0 : \text{coefficient is not significant}, \beta = 0$$
$$H_1 : \text{coefficient is significant}, \beta \neq 0.$$

It is to conclude that if the p value is less than $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected, which implies that the explanatory variable is an influencing factor for HFMD, and the influencing level can be quantified by the hazard ratio.

Findings

The reported cases have been analyzed by the Cox PH models according to the region which is shown in Table 3 where all null hypotheses for all meteorological variables were rejected. This result showed that the coefficients are all significant and impactful for HFMD. The hazard ratio, e^{β_i} further explains the impact level.

It can be seen that among these variables, the Borneo region has a slightly high temperature $e^{\beta_1} = 1.135$, simply means that the temperature variable has a 13.5% higher influence compared to rainfall and relative humidity. Opposite observations are gained for other regions. For instance, the Southern region has the least impact by temperature compared to other regions which have similar performance. The relative humidity and temperature have the least impact in the Central region, compared to the rainfall.

Table 3. Likelihood Ratio Test for All Meteorological Variables

Region	Explanatory Variables	e^{β_i}	Decision (*p*-value)
Malaysia	Temperature	0.9345	
	Rainfall	0.9737	Reject H_0 (0.0000)
	Relative Humidity	1.0910	
Borneo	Temperature	1.135	
	Rainfall	1.050	Reject H_0 (0.0000)
	Relative Humidity	1.010	
Central	Temperature	0.9633	
	Rainfall	1.0265	Reject H_0 (0.0000)
	Relative Humidity	0.9924	
East Coast	Temperature	0.9229	
	Rainfall	1.0034	Reject H_0 (0.0000)
	Relative Humidity	1.0020	
Northern	Temperature	0.9342	
	Rainfall	1.0029	Reject H_0 (0.0000)
	Relative Humidity	0.9970	
Southern	Temperature	0.8482	
	Rainfall	0.9909	Reject H_0 (0.0000)
	Relative Humidity	1.0038	

Further investigation is done to observe the impact of respective explanatory variables. Table 4 tabulates the analysis results for a single meteorological variable. Some significant findings should be highlighted. In the Northern region, it is seen that the null hypothesis for rainfall and relative humidity is rejected. The results showed that temperature is the sole factor for HFMD infection. While in the Central region, the authority should focus the observations on temperature changes and rainfall season. It is believed that high possibility of transmission during the transition period of the temperature and rainfall.

Table 4. Likelihood Ratio Test for Single Meteorological Variables

Region	Temperature	e^{β_i}	Rainfall	e^{β_i}	Relative Humidity	e^{β_i}
Malaysia	Reject H_0 (0.0000)	1.0533	Reject H_0 (0.0023)	0.9925	Reject H_0 (0.0000)	1.0784
Borneo	Reject H_0 (0.0324)	0.9567	Reject H_0 (0.0000)	1.0438	Reject H_0 (0.0000)	1.0134
Central	Reject H_0 (0.0000)	0.8862	Reject H_0 (0.0000)	1.0250	**Do not reject H_0** (0.9533)	1.0000
East Coast	Reject H_0	0.9095	Reject H_0	1.0213	Reject H_0	1.0053

Region	Temperature	e^{β_i}	Rainfall	e^{β_i}	Relative Humidity	e^{β_i}
	(0.0000)		(0.0000)		(0.0005)	
Northern	Reject H_0	0.9405	**Do not reject H_0**	1.0005	**Do not reject H_0**	1.0010
	(0.0000)		(0.8432)		(0.5921)	
Southern	Reject H_0	0.8621	Reject H_0	1.0140	Reject H_0	1.0069
	(0.0000)		(0.0002)		(0.0012)	

Table 5. Likelihood Ratio Test for a Combination of Two Meteorological Variables

Region	Explanatory Variables			e^{β_i}		
	T, R	**R, RH**	**RH, T**	**T, R**	**R, RH**	**RH, T**
Malaysia	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	1.0485, 0.9954	0.9790, 1.0858	0.9842, 1.0791
	(0.0000)	(0.0023)	(0.0000)			
Borneo	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	1.1238, 1.0642	1.0290, 1.0089	1.0205, 1.0139
	(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)			
Central	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	0.9731, 1.0211	1.0317, 0.9927	0.8658, 0.9948
	(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)			
East Coast	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	0.9211, 1.0066	1.0166, 1.0027	0.9184, 1.0024
	(0.0000)	(0.0000)	(0.0000)			
Northern	Reject H_0	**Do not reject H_0**	Reject H_0	0.9400, 1.0012	1.000, 1.001	0.9372, 0.9979
	(0.0000)	(0.9000)	(0.0000)			
Southern	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	Reject H_0	0.8476, 0.9938	1.0108, 1.0041	0.8660, 1.0020
	(0.0000)	(0.0002)	(0.0000)			

Table 5 tabulates the regression analysis results for the combination of two meteorological variables. It found also that when HFMD incidence increase, both explanatory variables of rainfall and relative humidity have no significant impact in the Northern region. Similar findings were found in the Central region. On the contrary, temperature, and rainfall are associated negatively with the confirmed cases in the Southern region. It also should be highlighted that when temperature and rainfall are associated in the study of the Borneo region, the temperature provides a 12.4% higher impact than rainfall.

A comparison study with the current literature review is carried out. From 2010 to 2016, the weekly mean temperature was discovered to have a significant relationship with HFMD incidence in Selangor (Wahid et al., 2020). This resulted from a comparison of Generalized Linear Model (GLM) models that the best-fit model of HFMD in Selangor is HFMD with a 2-week lag time mean temperature. Furthermore, Wahid et al. (2021) concluded that among the climate factors, temperature and humidity are the top two most impactful in HFMD transmission. Similar evidence has been found in China (Huang et al., 2013; Xu et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2016). These findings are consistent with the results of our study. Qi et al. (2018) discovered that the HFMD incidence increased with increasing average relative humidity, and with decreasing daily rainfall, which is negatively

associated. Such observation is different from our case study. In our study, the significance of the variables depends on the region. In the Northern region, the association of these two explanatory variables is not found.

Conclusion

Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD) is a communicable disease among children and infants, and sometimes it happens also among adults. A clinical study reported highly contagious cohorts involving children less than 6 years old. In 1997, the first outbreak in Sarawak Malaysia which involved 29 children aged less than 6 years old died of cardiorespiratory failure raised awareness of the disease in the community. It is a fatal disease that most commonly causes mortality in children, and the pathogen is easily transmitted by direct contact such as saliva, fluid of blisters, and nose and throat discharges. Since then, the research study has been carried out in the country for the past 25 years.

Malaysia has relatively little attention to HFMD with mathematical and statistical approaches. Although the disease has a common seasonal pattern, and the recent outbreak revisited the country in June with an astounding confirmed case, which is nearly twenty times compared to last year, there was still a lack of preventive measures taken. The review showed intensive discussion in a clinical and medical study, but the latest development of the statistical methods has revealed the research gap in the discussion. Survival analysis, which has been used to analyze the HFMD data in this study is one of the significant contributions to HFMD community.

Survival analysis with the Cox PH regression model is applied for illustration purposes. Three explanatory variables, such as temperature, rainfall, and relative humidity show a significant impact on disease transmission. The methods have also measured the impact level. For instance, among the explanatory variables, it is known that temperature the least temperature is overall the main factor played in all regions especially Northern and Borneo. In other words, to say, the Northern state and Borneo state governments should observe closely the temperature to provide awareness to the public before the outbreak. Other important findings are found. In the Northern, the temperature is the significant factor, whereas, for the Central region, temperature and rainfall are suggested to be closely monitored to control the transmission. While many of the existing studies commented that temperature and humidity are the main factors for HFMD incidence, the findings in this paper concluded that among all explanatory variables, the temperature is the one that plays the most significant role for all regions in Malaysia compared to rainfall and relative humidity. The authority should look into the variable temperature for preventive measures. Further investigation can be done in analyzing the monthly data for seasonal pattern study.

Acknowledgements

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Secrecy in Maidan Volunteer Organizations: E+ Initiative Case Study

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Abstract: In this paper, I refer to Maidan (Euromaidan) protests that took place in Ukraine in 2013–2014. I analyse the role of secrecy in Evacuation+ Initiative (E+), one of Maidan volunteer organization that evacuated sick and wounded Maidan residents to safe locations – makeshift hospitals. The empirical part of the paper uses in-depth semistructured oral history interviews with Maidan participants. The analysis identifies the peculiarities of horizontal network volunteering formations of Maidane using the E+ Initiative case study. Different manifestations of secrecy in E+ the same as some visibility markers are also thoroughly covered by the analysis. I suggest that, in the context of the resistance against autocracy, secrecy in E+ is subordinated to the aims of safety and survival. That is why we may frame a separate dimension of secrecy, the "safety dimension," in addition to informational and social dimensions considered by Costas and Gray while studying the different types of organizations (2014).

Keywords: Maidan 2013–2014, secrecy, hidden organizations, volunteer organizations, self-organized organizations, Evacuation+ Initiative.

Introduction

Maidan 2013–2014 (the Euromaidan, the so-called Revolution of Dignity) is one of the most significant events in contemporary Ukrainian history. It started as a protest against the Ukrainian government's foreign policy and, in a few weeks, turned into a larger-scale resistance movement against state violence and arbitrariness. The protest resulted in significant political changes for Ukraine, such as the signing of the Association Agreement with the European Union, and the introduction of a visa-free regime with EU countries. Moreover, Maidan contributed significantly to the development of civil society in Ukraine (Kvit, 2014). Last, Maidan is an important social phenomenon, often characterized as a unique period of consolidation, mutual help, and social solidarity (Kowal & Wapiński, 2014).

Volunteer initiatives during and after Maidan events shed special light on this unique cooperation between Maidan participants and the citizenry. Various volunteer initiatives developed as grassroots activities before turning into large and diversified organizations with clear structures, work regimes, and divisions of labor. These organizations achieved unexpected results thanks to volunteer support, including financial contributions

(Prokhorova, 2017a; Prokhorova, 2017b). After the Maidan events, some of these groups officially registered as public organizations and continued their activities. Moreover, these organizations were the first to respond to subsequent crises in Ukraine: the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2014, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the full-scale war started by the Russian armed forces on 24 February 2022 (Zarembo, 2017).

Researchers have already analyzed Maidan volunteer initiatives from various angles (Gomza, Koval, 2015; Ishchenko, 2016; Kvit, 2014; Kulyk, 2014; Onuch, Martsenyuk, 2014; Onuch, Sasse, 2016; Prokhorova, 2017a; Prokhorova, 2017b; Shevtsova, 2017; Stepanenko, 2015; Worschech, 2017, ets.). However, one important topic has yet to arise – the secrecy and visibility of Maidan organizations in the context of the uprising. An examination of Maidan volunteering organizations through the theoretical framework of visibility/secrecy theories promises to shed light on two important questions in organization studies. First, researchers much less describe hidden organizations than large transparent corporations and organizations with elements of secrecy. Second, the information we have about secret organizations, especially in developing regions, usually focuses on such illegal formations as terrorist organizations, organized crime, backstreet businesses, and other enterprises in the informal economy (Scott, 2013, pp. 25, 11–16). The Maidan, by contrast, spawned organizations that were meant to help people and that were developed by civil society actors facing political repression. A case-study analysis of Evacuation+ Initiative suggests new avenues for Maidan research and for organizational studies generally.

The article's main goal is to consider what role secrecy played in Evacuation+ Initiative and what influence secrecy had on the development of a Maidan volunteering organization.

Literature Review

Maidan volunteering organizations

According to volunteering researcher John Wilson, volunteering is help that is more than spontaneous and helps people beyond relatives and friends (Wilson, 2000, p. 216). The Maidan period inspired many acts of volunteerism along with the formation of several volunteering organizations. Maidan participants who were not ready to fight actively in the military were helping those who were (Onuch & Sasse, 2016, p. 3; Prokhorova, 2017b). Before the Maidan, the development of volunteer activities in Ukraine was influenced by external factors, for example, financing by international funds. But the Maidan volunteer movement was substantially homegrown (Matiichuk, 2016, p. 102).

According to a study conducted in 2015 by the Democratic Initiatives Foundation named after I. Kucheriv, and the sociological service of the Razumkov Center, the amount of time people devoted to volunteering increased significantly in the years leading up to the protest. In 2012, about 10% of volunteers spent a few hours per month volunteering, and 6% spent a few hours per week. In 2015, the year following the Maidan, those figures were 35% and 23%, respectively, and about 5% volunteered daily ("Post-maidan Charity", 2015). That year, the

Kyiv International Institute of Sociology found that the volunteering sector had the highest level of public trust among all key social institutions. In 2015, 57.6% of Ukrainians trusted volunteers, and 13.5% did not, for a trust-distrust balance of 44.1% ('Trust in social institutions and groups', 2015). In 2016, the trust-distrust balance slipped to 33.9%, and the church returned to its traditional rank among Ukrainian institutions with the highest level of trust. However, more than half of Ukrainians (53.5%) still trusted volunteers ('Trust in social institutions and groups', 2016). From this we may infer that the crisis activated the potential of the volunteer movement. As a result, new volunteer initiatives formed, corresponding to the demands of the time. Moreover, since the time of the Maidan, the "help" phenomenon has become an essential component of Ukrainian public discourse.

Various authors have noted common characteristics among typical Maidan volunteering organizations. V. Stepanenko characterizes the Maidan not as a unified, hierarchical protest organized by the political elite but as a social, open, variegated, voluntary, self-organized entity (2015, pp. 38, 40). M. Ryabchuk and A. N. Luzhnycky emphasize the grassroots nature of Maidan initiatives in the self-empowerment of civil society, using Vaclav Havel's famous expression "the power of the powerless" (Riabchuk, Lushnycky, 2015, p. 49). Olga Onuch analyzes the role of communication technologies in the mobilization processes of Maidaners and notes that these technologies made "grassroots self-organization by 'ordinary' citizens" possible (2015, p. 170). Emily S. Channell-Justice focuses on left activists' discourse in her research. She also refers to the "grassroots self-organization" of Maidan to describe change achieved on the strength of activists' skills without the help of the state (2016, pp. 115, 138).

In an earlier article, I conceptualize the formation of the typical Maidan grassroots volunteering initiative as "self-organization"—a fast and spontaneous process that took place in response to new and urgent needs arising at different stages of the conflict. The main features of these organizations were horizontal structure; functional specialization of organizations and their participants; active communication through the Internet, mainly through social networks; and common characteristics of the organizers, who were largely young, educated representatives of the middle class who achieved success in their professional field and brought with them their networks of connections and contacts (Prokhorova, 2017a).

Secrecy and Secret Organization

Jana Costas and Christopher Grey (2016), following Georg Simmel, call secrecy a "universal sociological form" (p. 6). The authors write that both the information kept secret and the methods for keeping it secret vary. Nevertheless, keeping secrets is typical for humans and, consequently, for organizations (pp. 5–6).

Researchers define secrecy as the "perpetuation of keeping certain information from becoming public" (Birchall, 2021, p. 8) or as the act of intentional concealment (Costas & Grey, 2016, pp. 5, 7) or as something hidden and unknown (Scott, 2013, p. 65). However, the most comprehensive definition of secrecy is made by Costas and Grey. They explain the term as "the ongoing formal and informal social processes of intentional

concealment of information from actors by actors in organizations" (2014, p. 1426). It is important to emphasize that secrecy is understood here as process, namely, "the processes through which secrets are kept" (Costas & Grey, 2016, p. 7). Moreover, we can see both formal and informal manifestations of secrecy in this definition. Formal secrecy is the official concealment of information in specific established ways. It covers laws and rules about who should keep secrets, what secrets they should keep, and in what circumstances. Such rules can be spelled out in formal agreements or contracts. By contrast, informal secrecy is the unofficial concealment of information by uncodified methods. In these cases, secrets are shared through informal socialization not governed by formal rules (Costas & Grey, 2014, pp. 1431–1432).

There are two different approaches to understanding secrecy. According to the informational perspective, secrecy deals with keeping information safe, while the sociological perspective considers secrecy as a social phenomenon and space for social interaction (Costas & Grey, 2014, p. 1424). Researchers describe such social phenomena as control (Costas & Grey, 2014, pp. 1428–1429) and identity development (Costas & Grey, 2014, p. 1428; Scott, 2013, pp. 54–57) as manifestations of secrecy in social perspective.

As stated above, secrecy is a universal phenomenon. Still, organizations differ from each other according to the degree of their secrecy. For example, Craig Scott examines different organizations according to their characteristics in three dimensions: organizational visibility, member identification, and relevant audience (2013, p. 84). Using this concept, the organizations we are calling "secret," "hidden," or "dark" (in this article, the terms are used synonymously) are relatively invisible. Their members are relatively more likely to be anonymous and unrecognized, and their audience is more likely to be local than public (Scott, 2013, pp. 117–119).

Researchers consider different features common to secret organizations. For example, Cynthia Stohl and Michael Stohl detail three features common to various hidden organizations: an agreement among members to keep confidential their involvement in the organization; an agreement among members to keep confidential the organization's internal activities and management structure; and the eventual leaking of secrets. However, organizations may nonetheless remain hidden for an extended period (Stohl & Stohl, 2017, p. 3). At the same time, Oana B. Albu dwells on the implementation of the following mechanisms in the activities of secret organizations: managing encryption (coding of different data connected to organizations in a way that they may be decoded only by an authorized person), managing concealment (obscuring information about an organization and revealing it only to specific audiences), and managing obfuscation (bolstering organizational secrecy by sending confusing signals (Albu, 2022).

Hidden organizations often face specific problems related to secrecy. Craig Scott mentions three such problems: the communication problem (the need to develop mechanisms for secret communication among members), the identification problem (the need to develop secret mechanisms to identify members), and the advertising problem (the need to promote the organization's products without attracting unwanted attention).

Methodology

The empirical part of this paper is based on a database of in-depth, semistructured oral-history interviews, each lasting between one and three hours. Oral-history methodology is widely used in the study of social and political movements to reconstruct a particular historical period from the position of active participants through their interpretations of events and processes (Bosi, Reiter, 2014, p. 118).

These interviews were conducted within two oral history projects. The Maidan: Testimonies (Audio recordings and transcripts of the conducted interviews are available to researchers at the Center for Studies of History and Culture of East European Jewry of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Part of transcripts were also published in the book Maidan*: Testimonies, 2013–2014*, ed. by Leonid Finberg and Uliana Holovach, Kyiv: Duh i Litera, 2016. The electronic version of the book is available here: https://ia800909.us.archive.org/0/items/Maydansvidchennia/Maydansvidchennia.pdf). project aimed to collect testimonies of the participants of the Revolution of Dignity. The project includes 303 interviews. Many of these were conducted in the first six months after the protest. Snowball sampling with elements of maximum variation sampling was applied (Kovalov, Shteinberg, 1999, p. 43). The researchers' attention was not focused on opposition politicians or public figures but rather on "ordinary" participants and resistance activists: self-defenders, doctors, cooks, volunteers, priests, businessmen, etc.

The remaining 94 interviews were conducted in 2016–2017 in Maidan: Testimonies. Help to the Injured. International Solidarity project.(Audio recordings and transcripts of the interviews are available to researchers at the Center for Studies of History and Culture of East European Jewry of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Transcripts were also published in the book *Maidan: Testimonies. The Help to the Injured. International Solidarity*, ed. by Leonid Finberg, Iryna Berland, and Olena Andreeva, Kyiv: Duh i Litera, 2018. The electronic version of the book is available here: https://ia803005.us.archive.org/8/items/Maydandopomoga.indd/Maydandopomoga.indd.pdf). The project was designed to reveal the aid chain to those who suffered at the Maidan. These include different categories of respondents: doctors from mobile teams; doctors from the field and from underground hospitals; leaders and members of different volunteering organizations that were engaged in helping the injured in various situations, from the supply of medicines to emergency transportation; representatives of the international community who helped Maidan participants; and so on. Here a combined snowball sampling with the elements of purposeful selection of information-rich cases was applied, as is common in studies of hard-to-reach, hidden, or vulnerable communities (Ellard-Gray, Jeffrey, Choubak, Crann, 2015, p. 3).

Interviews were conducted according to the methodological principle of reducing the level of symbolic violence toward respondents (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 20). We recommended that interviewers allow respondents to tell their stories and build the conversation themselves. The fewer questions asked, we reasoned, the less the interviewer would determine what the respondent talked about. For more information about the methodological peculiarities

of these research projects, see Prokhorova (2017c).

The interviews connected to the E+ Initiative were selected from the whole database for this paper by keyword search. The search keywords were variations of the organization's name and the names of its initiators. Finally, all the information about the secrecy of the E+ Initiative was extracted from the transcripts and analyzed. The whole database consists of 379 interviews, however, only 10 of them were selected for the purpose of this article/ These were the interviews with the E+ Initiative members, doctors, who cooperate with them, and their colleagues from the underground hospitals.

Results

In order to answer the central question of this article—what was the role of secrecy in Evacuation+ Initiative— we should understand what kind of organization it was and how secrecy and visibility manifested within it.

E+ Initiative developed spontaneously in response to the escalation of Maidan events. After January 19, 2014, when protesters and the military confronted one another, the abduction, followed by disappearance or imprisonment, of wounded Maidan participants became commonplace. In one example, on January 21, police abducted Yuri Verbytskyi from the hospital and tortured him to death (Chebeliuk, 2022). In order to prevent such cases, a group of activists created Evacuation+ with the goal of transporting sick and wounded Maidan residents to safe locations outside the Maidan for shelter and medical care.

At first, such safe places were the apartments of those willing to host Maidan residents. However, according to one of the activists, this idea was quickly rejected, as organizing the community to provide medical care to the injured was easier. It was better to look for premises where many of the wounded could be brought at once (*140*[1]). At that point, an activist with contacts among various religious groups proposed sheltering the wounded in churches and monasteries (*371*). Having contacts with colleagues, public activists, and representatives of specific communities is characteristic of Maidan volunteer organization founders (Prokhorova, 2017a).

Five activists and Maidan members formed a group that developed E+. Since E+, like other grassroots Maidan initiatives, was a horizontal organization, the leading activists' roles had mainly to do with coordination rather than leadership. Four of those people became coordinators of subdivisions of the organization.

The E+ structure was clear: the organization was divided into subdivisions according to functional specialization, which was also typical for other Maidan organizations (Prokhorova, 2017a):

We were helped by the fact that we had specialization from the very beginning . . . Divisions were formed so that they began to perform their specific work very quickly (140).

The members of the first such unit were drivers. Their task was to stay directly on the Maidan and either look for potential "clients" of the organization or remain on call, ready to provide help for those who needed it. There were 5–7 drivers (*140*). Volunteers whose role was accompanying the victims stayed together with the drivers. The latter were admitted to the organization according to two criteria: they had to know their way around, and their license plates couldn't be in the police database, which the police had collected in the first two months of the Maidan events. E+ needed drivers who would attract as little attention as possible (*371*).

The second division included call center workers coordinating between Maidan doctors seeking transportation for the injured, drivers, and contacts in underground hospitals. Respondents noted that the call center started with a few people with only ten mobile phones at their disposal. Later, the number grew to 15–18 volunteers (*140*). At first, the call center was located in an activist's office. Later, activists leveraged their contacts to find premises in several offices with convenient locations and 24-hour access (*371*).

A separate category of E+ volunteers were doctors, nurses, and paramedics. Doctors visited patients and prescribed treatment, while nurses and paramedics filled the prescriptions. When the number of wounded and the severity of their injuries increased, more doctors were needed for longer periods. If necessary, patients were brought to hospitals for additional examination.

The organization also had an administrative division:

There were about five people who worked in the office. This included administrative work and some accounting . . . There were IT specialists and so on (140).

It is worth noting that there were no strangers among the E+ Initiative participants. Only friends or acquaintances—people who could be trusted—joined the volunteers:

Acquaintances to trust each other. Alternatively, if someone brings someone, he vouches for him . . . They summoned as many as possible from such people who can be trusted (371);

We certainly needed a recommendation; when someone new was coming, we always asked who brought them; and we strictly adhere to this, because we needed trust (285).

The medical coordinator stated that the "recruiting" of doctors to the team also took place only thanks to her social networks:

I called all my friends . . . All of them got together, it was interesting to see because it was my [student] group, among them were two of my children's godmothers . . . I called, and everyone came (285).

The E+ Initiative cooperated with several underground hospitals. The leading hospitals were located on the grounds of three churches: the St. Catherine's Church (German Evangelical), the monastery of the Friars Minor Capuchins (Roman Catholic Church), the monastery of St. Basil the Great (Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church).

Similarly to other Maidan volunteering organizations, E+ has both features of a grassroots self-organized

initiative, such as spontaneous development, horizontality, social network, and flexibility; and characteristics of bureaucratic organizations: clear structure, precise positions, coordinators of departments. However, unlike other corresponding initiatives, E+ had a unique and essential feature—secrecy.

Secrecy in E+

The activities of E+ were carefully hidden from the authorities and from society both outside and within the Maidan. Those who knew about the organization's existence were Maidan doctors and church and monastery workers involved in the operation of underground hospitals. At the same time, even they did not know details of the organization's functioning:

> *But it was really very secretive. No one knew about it . . . there was no information about it anywhere. A few people knew this. It was very secret (315).*

Details were also hidden from the patients. For example, the monastery of the Friars Minor Capuchins is far from the center of Kyiv, and patients brought to this monastery (as a rule, not Kyiv citizens) did not even know where they were. Furthermore, when the patients were ready to leave, they were taken from the monastery to the Maidan by car (*315*) just as they were brought. So, even if they wanted to, they would not have been able to reveal the hospital's location.

With St. Catherine's Church, such secrecy could not be achieved due to its location in the thick of things on Lutheranska Street, which runs perpendicular to Bankova Street, where the Presidential Administration is located. Moreover, active Maidan participants knew the church as a place where they could warm up and drink tea. Furthermore, since the police and the military always guarded the Presidential Administration, and they were located directly next to the Church, they were also coming there to warm up and drink tea:

> *Our hospital was on the second floor, and these guys came to the first floor and were given tea there, but they did not touch ours (285).*

However, the hospital's existence in Saint Catherine's Church was kept secret.

Monks and ministers tried not to spread information about underground hospitals, either among colleagues not involved in helping the wounded or among the congregation. Still, the information risked getting out: someone might guess or hear rumors (*391, 379*).

Perhaps surprisingly, E+ representatives did not see the whole picture; members of the organization did not know the details of others' work:

> *To prevent information leaks, we separated as much as possible (382).*

The organization's volunteers knew as much as was necessary to perform their duties; they did not know and did not want to know more. There was always the possibility of arrest and interrogation, in which case it is always

better to know less:

I knew there were five or six more hospitals in the territory of Kyiv, but I did not even know where. They told me: 'If Berkut [a police unit] catches you, you do not know anything' (325);

I did not know many of those involved in the Initiative [E]+ . . . We were so secretive that we were not told who was bringing the sick to us (325);

I did not remember the names. Because at the moment, if something suddenly happened, this is a good protective mechanism so that these people are not found (391).

Furthermore, many members of the organization could not identify the others. Some knew each other, for example the five founders, or the call center workers who worked in the same room. But volunteers who did not cross paths or only communicated by phone did not know each other:

When it was all over, we decided to get together and look each other in the eye. It was fascinating when I looked at the dispatcher girls, and they looked at me. They imagined me in one way, and I imagined them in another. [During this time] we were almost relatives, but we never saw each other (369).

In sum, E+ organization members deliberately kept their activities invisible to outsiders. The organization mostly managed to keep its locations (both the office and the underground hospitals) secret, not to publicize the identities of the organization's leaders and members, and not to spread information about the organization's activities. We can observe a few manifestations of E+ secrecy.

The first concern **technology**. Many articles detail the role of modern technologies in visibility and invisibility processes in contemporary discourse (Albu, 2022; Shaikh & Vaast, 2016; Birchall, 2021; etc). At the same time, Maidan is often called a revolution in social networks. After all, the protests started with a post on Facebook, and throughout all the events, the coordination of most organizations took place on social networks. People coordinated actions, published information about the needs of the Maidan, collected money and reported on expenses, warned about dangers, etc. The E+ Initiative also had a closed Facebook group, but the respondents hardly mention it. However, every respondent says that coordination took place by telephone, and scenarios of possible events were also developed based on telephone communication.

We bought telephones, separate ones that we used for communications (311);

We had an emergency phone; if they would start to [arrest] me, I just would dial this number, press the [button], throw the phone somewhere so that it could be heard what is going on (369).

Maidan doctors communicated with the wounded using analog media: printed announcements on A4 paper, badges, and business cards (*140, 311, 315*), which helped E+ ensure greater secrecy.

E+ volunteers assumed that their phones could be tapped.

You know that they listen to everything . . . I am aware of it: I know what to say on the phone and what not to say, I know how to talk about some things (391).

For this reason, E+ Initiative members contrived special **language and codes** for use in telephone

communication. For example, it was agreed not to use words related to the Maidan, such as *Maidan*, *maidaner*, or *meeting* (140). Phone conversations did not discuss underground *hospitals, monasteries, victims*, or *the wounded*. A code developed: St. Catherine's Church was called *Katerina*, and the Friars Minor Capuchins monastery became *cappuccino*. It was decided to call the victims *guests* or *pizzas*. In the beginning, such ciphers led to misunderstandings and comical situations. A doctor who worked in late January in a field hospital on Hrushevskyi Street (where active fighting was going on at that time) recalls:

There was a case: (name) calls and says: 'Good evening, I have two pizzas here for you.' And at this moment, I am sewing up the patient, everything explodes [sounds of protesters and the military confrontation]*, and I do not understand anything. He tries to explain something to me, I start yelling at him that I did not order any pizza! (285)*

The code words eventually wound up firmly embedded in the volunteers' language. A nun who worked as a nurse at the Friars Minor Capuchin monastery consistently called the wounded "guests," even in the interview more than a year later (391).

According to respondents, Maidaners treated in underground hospitals might use pseudonyms when communicating with doctors, nurses, and monks, who did not attempt to discover their real names. A nurse and nun from the Friars Minor Capuchin monastery described her dialogue with patients as follows:

We did not ask for surnames then, people were afraid . . . There was no point in asking, because if people did say surnames, they were fictitious (285);

How should I call you? I am not asking for your name, just what I should call you (391).

Another manifestation of secrecy within E+ was the effort by volunteers to **avoid repeated routines**. For example, the team exchanged phones with one another to avoid calling the same contacts from the same numbers and thus prevent regular contacts from being tracked. The numbers of critical contacts were not saved and had to be memorized:

I can call it [the connection] a cerebral connection. You had to remember the endings of all numbers that called and who called from them (391).

Similarly, drivers changed cars and routes to avoid drawing the attention of law enforcement:

I know that at three or four points they changed cars, drove different roads around Kyiv so that even the person sitting in the car did not quite remember (391).

E+ Initiative members planned how to protect themselves and patients if the organization became exposed. To develop plans, the activists communicated with an employee of the Security Service of Ukraine (a former employee of the State Security Committee of the USSR) and with a foreign "security specialist in military and humanitarian conflicts." In response to these conversations, activists developed different behavior models under different conditions. For example, several respondents describe the following **cover-up scenario** should the police start questioning drivers or volunteers:

One of our ideas was that we are like foreigners, speaking English, in more expensive clothes. We have nothing to do with it, and we are going to a hotel. We tried to have currency in our wallets to print documents so that if someone were to catch us, so to speak, we could immediately 'switch to foreigner mode'. We went wearing shirts quite often (311);

For example, I walked around the Maidan in a suit. Yes, just in case. If I am stopped, I go to the hotel to see an Austrian, as I am consulting him (140).

Activists were also preparing for large-scale sweeps of the Maidan, the disconnection of telephone service, and other possible escalations of events:

Later, they searched for various locations in the center where it would be possible to hide in Kyiv—entrances, houses, and so on (311);

He [the security expert] was setting us up for different scenarios. He told us which lanes we could run away; talked about, for example, how to 'lie low' and not call anyone for two days if such a scenario occurs (140);

We bought green lasers that shined very far away—this is so that if communication is blocked, if it will not be possible to communicate, then you can shine it into the sky, and it will be visible for half of Kyiv. We even thought about the code signs we would create with them (311).

We even had a printed-out contact list of everyone, all our contacts that we had to have with us. And if everything were too bad, then we would have to destroy it (314).

As a result of its secrecy, E+ remained unknown to ordinary Maidan participants who, as a result, were afraid to rely on their help.

We wanted to help them, but they did not know us. It was not clear who, it was not clear from where (314).

Ukrainian society has always been quite traditional and religious. For many years, the Church has been the only institution whose ratio of trust to distrust was always more than 1. Moreover, the level of trust to the Church was higher than to any other institution for many years ('Ukrainian Trust in Social Institutions', 2012; 'Trust in social institutions and groups', 2015; 'Trust in social institutions and groups', 2016; etc). E+, in a certain sense, borrowed institutional legitimacy from the Church, helping it surmount mistrust. Connections to a church helped volunteers establish trusting relations with the wounded.

The mistrust was terrible, and people were afraid just to go beyond the perimeter of the Maidan simply, but when they heard that it was a monastery or a church, they immediately agreed to go (285).

Visibility in E+

While there are a lot of manifestations of secrecy in E+ activities, we can also observe some visibility markers, namely in its **external communication**. Activists of E+ started by printing information about themselves and their contacts and pasting them all over the field hospitals of the Maidan. In addition, through a coordinator and directly, they established communication with "Doctors of the Maidan"—one of the volunteer initiatives created to help the sick and wounded in improvised field hospitals. Soon, Maidan doctors started to call E+ directly

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when they had potential "clients" for them:

We printed such A4 sheets where [our contacts] were indicated . . . and went to all the medical services. We had

6 or 7 points where these sheets hung;

We handed out our business cards at medical centers; they called us (140).

 E+ also employed the use of **visual recognition signs**. Identification signs were vital for drivers and volunteers interacting with the wounded because the "field" employees had to instill trust in potential "clients." Thus, the drivers and volunteers had E+ badges that officially represented the organization in the eyes of potential patients, field hospital doctors, and Maidan guards:

We already had such a badge, it was written "E+ Initiative," "Evacuation+" (315);

We had a special sign. Only with it could our volunteers go, and all the doctors knew us at all medical centers (285).

It is worth emphasizing that external communication and visual recognition signs were intended for other active participants engaged in organizing Maidan (doctors, guards, fighters), but not for average Maidaners and, obviously, not for anyone outside the Maidan.

Discussion

The balance between visibility and secrecy in an organization providing life-saving support and medical assistance requires elaborating combined strategies of "secret visibility," which includes transferring the information about the functioning of the organization to potential recipients of its services, and, at the same time, keeps in secrecy its networks in the interests of organizational security and personal safety. The questions of elaborating such strategies in different protest settings were studied in Albrecht, M., Blasco, J., Jensen, R. & Mareková, L., 2021; Jusufi, I., 2018; Thomas, M., 2016.

It was not always easy for E+ to stay hidden. As described above, it was hard to overcome distrust from potential E+ clients. Even active Maidaners did not know about the initiative and did not want to leave the territory of the Maidan with its members. It would have been easier to help people had E+ been recognizable to Maidan participants. But such visibility risked attracting the interest of security forces, thus putting volunteers and patients in danger. Apart from a few visible manifestations, secrecy dictated the group's actions.

Meanwhile, the literature on transparency and secrecy suggests that secrecy is "being widely considered illegitimate and unjustifiable" and is even "deemed an evil that needs to be eradicated" (Ringel, 2019, pp. 705, 707). Costas and Gray (2016), by contrast, insist that secrecy should not necessarily be understood as something "ethically wrong" (p. 6). But a preference for transparency is all but universal among researchers, together with the idea that transparency can "improve" organizations (Ringel, 2019, p. 706). However, using the example of Evacuation + Initiative, we can see how an active Maidan agent used secrecy to establish stable and efficient

practices and interactions with underground hospitals, which were themselves created with the help of E+ volunteers. The interviews do not reveal an exact number of Maidan residents transported by the organization, though approximately three hundred people are said to have been transported in a single month (*285*).

Particularly if it operates in a difficult socioeconomic context or under conditions of repression, transparency may not always be the best choice for an organization. In those cases, secrecy might be preferable to visibility. In a stable, open society, secrecy might reduce an organization's effectiveness. But amid resistance to autocracy, secrecy furnishes extra opportunities for efficiency and security, and may pave an organization's only way forward.

Secrecy kept E+ volunteers and patients safe. It protected partners at churches and monasteries who took significant risks permitting and helping coordinate underground hospitals on their property. E+ sought to protect all participants from the authorities and their security forces, and secrecy was their first line of defense.

Costas and Gray (2014) drew attention to the fact that secrecy in an organization can exist not only for the sake of keeping particular information secret (the informational dimension of secrecy), but also for its symbolic value to society, its social dimension (p. 1429). Signs of both dimensions of secrecy can be discerned in the activities of E+. For example, information about the location of underground hospitals was not disseminated because doing so could harm the organization's functioning (information dimension). The social function of secrecy manifested, for example, in forming the mutual identity of the members of the organization (social dimension). They may not have seen each other during the activities; still, they formed a clear sense of interconnection. At the same time, it seems that neither informational nor social dimensions of secrecy are primary in our case. After all, secrecy on the Maidan is not aimed at preserving the organization's reputation or capital. Nor is it about secrecy as social control, where managers know more than subordinates and insiders know more than outsiders (Costas & Gray, 2014, p. 1436).

Secrecy was necessary for the E+ Initiative and underground hospitals to ensure the safety and survival of wounded and sick Maidan activists. Further research is required to claim that secrecy of this type may be considered a separate "safety dimension." However, this "safety" is probably the key feature of secret organizations that exist in conditions of autocratic repression. The primary role of secrecy in the development of E+ as an active Maidan volunteering organization was to provide safety.

Such secrecy is inextricable from its social context. As soon as the context changed, there was no longer a need for E+ to stay secret. Immediately after the escape of President Yanukovych, E+, which became known as "Safe Transportation," together with several other Maidan initiatives, established communication with the foreign governments of Poland, the Czech Republic, Germany, France, and others. As a result, these countries were prepared to take seriously injured Maidan activists abroad for care. By this time, the need for secrecy had passed, and the organization needed to be visible in order to establish trust with foreign governments. In days, the organization went from secrecy to visibility.

Conclusion

Summing up our inquiry, we can state several peculiarities regarding the secrecy/visibility aspects of E+ as a Maidan volunteer organization.

First, to act effectively, there was a need for E+ to find a balance between visibility and secrecy. Meanwhile, secrecy prevails over visibility in the functioning of E+ all it was acting in the conditions of antiauthoritarian resistance.

Second, conducting helping activities in armed confrontation, the operation of E+ is subordinated to preserving the safety and survival of protesting activists. This feature of E+ suggests that neither the informational nor social dimension of secrecy is critical for it, but what we have called the "safety dimension."

Finally, E+, similarly to many other horizontal network formations, is adaptive and flexible, which provides a tremendous resource for quick and efficient development of secret coding, change of secrecy strategy, and even for a rapid turn from secrecy to visibility when the confrontation is over.

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Narcissism and Art Relation in Line with Freud's Thought Basis

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Abstract: This study examines the relationship between narcissism and art based on the basic tenets of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Freud's conceptual framework, centered around the unconscious mind, internal conflicts and psychodynamic processes, provides a valuable lens through which to examine the complex interplay between narcissism and artistic expression. From the perspective of Freud's foundations of thought, narcissism and art reveal a deep connection between self-expression, self-reflection and creative fulfillment. Art serves as a vehicle through which artists explore their inner world, experience catharsis and seek recognition. While Freud's theories offer valuable insights, more interdisciplinary research is needed to enrich our understanding of the nuanced relationship between narcissism and artistic expression. This paper examines how narcissistic tendencies can manifest in the creative process, the impact of art as a vehicle for narcissistic fulfillment, and Freud's perspective on the subject.

Keywords: Freud, narcissism, art, psychoanalysis, visual arts

Introduction

The concept of narcissism, characterized by an excessive preoccupation with oneself, has long fascinated scholars in a variety of disciplines. Sigmund Freud, a leading figure in psychoanalysis, examined narcissism as a fundamental element of human psychology. Freud's assertion that we are not rational stewards of our lives, but rather controlled by unconscious forces of which we are unaware, and that logic and reason are not the most important factors guiding our lives, is considered the first step of a very important beginning (Duane, 2002).

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theories have become increasingly widespread and influential on many artists since the beginning of the 20th century. Freud's work offered a new perspective in understanding and exploring the inner world of the individual. Freud's theories offered artists a new world of meaning by emphasizing the importance of the unconscious, subconscious and dreams. Artists have utilized Freud's theories to explore their inner worlds and understand their own emotional and psychological experiences. In this process, they conducted their own "analyses" and transferred the intellectual processes that emerged as a result of these analyses to their artistic works. However, the fact that artists delve into their inner worlds and conduct their own analyses under the influence of Freud's psychoanalytic theories should be considered a phenomenon that existed before these

theories became widespread. In the history of art, there are many examples where the subconscious, dreams and fantasies are expressed through the instrumentalization of mythology, religion or daily life. In other words, Freud's psychoanalytic theories had a great impact on artists and inspired the creation of many works of art. However, the effort to express and understand one's inner world was a phenomenon that existed even before Freud and was transmitted through various cultural means.

Freud's theories have made significant contributions to the development of art and the change of its content. Freud's theories of psychoanalysis have become an important tool for artists to explore and express the inner world. Freud was interested in art and artists and searched for elements to support his theories. He was particularly interested in classical art and studied works in art history and biographies of artists. Interestingly, however, he did not have much influence on the revolutionary art movements of his time. This is an ironic aspect of the fact that Freud's ideas became central to modern consciousness over time, but were somewhat disconnected from other contemporary art movements (Robert, 1997; August, 2007).

Although Freud had a close relationship with art, only Leonardo da Vinci and a Childhood Memoir, 1910, and Michelangelo's Moses, 1914 - supplemented in 1927 - are known to be directly related to the visual arts (Werner et al., 1995). In Michelangelo's Moses, Freud admits that he is not an art connoisseur; he has the tastes of a man of his time and class. He is generally in favor of using works of art to investigate the psychology of creation or the psycho-biography of individual artists, not to develop a serious aesthetic. In Freud's 1910 Leonardo da Vinci and a Childhood Memoir, the memory or fantasy of Leonardo being visited in his cradle by a bird of prey plays an important role. Freud interprets this memory as an imaginary of passive oral sexuality, produced in the later years of the artist's life, and combined with the memory of oral fulfillment through breastfeeding. In these two studies, Freud had a direct relationship with the artist and works of art; sometimes he tried to interpret the artist, sometimes the work, and sometimes both. In a way, these studies focusing on the lives and works of the great masters of the Renaissance can be called the first examples of psychoanalytic art criticism (Michael, 2000).

Figure 1: Leonardo da Vinci, Annunciation, 1472, Uffizi Gallery.

Surrealism is one of the art movements that most clearly reflects the influence of Freud's theories. Freud's

psychoanalytic theories played an important role in the formation of Surrealist thought. For example, André Breton, one of the leading figures of the Surrealist movement, took a great interest in Freud and was influenced by his theories. However, due to Freud's ignorance of art, the Surrealists often thought that Freud considered them "crazy" and only praised those who visited him, such as Salvador Dali. According to Freud, dreams are a legitimate way of accessing the unconscious and were therefore embraced by the Surrealists (Norbert, 1991).

Freud's theories had a great influence on the formation of Surrealism. Freud's psychoanalytic theories fed the Surrealists' interest in the unconscious and the world of dreams, which manifested itself in their works. By emphasizing the free flow of the unconscious and non-logical connections, the Surrealists enabled art to break away from traditional norms and the perception of reality (Louis, 2002; Michael, 2000).

The frequent use of images such as cabinets and drawers in Salvador Dali's paintings is a visual expression of Freud's theory of psychoanalysis. Dali frequently used drawer images to express Freud's theories in a visual language. Dali first met Freud in London in 1938 and showed him his work The Transfiguration of Narcissus. Later, he began to paint Freud's portrait from memory. In another portrait he painted in the same period, he shaped Freud's skull like a snail shell. Dali stated that he cared a lot about Sigmund Freud because he discovered that the only difference between Ancient Greece and today is that the human body, which was neoplatonic then, is full of many hidden drawers that only psychoanalysis can open today. This reflects Dali's admiration for the impact of Freud's theories on human psychology and the exploration of the unconscious. The frequent use of images such as cabinets and drawers in Dali's paintings is a visual expression of Freud's theory of psychoanalysis. Dali cared about Freud's theories and reflected his interest in the exploration of the unconscious in the human mind in his paintings (Robert, 1997).

Figure 2: Salvador Dali, The Transfiguration of Narcissus, 1937, Tate Modern.

In addition, Freud's psychoanalytic theories have had a great impact on women artists' exploration of their inner worlds, understanding their unconscious and expressing it in their works. These theories helped women artists to reflect their personal experiences and existences in their works and enabled women to reveal their individual passions and unique identities due to the development of self-awareness (Norbert, 1991; Ingo, 2005).

Freud's theories of psychoanalysis have enabled artists to explore their inner world and unconscious thoughts, to understand and express traumatic experiences. Using Freud's theories, artists can delve deep into the subconscious and use dreams, mythology, icons and symbols to create a complex and visceral narrative. Freud's theories played an important role in the development of modern art and in changing its content. As artists explored their inner worlds under the influence of psychoanalysis, they focused on the complexity of human nature and the power of the unconscious. This helped to create a more subjective and psychological approach in modern art. Therefore, Freud's theories of psychoanalysis transformed the content and forms of expression of art and were influential in the development of modern art (Louis, 2002). Even though Freud's interest was in classical art, his thoughts and theories had a profound impact on the understanding and content of modern art (Marcuse, 1998).

This study aims to examine the relationship between narcissism and art and analyze Freudian thought foundations as a theoretical framework to understand this dynamic interrelationship.

Freud's basic foundations of thought are as follows:

The unconscious: One of Freud's most important concepts is the unconscious. According to him, the unconscious is a space underneath our minds, filled with thoughts, desires, traumas and internal conflicts that we are not aware of. The contents of the unconscious can influence human behavior and emotional experiences.

Internal conflicts: According to Freud, the human psyche is full of internal conflicts. Based on the idea that instincts, especially sexuality and aggression, should be expressed within socially acceptable limits, Freud argued that internal conflicts have profound effects on human psychological health.

Psychoanalytic therapy: Freud developed a method of therapy called psychoanalytic therapy. This therapy focuses on exploring the unconscious contents of the patient. A safe environment is created between the therapist and the patient and techniques such as free association, analysis of dreams and free association are used. In this process, awareness of unconscious contents increases and internal conflicts are aimed to be resolved.

Psychosexual development: According to Freud, humans undergo a process of psychosexual evolution. This evolutionary process includes the stages of sexual development during childhood. This evolutionary process, which consists of five stages: oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital, shapes the way an individual deals with sexual urges and their unconscious contents.

Defense mechanisms: Freud proposed that people develop various defense mechanisms to cope with unwanted thoughts, feelings and memories in the unconscious. These include mechanisms such as denial, regression, repression, projection and displacement. These mechanisms can help people to maintain mental balance.

These basic ideas form part of Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Freud sought to understand the unconscious processes underlying human behavior and emotional experiences and developed psychoanalytic therapy, providing a method for delving deeply into people's inner worlds. However, some of his ideas are controversial and subject to criticism today.

In many cases, art can be a means of expression and fulfillment for people with narcissistic tendencies. Artists create works of art to express their inner world, to attract attention and to fulfill their ego. Art provides a space where the artist can reflect their personal experiences, feelings and thoughts. In this sense, individuals with narcissistic tendencies are often seen among artists (Louis, 2002; Norbert, 1991).

However, Freud does not think that narcissism is directly related to the creative process of art. According to him, since the main purpose of art is the expression of inner satisfaction and creativity, the narcissistic tendencies of the artist are only by-products. The creative process of art involves the expression of impulses and inner conflicts coming from the depths of the unconscious. Therefore, narcissistic tendencies of artists can feed their creativity, but it is difficult to say that there is a direct relationship between narcissism and art.

Freudian Theory and Narcissism

Freud's psychoanalytic theory posits that the human psyche is composed of conscious and unconscious elements. Central to his theory is the concept of the unconscious mind, where repressed thoughts, desires and conflicts reside. By introducing the concept of narcissism, Freud emphasized the developmental importance of narcissism and its impact on the formation of the self. He argued that narcissism plays a vital role in early childhood development and the construction of self-identity. Sigmund Freud was an Austrian psychiatrist who developed a method of therapy and psychological theory called psychoanalysis. Freud's ideas are based on a method of therapy called psychoanalysis and aim to understand and explore the inner world of human beings. Narcissism is an important concept in Freud's psychoanalytic theory and refers to the state of excessive focus on oneself and exaggerating one's sense of self. The relationship between art and narcissism can be analyzed from various angles with Freud's thoughts.

Freud interprets manic states in terms close to this "ideal self". In mania, the subject "I" is described as very rich, not leaning inward but very outward, to the point of contact with external objects and ideals of the self. On the same axis, melancholia, defined as the opposite of mania, corresponds to a poor "I": I am oppressed by my Ideal and my Object at the same time, because here again Ideal and Object merge. "Thus in melancholia, according to Freud, the shadow of the idealized object has fallen on the 'I'." In distinguishing between the idealizing object and the mirror object, Kohut approaches this distinction between the "I-Ideal" and the "ideal I". According to Freud, the movement of objects towards ideals is very different from the movement of ideals towards objects: these two movements produce two different phenomena. When the object is placed in an idealized position, we encounter what Freud described in Group Psychology and Ego Analysis as the leader

syndrome. As to Freud, when an external object - the ascendant leader - replaces "my" libidinal object and is placed in the position of "my" I-Ideal, we have a structured crowd.
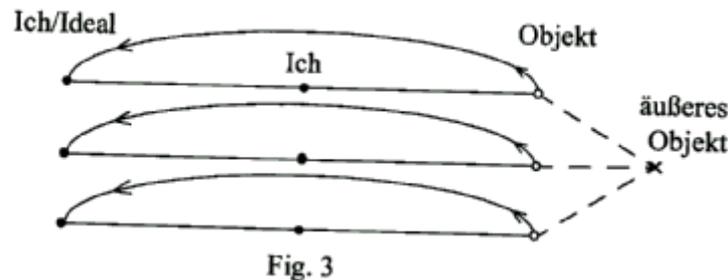
Figure 3. Freud's characterization of libidinal object dynamics

In Figure 3, Freud describes an external object. In describing crowds in this way, Freud included a "crowd of two". Any psychoanalyst is always ethically balancing between a "crowd of two" and something else. Psychoanalysis is forced to create a social bond similar to crowds, falling in love and mania, but essentially different from them all.

Freud stated that narcissism is important for normal human development. During early childhood, the child behaves in a narcissistic way in order to discover and satisfy himself. This stage is necessary for a person to develop a healthy sense of self. If this stage is not completed in a healthy way, narcissistic disorders may emerge in the individual. According to Freud's metaphysics, humans are not programmed by God or Nature to learn from experience; they are essentially and profoundly governed by the principle of Lust. According to Freud, there is only one way to access reality: to take external things as objects of hate and love. In fact, according to Freud, people do not really deal with things, but with their own objects, which are basically pieces of food or breasts spat out by a disgusted child (August, 2007).

Narcissism, characterized by excessive egocentrism and lack of empathy, can significantly affect interpersonal relationships in various domains. Understanding the effects of narcissism on romantic relationships, family and parent-child dynamics, workplace interactions, and social interactions and friendships is crucial to addressing and overcoming the challenges associated with narcissistic individuals.

Narcissists strive to love the essential, that is, the value of life itself. But we cannot love true love itself, we cannot value the value itself. Narcissism - the fourth and worst temptation - has the same passion for consistency as the theory. The narcissist wants to love what gives value to love: his own fulfillment. But this is not possible. Of course we can be more or less selfish, but the paradox is that the only real way to love ourselves is to love others. If we take seriously the task of loving ourselves simply because we value our own lovable objects, we become depressed and unhappy, as Freud pointed out. Melancholy is the only consistent way to love ourselves, to love value itself.

The study of narcissism and creativity is very complex. Narcissistic people also see themselves as creative, and others sometimes admit that they are creative, but only when they are under the influence of their charisma. When it comes to actual creative thinking performance on objective tasks, narcissistic people do not perform better than others and sometimes even perform worse. Nevertheless, they can do well on creative thinking tests if others are watching them and they can show off. Almost all of the studies on this topic are correlational, meaning that it is not possible to know whether higher empathy increases creativity, whether higher creativity helps people to be more empathetic, or whether there is some other unknown explanation. However, studies have found that being temporarily placed in a state of higher prosocial motivation or higher authority (a form of narcissism) can lead to more creative thinking.

According to an article by Pamela B. Rutledge Ph.D. (2013), there are two ways in which people interpret selfies: one sees selfies as "evidence of cultural or at least generational narcissism and moral decadence" and the other as "a by-product of technology-assisted self-discovery". On the one hand, selfies are associated with narcissism because they give the selfie-taker complete control over the image they project. These individuals will then upload it to social media to gain approval or "likes" from others, which will boost their ego. The problem with selfies, as Megan Rogers (2013) notes, is that "users spend a lot of time, effort, and even money to maintain their pleasing and attractive online image", which in itself is related to narcissism, as the willingness to spend a lot of time and money on one's physical appearance is considered narcissistic. People will always upload photos of themselves looking their best, which creates unrealistic standards in society. The bigger problem is that "it doesn't matter what you think about yourself and you start doing things that other people like. This can lead to selfie addiction and narcissism" Rogers (2013). People can start to lose their sense of self, measure their self-worth in likes and dislikes, and get too caught up in details that are not that important. In a way, this can be used as a modern example of the myth of Narcissus, who sat day and night on the edge of a pool of water, looking at his reflection without realizing anything around him.

On the other hand, while Rutledge (2016) argues that preoccupation with oneself is as old as humanity, he gives several reasons why there is no relationship between selfies and narcissism. The first is that "selfies may be more about context than self", which is often explored by artists who want to utilize technological resources. Selfies show aspects of other people and allow us to learn about them, and they are not always approval-seeking. Most importantly, Rutledge (2016) points out that "selfies can be normalizing" because for many years people were concerned about the amount of images setting unrealistic standards, but nowadays there are more photos of 'real' people on all social media platforms. This allows people to challenge their vanity and re-document who they are. From this perspective, selfies can be seen as a way of celebrating oneself, but can also be considered narcissistic if done too often.

Narcissism and Romantic Relationships

Narcissistic traits can profoundly affect romantic relationships. This subsection discusses the dynamics of

narcissism in intimate partnerships, including the challenges of maintaining emotional intimacy, the presence of grandiose self-image and entitlement, and the tendency to exploit and manipulate partners for personal gain. It explores the impact of narcissism on relationship satisfaction, communication patterns, and the potential for emotional and psychological abuse (Karen, 1990).

Narcissism in Family and Parent-Child Dynamics

Narcissism can have detrimental effects on family relationships and parent-child dynamics. This subsection examines how narcissistic parents prioritize their own needs over the well-being of their children, exhibit limited empathy and emotional attunement, and foster an environment of emotional neglect or invalidation. It explores potential long-term consequences for children raised by narcissistic parents, including difficulties in forming healthy attachments, low self-esteem, and the perpetuation of narcissistic patterns in future relationships (Segal, 2006).

Narcissism at Work and in Leadership Positions

Narcissistic individuals often gravitate towards positions of power and leadership. This sub-section explores the impact of narcissism in the workplace, including the challenges of collaborating with narcissistic colleagues or superiors. It examines how narcissistic leaders can exhibit authoritarian and exploitative behaviors, create toxic work environments, undermine teamwork, and hinder organizational success. The effects on employee well-being, job satisfaction and productivity are also discussed.

Effects on Social Interactions and Friendships

Narcissistic traits can significantly affect social interactions and friendships. This subsection examines how narcissistic individuals may engage in self-centered conversations, constantly seek attention and approval, and exploit others for personal gain. The challenges of maintaining authentic and satisfying friendships with narcissistic individuals and the potential negative effects on social support networks and general well-being are discussed. Strategies for setting boundaries, managing expectations, and maintaining self-care in relationships with narcissistic individuals are also addressed (Ingo, 2005).

Narcissism in the Creative Process

Artistic creation often involves deep self-discovery and self-expression. Driven by their inner motivations, artists often exhibit narcissistic traits in their creative endeavors. The creative process can serve as a means for artists to channel their own obsessions, allowing them to communicate their inner world, emotions and personal experiences through their artworks. This section discusses how narcissistic tendencies can influence and shape the creative process (Louis, 2002).

Art as Narcissistic Satisfaction

Freud suggested that narcissism is an intrinsic aspect of human nature and its satisfaction is essential for psychological well-being. Art provides a platform for artists to seek approval, attention and admiration from others. Through their work, artists can capture the gaze of the viewer and satisfy their narcissistic desires by evoking emotional responses. This section examines how art functions as a vehicle for narcissistic fulfillment and the potential consequences of this relationship (Karen, 1990).

Freud's Perspectives on Narcissism and Art

Although Freud recognized the existence of narcissistic elements in the creative process, he did not see narcissism as the primary driving force behind art. According to Freud, art serves as a vehicle for the expression of unconscious desires, conflicts and emotions. Although artists may have narcissistic tendencies, these tendencies are seen as by-products of artistic creation, not its sole purpose. This section examines Freud's views on the relationship between narcissism and art and emphasizes the profound importance of artistic expression in Freud's theory (Tyson, 2014).

Criticisms and Contemporary Perspectives

It is important to recognize that Freud's theories have been subject to criticism and subsequent development over time. Critics argue that Freud's emphasis on unconscious motivations and conflicts may oversimplify the complex interplay between narcissism and art. Contemporary research draws on interdisciplinary perspectives that integrate cognitive, social and cultural dimensions to deepen our understanding of the relationship between narcissism and artistic expression (Ingo, 2005). In summary, Freud's thoughts addressed many issues, including art and creativity. Freud's views on art can be listed as follows (Blum, 2001; Segal, 2006):

- Art is the expression of dreams and unconscious thoughts: Freud argues that the unconscious plays an important role in human mental life. He thinks that art is a means of expressing people's unconscious desires, fears and dreams.

- Art provides emotional satisfaction: According to Freud, people resort to art to suppress their instinctive desires and relieve emotional tension. Art is an area where people find emotional satisfaction and relief.

- Artists are connected to their instinctive drives: Freud argues that artists have stronger instinctual drives than other people, and therefore artists stand out for their creative expression.

- Art can reveal society's taboos and repressed thoughts: Freud thought that art can challenge social norms and reveal repressed thoughts by addressing subjects that people consider taboo.

- Art can be a tool of psychoanalysis: Freud believed that art could be used in psychoanalytic treatment. Art can function as a means of communication between therapist and patient and help patients express their unconscious thoughts and emotional experiences.

Conclusion

Freud's views on art have a multifaceted perspective. However, there are also different views and criticisms on his evaluations. The relationship between art and psychoanalysis is complex and multifaceted, which is why there are various approaches and interpretations among different thinkers and experts. Freud's approach to art emphasizes that art is an important tool for the exploration and expression of the human inner world.

By revealing the unconscious and releasing repressed feelings and thoughts, art can help people to better understand themselves and achieve emotional fulfillment. Therefore, Freud argues that art has a deep relationship with the unconscious and plays an important role in understanding human psychology. In Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the unconscious is defined as an area of thoughts, desires and emotions that are not recognized by the conscious mind. According to Freud, this subconscious contains elements such as repressed and repressed emotions, childhood experiences and dreams. Artists access this subconscious content and express it creatively (Louis, 2002).

According to Duane (2002), Freud argues that the source of creation of art is the subconscious and glorifies this process. According to him, works of art are the expression of repressed emotions, dreams, gender factor and childhood memories. According to Freud, artists explore the inner world of human beings by transferring these elements of the unconscious into works of art. Dreams, sexuality and gender factor, childhood memories and repressed emotions are of great importance in works of art. These elements are resources that artists can use to express themselves and develop a deep understanding of human psychology.

The relationship between narcissism and art, when examined through the lens of Freudian foundations of thought, offers valuable insights into the psychological processes underlying creative expression. While narcissistic tendencies are present in artists, art creation serves as a multifaceted endeavor encompassing self-discovery, emotional catharsis, and communication of the human experience. Future research should continue to explore and develop our understanding of the complex relationship between narcissism and art from different perspectives. Freud stated that narcissism is important for normal human development. During early childhood, the child behaves in a narcissistic way in order to explore and satisfy himself. This stage is necessary for a person to develop a healthy sense of self. If this stage is not completed in a healthy way, narcissistic disorders may occur in the individual.

In conclusion, in line with Freud's ideas, there is a complex relationship between narcissism and art. Art can be a means of expression and fulfillment for people with narcissistic tendencies, but this narcissism is not directly related to creativity and inner fulfillment, which is the main purpose of art. The meaning and function of art is centered on the expression of individual experiences, the establishment of emotional connections and interaction with the viewer.

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Simulacra and the Female Protagonist of History, Novel, and Film: *Inés del Alma Mía*

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Abstract: Inés Suárez appears in the chronicles of the 16th Century serving alongside Pedro de Valdivia as founders of the city of Santiago and conquerors of Chile. Historical accounts and images of the actual woman have survived through centuries to arrive before us today as evidence of a dramatic and impactful life. Two defining acts secure a legacy for Inés Suárez; first, saving the expedition in the Atacama by divining water and second, turning the tide in a key battle with the Mapuche. The latter moment was defined by overt displays of strength and resolve with the decision to decapitate caciques and then to ride into throngs of soldiers in full armor, mounted on a white horse. Details from history already separate the woman from the narrative of her life; Inés Súarez the person retreats before the character that emerges in texts. This separation from reality eventually manifests itself as full spectacle in the recent television miniseries, Inés del alma mía (2020), based on the novel by Isabel Allende (2006). This paper proposes to classify the protagonist of the small screen adaptation, Inés, as simulacra according to its conceptualization by Jean Baudrillard. The visualization of Inés Suárez as a screen hero exemplifies what Baudrillard establishes as a disturbing lack of referents, a detachment from reality that permeates popular media as we interact with rootless simulacra. The figure of Inés Suárez on film enhances the myth of her through a projected heroism that ultimately displaces the reality of her existence.

Keywords: Chile, Conquest, Suarez, Allende, Valdivia

Introduction

Inés Suárez was born in 1507 in Placencia, Spain. After her marriage to Juan de Málaga, Inés traveled to Columbia in search of her husband, and discovered upon her arrival that he had already died. She moved on to Perú, where she was granted by Pizarro a "vivienda" and "encomienda" in recognition of her husband's service and of her status as widow. She later joined the expedition to Chile led by Pedro de Valdivia and assisted him in crossing the Atacama desert. Together, they established the city of Santiago. Suárez is mentioned in correspondence between Pedro de Valdivia and Francisco Pizarro; in one of his letters, Pizarro grants permission for Suárez to accompany Valdivia on his journey to Chile. Suárez also appears in official documentation of the Inquisition charges against Valdivia. Chronicles relating the conquest and Spanish

settlement of Chile include Inés Suárez and report briefly on her actions as a "conquistador." According to Carmen Rivero:

> Los fragmentos que se conocen de su historia son, fundamentalmente, herencia de crónicas del
> siglo XVI… de Jerónimo de Vivar y de Pedro Mariño de Lobera, que dan breve cuenta de su
> participación en la defensa de Santiago…(2021).

From this limited archival evidence and recorded history of Chile, Inés Suárez emerges as a legendary figure embedded within the mythical narrative of conquest.

Discussion

The History of Inés Suárez in Literature

A possible approach to the narratives featuring the life story of Suárez is to view them as discrete works of art or invention, possessing an origin rooted in its time, place, and artistic endeavor. In this way, we understand that the Chronicles alighted upon the image of Inés Suárez as co-conquistador alongside Pedro de Valdivia; the works were written in a time of colonial expansion and settlement that seemingly mandated the documentation of great deeds and heroic actors of mythical proportions. In this light, Suárez appears in the chronicles as a legendary figure committing brave acts to save the city of Santiago. Mario Vargas Llosa comments, "The chronicle… is distilling fiction into life all the time… Does this mean that its testimony must be challenged from a historical point of view and accepted only as literature? Not at all. Its exaggerations and fantasies often reveal more about the reality of the era than its truths (1990). The historical records from colonial Perú and Chile function within a reality of ever-expanding empire and a need to justify possession of land and subjugation of people with narratives of bravery, super-human feats, and divine providence. The few mentions of Inés Suárez bear a legend because they celebrate her as a conquistador(a) in an era of deliberate narrative acts seeking to glorify the conquest.

The Isabel Allende novel *Inés del alma mía* (2006) can be considered within the parameters of the author's body of work. The novel responds to the author's commitment to retelling certain stories, first, about the country of Chile, and second, about strong women that defy the norms for their gender. According to Allende, "in most of my books, the main female protagonist is a strong willed, independent and rebellious woman who struggles to beat the odds against her. I feel very connected to those protagonists (Norris, 2006). In the words of the character and narrator Inés Suárez, her decision to travel to America reveals her independence and will: "…sospechaba que allá había algo aún más valioso: libertad. En las Indias, cada uno era su propio amo, no había que inclinarse ante nadie, se podían cometer errores y comenzar de nuevo, ser otra persona, vivir otra vida" (Allende, 2006). Allende details the creation of her character, Inés Suárez, and the need for a first-person narrative: "The first sentence just popped out of my - I wouldn't say my head - my womb. It was I am Inés Suárez, townswoman of the city of Santiago de Nueva in the kingdom of Chile. And that's how I felt. I felt that I was her and that the story could only be told in her voice. This story so removed in time, and the place also so removed, that the readers would not feel close to the story if it was not told by her (McMichael, 2006). The

novel invents a journal that Suárez leaves to her daughter upon her death, which becomes the voice of the text: "…cuando yo me muera… recuerda que me has prometido que guardarás estas páginas, escritas para ti y para us descendientes" (Allende, 2006). Allende meaningfully inserts the point of view of Suárez back into the history of Chile, as a major player in the events of her life and the development of Santiago. "… Isabel Allende introduces… una voz femenina autodiegética, esto es, que cuenta su propia historia y participa de forma activa en la narración… la voz narrativa femenina de Allende no presencia sino que… participa activamente en la Conquista (Rivero, 2021).

The Screen Adaptation of the Life of Inés Suárez

The film adaptation of *Inés del alma mía* enters a realm of technological displacement, while still presenting an air of authenticity, steeped as the film is in the facts and events of its historical origins. This displacement of the novel into the medium of film is something Walter Benjamin explores in terms of art reproductions and copies in his article, "The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility." According to Benjamin, the authentic is something real that exists in the moment of creation, inextricably linked to the time, place, and activity of the piece's provenance. "The authenticity of a thing is the quintessence of all that is transmissible in it from its origin on, ranging from its physical duration to the history which it testifies…" (2010). Benjamin views technology as the means by which we are able to place artwork in front of the viewing or listening public without maintaining a connection to the real. If we consider the life of Inés Suárez as the point of origin for the narrative thread of her life, then subsequent renderings of her story would take on aspects of reproduction. The Chronicles contain fragments and allusions to that life, woven into the great moments of the history of Chile. Isabel Allende attempts to recover the overlooked narrative by introducing a fictional retelling of Suárez' life. Finally, the film version of Allende's novel offers a technological rendering of that story, infinitely reproducible with each subsequent viewing of the series. The connection of the televised miniseries to the novel, the historical archive, and, ultimately, the life of Inés Suárez becomes tenuous even as the "authenticity" of the project is celebrated. As the IMDB file indicates, the series is "a romantic historical drama based on the true story of the first woman 'conquistador' who went to the South American land that would become Chile." The real equals a "true story" and "historical" elements, even while the artform itself presents incongruous anachronisms of modern innovation and invention.

Iconic Moments in the Life of Inés Suárez

Allende presents history as the backdrop for her novels and as the "foundation on which I can move my fictional characters" (Diazgranados, 2023). She refers to Inés Suárez as her favorite "historical character." The novelistic project as defiáned by Allende is to bring to light and to life a woman that played a major role in the Spanish development of Chile; Allende explains her novel as a recuperative work, giving voice to a historical figure that has mere lines devoted to her in the chronicles. The film based on Allende's novel picks up this historical thread and repeats many moments of the texts with fidelity to Allende's writing. The celebrated incidents from

recorded history thus appear in both the novel and the film. The first decisive moment occurs with Doña Inés using a divining rod in the desert:

> -Capitán, is a decirle a don Benito que me mande gente con picos y palas-lo interrumpí.
>
> -¿Picos y palas? – repitió, atónito.
>
> - Y decidle, por favor, que me traiga también unas tinajas y varios soldados armados.
>
> Poco después había seis indios cavando un hoyo… vimos que empezaba a juntarse agua,
>
> primero solo una leve humedad… pero al cabo de unos dos o tres minutos ya había una
>
> pequeña charca…
>
> -Este Milagro no es de ls Virgen, sino tuyo, Inés-me dijo Pedro… (Allende, 2006)

Inés has taken the bold step of serving as an active participant in the expedition to Chile; with her discovery of water, she merges a traditional feminine art, divining, with the very masculine role of explorer/conquistador. The historical record testifies to Inés' multiple roles and Allende offers a character that merges these seemingly conflicting identities, a "rebellious" woman with history as the "foundation" for her actions in the work. "Thanks to her multiple skills—sewing, cooking, cleaning, healing the wounded, uncovering complots against Valdivia and her amazing gift to find water in the desert—and her strong personality, Inés Suárez has been recorded in Spanish histories as the female conquistador of Chile par excellence" (Quispe-Agnoli, 2015). Inés travels through time with the mythical qualities of her historical interventions intact.

The second event that secured a place in history for Inés Suárez occurs during the siege of Santiago by Mapuche warriors in 1541. The legend of her actions emerges as documented history and finds full expression in first Allende's novel and then, later, in the television series of the same name. As documented in *Historia General de España y América*:

> Inés Suárez, la manceba de Valdivia que le había acompañado desde el Perú, y que llegó a
>
> gozar del aprecio de sus compañeros, se distinguió por su decisión y el ánimo que supo
>
> infundir en los defensores. Todo ardió... El escarmiento para los derrotados nativos que puso
>
> fin a la batalla fue ideado por Inés Suárez, y consistió en la decapitación de siete jefes
>
> indígenas y el lanzamiento de sus cabezas a los atacantes (1989).
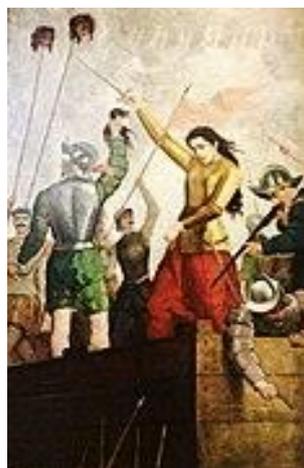
Note: Image in Public Domain, Retrieved from Wikimedia Commons

Inés, as narrator, recalls the critical event in this way:

-¡Matadlos a todos!- ordené a los guardias en un tono imposible de reconocer como mi voz.

-¿Cómo queréis que lo hagamos? – preguntó uno de los soldados, espantado.

-¡Así!-

Y entonces enarbolé la pesada espada de dos manos y la descargué con la fuerza del odio

sobre el cacique que tenía más cerca, cercenándole el cuello de un solo tajo. El impulse del

golpe me lanzó de rodillas al suelo, donde un chorro de sangre me saltó a la cara, mientras la

cabeza rodaba a mis pies. El resto no lo recuerdo bien" (Allende, 2006).

Allende, in order to accept a mythologized version of historical events, concedes to her character extra strength fueled by her "odio" and she abandons the play-by-play account of the scene, using a strategic "out of body" device to sidestep the improbability of a woman wielding a sword against seven *caciques*. The author cleverly communicates a historical moment without allowing the reader time to question the veracity of the scene. The connection to history is asserted and celebrated while the reenactment of historical events undermines the relationship of the text to the real.

A Search for Authenticity

The project of locating what Benjamin refers to as the "authentic" in historical evidence can be alternatively viewed as the location of the Idea in the analysis of Plato's simulacrum offered by Gilles Deleuze. Deleuze, in his article, "Plato and the Simulacrum," distinguishes between copy and simulacrum. For Deleuze, the simulacrum is "a copy of a copy, an endlessly degraded icon, an infinitely slackened resistance…" (1983). The copy stands apart as "endowed with resemblance" to the extent that it resembles the Idea." Isabel Allende, taking history as the cornerstone for her novel, and basing key plot moments on facts about the life of her protagonist, puts forth an Idea from which her fiction derives. Her work can be seen as a copy that resembles truths carried forth from the Colonial era in Chile.

In commentary to TTV News, Executive Producer of the television series, Jorge Redondo, literally grounds his work in the history of the lead characters, following their "pasos: "… hemos sido capaces de narrar la historia de Inés Suárez y Pedro de Valdivia en los mismos lugares por los que pasaron ellos. Han sido cuatro meses en los que hemos recorrido más de 20.000 km. entre los tres países" (2019). There is a sense, perhaps inferred from interviews and marketing strategies alone, that the novel and the film have faith in their ability to locate the authentic, as conceived of by Benjamin, and the Idea, as explained by Deleuze. The representations of Inés Suárez and her life as a conquistador suggest access to the referent, a real person and a true story.

Simulacra

Let us consider now the chaotic world of simulacra unmoored from any place of origin and dislocated from an

initial referent, the final stage of the image as presented by Jean Baudrillard in his work, *Simulacra and Simulation*:

> Such would be the successive phases of the image
>
> It is the reflection of a profound reality;
>
> It masks and denatures a profound reality;
>
> It masks the absence of a profound reality;
>
> It has no relation to any reality whatsoever: it is its own pure simulacrum.

The creative endeavor of both the novel and the film lie in the third stage of an image, that is, "it plays at being an appearance – it is of the order of sorcery" (1981). The real, identifiable person that lived and committed great feats documented in the annals of history, has already been displaced from her origins and rendered symbolic in the language of the text and in the visual imagery of the film. We are left with what Baudrillard calls an "artificial resurrection" of Inés Suárez. We cannot possibly reach her life story as a knowable point of departure. Allende is only able to craft her tale from the vestiges of actions that have been mythologized and packaged as part of the heroic narrative of conquest in the history of Chile. Allende speaks of her desire to recreate a "lost" or marginalized voice from the past. According to Baudrillard, this "nostalgia" surfaces when there is a loss of the real. There is also a concomitant, "Escalation of the true, of lived experience, resurrection of the figurative, where the object and substance have disappeared" (1981).

It could be helpful to contemplate the actual, concrete presence of the memorial plaque that covers the final resting place of Doña Inés and her second husband, Rodrigo de Quiroga. The tomb is a site of authenticity that bears the remains of a real person with evidence of their existence. The question becomes whether remains, ruins, or some other disinterred "real" item can rescue a life story that has passed into language and spun into multiple subsequent versions over time. Isabel Allende often draws inspiration for her literary works from the material world of remains and relics. In her early novel, *De Amor y de sombra* (1994), bodies discovered in a mine at a pivotal plot moment are the same bodies taken from national news headlines, the gruesome reality that led to an unravelling of the Pinochet regime.

The novel *El largo pétalo del mar* (2018) includes the concrete object The Winnipeg, the large ship that transported Spanish immigrants to Chile after the Civil. Allende writes historical novels grounded in authentic places, events, and even objects. However, this practice does not guarantee that the real-ness of the work's provenance will prevent the work from becoming a simulacrum. In the words of Baudrillard, "… history has retreated, leaving behind it an indifferent nebula…" (1981). In the novel *Inés del alma mía*, there is an "invocation of resemblance" to the limited facts of Suárez' life (1981), but the result is an empty figure that no longer resembles anything at all. The film derived from the novel is so far removed from the source that it only "resurrects ghosts" (Baudrillard, 1981). For this reason… "it is the real that has become our true utopia" (Baudrillard, 1981). Tying a work to a "true story" or "real person" provides the audience with a comforting concept of deeper meaning, of a solid network of roots binding us to the past. However, the assertion of the authentic may only delay recognition of the futility of the search.

Conclusion

The realization that simulacra are free-floating and empty of referential truth could provide the public with an exciting possibility of discovery and the creation of meaning from within the chaotic and conceivable infinite projection of images. There is freedom in the potential to formulate a truth in the moment, to observe intersections and coincidences amongst and between simulacra. For example, a comparison of the protagonist of the television series and the painting that is purported to represent Inés Suárez show two images that are very much in concert with each other. However, the iconic representation of Inés that is widely associated with her and featured in articles about her is an erroneous attribution that predates Inés' birth. The first image, not even a copy of a copy, yet a spontaneous simulacrum based on a faculty concept, shows the actress styled to match the painting.

Note: Image from Chilevisión Article: "¿Quién fue Inés de Suárez..."

Meaning could be derived from a sense that the images correspond to each other and reaffirm a notion of Inés' appearance in the 16th century, thus "doubling the signs of an unlocatable identity" (Baudrillard, 1981) within "an uninterrupted process of simulation" To this end, one could consider the iconography of Inés Suárez while relinquishing any claim to her actual, lived past. Or, the fantasy of a return to origins, nostalgia for something we cannot know, could lead the viewing public to believe there is a truth to be witnessed or an authentic kernel to be discerned. To repeat the last words of the novel… "Adiós, Inés del alma mía…" (Allende, 2006).

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An Analysis of the Memoirs of Marshal Louis Nicolas Davout

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Abstract: The following paper presents a first philological analysis of the memoirs of Marshal Louis Nicolas Davout, one of the key figures of all the Napoleonic Wars and of French history in general. The work is supported also by original elements of professional translation, which are provided with parallel text. The analysis starts from a linguistic and philological consideration, providing thus the author the possibility to chart a course into the historical context that gave birth to this work as well, highlighting its structure, content, and layout. Particular attention is addressed also to the presentation, translation, and comment of several different key extracts of the main historiographical and philological works about the historical personality introduced in the analysis. A further and extensive attention of historians, philologists, and linguists on the entire spectrum of available memoirs regarding the Napoleonic Wars, notwithstanding the overall interest and popularity all over the world, is still required.

Introduction

Most of times, people tend to mistake the concepts of "memoirs" and "autobiography": in order to better understand the philological an sometimes even historiographical difference between them, a good starting point can be the analysis of the linguistic definition of these two ideas.

According to "The Oxford dictionary of current English", under the word "memoir" we find (Tompson, 1993):

"*1. historical account etc. written from personal knowledge or special sources. 2. (in pl.) autobiography, esp. partial or dealing with specific events or people. 3 essay on a learned subject. [French memoire: related to MEMORY]*"

Next, under the word "autobiography", we find:

"*1. written account of one's own life. 2. this as a literary genre.*"

On the basis of this terminological difference between them, we can therefore conclude that, first of all, memoirs are an account of personal nature on a precise experience or period of somebody's life. Moreover, we can also rightly conclude, even if it is not expressly stated above, that memoirs are a subgenre of autobiography. In fact, an attentive study of memoirs can give the reader the possibility to fly back in time to different historical periods, to imagine and see how in the previous centuries people used to express their intentions, feelings, and thoughts.

This individual perspective today represents a key factor for those who desire to get into the psychology of the great personalities of the past, whose emotions, deeds, successes and mistakes influenced the course of history. By studying memoirs and documents of personal nature of these people in our days, especially with the use of modern technologies and means, we can realize that some aspects of their life appear even clearer to us than to their contemporaries; indeed, today we have the great advantage of knowing how a precise event of the past actually ended.

When Napoleon capitulated in 1814, for instance, the entire world was sure that he would never represent a thread to the European powers again, whilst today we know that in less than a year the "*hundred days*" would begin, culminating afterwards in the definitive and catastrophic French defeat of Waterloo in June 1815. Thinking about it now, as we can in 2023, such a story would have probably sounded bizarre, or even delirious, to anyone in April 1814.

The memoires about to be introduced have little to do with the very character of Napoleon, but they belong to one of the most important characters of all the Napoleonic Era. Moreover, his part in this precise moment of history would not finish with these memoires as a full stop. This preface is crucial to better identify the following topic: an analysis of the memoirs of Marshal Louis Nicolas Davout.

Method

The methodology choice made in the present work concerning the content of Davout's memoirs followed the guidelines expressed in the philological methods proposed by the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Robert D. Fulk (Fulk, 2016), and Christopher S. Mackay (Mackay, 1997), of the University of Alberta. This choice was made in order to study the presented text, the written records attached to it and to be able to establish and determine their meaning. The general translation method chosen in the work was the literary one, in order to convey the emphasis and the importance of several expressions, context, emotions, and tones present in the text. Nevertheless, the work required a wide use of professional, technical, and administrative translation as well. The first and the third mostly for the official acts and documents issued by government bodies, ministries, military administrations, and municipalities; the second, to a major extent, for the engineering, scientific, and military terminology.

Results

In a broad sense, Marshal Davout definitely cannot be considered a minor character of French history, nor of the Napoleonic Wars. As a matter of fact, the name of the "Iron Marshal" is on top of all search results on the internet when users look for the expression "the best marshal of France"; there is a huge quantity of forums, scientific papers, monographies, documentaries and blogs whose aim is to attempt to defend this thesis.

Of course, his name is not the only one, as all marshals of France, along with many other characters, contributed in the creation of the myth of the Napoleonic era. It is no coincidence that sometimes we even tend to generalize, identifying the expression "Marshals of France", or "Napoleon's Marshals" as something like a single whole. Besides, we have to consider that the concept of "being the best" sometimes appears quite faded and dull to be empirically demonstrated when it comes to historical research or philology.

Nevertheless, the overall interest and the plurality of the debates about this particular character testify a clear and widespread knowledge of this interesting historical figure. Unfortunately, Davout never left, as far as we know, a complete autobiography of his life; we have a relatively generous collection of his personal correspondence and various historical sources, along with several further biographies about him, which actually do help us in reconstructing the key events of his life.

The main of them, about his correspondence and his documents of personal nature, are without any doubt the following works:

- "*Le Maréchal Davout, prince d'Eckmühl, raconté par les siens et par lui-même*" (de Blocqueville, 1880).
- "*Le Maréchal Davout, Prince d'Eckmühl, Correspondance Inédite, 1790-1815, Pologne, Russie, Hambourg*" (de Blocqueville, 1887).
- "*Correspondance du Maréchal Davout, Prince d'Eckmühl, Ses Commandements, Son Ministère, 1801-1815*" (de Mazade, 1885).

The first of the previously mentioned works is a reconstruction of all the life of Davout, beginning from his early years up to his death, by the Marquise of Blocqueville, his last daughter. She was in fact a noblewoman of great culture, known for her fine mind, and whose salon in Paris was highly appreciated by the cultural élite of both the Second French Empire and the Third Republic.

This massive work, consisting of four volumes, was published in Paris between 1879 and 1880. In its dedication, at the beginning of the first volume, we can read the following words (de Blocqueville, 1880):

"Le nom du Maréchal Davout appartient au pays qui l'a vu naître, et non point à un parti quelconque : la

France a besoin de héros dans l'ordre moral aussi bien que dans l'ordre militaire ; je dédie donc ce livre à la mémoire de mon Père et à la France !

Adélaïde-Louise d'ECKMÜHL,

Marquise de BLOCQUEVILLE, Paris, le 28 décembre 1878".

("The name of Marshal Davout belongs to the country where he was born, and not to any party whatsoever: France needs heroes on the moral level, as well as on the military one; I dedicate therefore this book to the memory of my Father and to France!

Adélaïde-Louise of ECKMÜHL,

Marquise of BLOCQUEVILLE, Paris, December 28th, 1878")

As we can clearly see here, the word "father" is written with a capital letter, in order to underline a form of respect.

The second work, also written by the Marquise of Blocqueville, was printed in 1887, that is, 7-8 years after the previous one, after having published "*Roses de Noël. Pensées d'hiver*" (1884) and "*Pensées d'un pape (Clément XIV), publiées par la M.ise de Blocqueville*" (1885).

Here too we can find an open dedication, even if much shorter, which reads (de Blocqueville, 1887):

"À la mémoire de mon frère, le Prince Louis d'ECKMÜHL, seul fils du Maréchal Davout qui lui ait survécu."

("In memory of my brother, Prince Louis of ECKMÜHL, the only son of Marshal Davout who survived him.")

These words were addressed to her brother, who had already died more than thirty years before, and with whom the name of the Princes of Eckmühl disappeared forever, having he passed away unmarried and without issue.

The third work presented in the previous listing is another massive gathering in four volumes of documents regarding the professional and personal life of Davout, curated by Charles de Mazade.

Particular attention deserve his last words about Davout in the preface of the book, just before the post scriptum (de Mazade, 1885):

"[...] Napoléon, le premier de tous, venait de mourir depuis peu dans son île lointaine. Murat avait péri fusillé en courant après sa couronne sur une plage de Naples. Berthier, la tête perdue, s'était jeté par une croisée d'un château de Bavière, en 1815. Lannes avait eu la mort des héros à Essling. Bessières avait été emporté par un boulet à Lutzen. Duroc avait été enlevé à Reichenbach. Desaix était mort depuis longteps. Davout s'éteignait loin des champs de bataille, en pleine Restauration, à cinquante-trois ans. Il avait assez vécu pout rester une des plus fières et des plus saisissantes images d'une grande époque, du commencement du siècle."

("[...] Napoleon, first of all, had recently just died on his far island. Murat had been shot by firing squad running after his crown on a beach of Naples. Berthier, having lost his mind, had jumped out of a window of a

castle in Bavaria, in 1815. Lannes had seen the death of the heroes at Essling. Bessières had been struck by a cannon ball at Lutzen. Duroc had gone at Reichenbach. Dasaix was long dead. Davout faded out far from the battlefields, in the middle of the Restoration, at the age of fifty-three. He had lived enough to remain one of the proudest and most vivid images of a great time, of the beginning of the century.")

Actually, Davout was one of the very few marshals of France who died of natural causes, though he passed away in serious illness, and several years after having overcome a period of disgrace.

Nevertheless, the only personal document he actually left for posterity are his memoirs to King Louis XVIII. This work was printed in Paris in 1814 after the abdication of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbons, after Davout had been cut off from France since the beginning of the siege of Hamburg (1813-14). This is a crucial point, because, notwithstanding the previously mentioned relatively widespread interest about the character, these only memoirs of him have never been translated. The only published translation ever made, from French into Italian, was realized in 2023 (Davout, 2023). The aim of this paper is therefore to present a first analysis of this work, which may represent an interesting scientific material for both philologists and historians in the future.

As we are about to analyze a memoir, first we need to determine the precise temporal interval, as well as the historical context, which are the object of the content:

« Sire,

J'ai l'honneur de soumettre à la justice de Votre Majesté l'examen détaillé de ma conduite ; Elle y acquerra la preuve que je n'ai jamais fait qu'un usage légitime de l'autorité dont j'étais revêtu. Je n'ai point abusé, Sire, du pouvoir qui m'a été confié ; aucun des actes de mon gouvernement, dans la trente-deuxième division militaire, ne peut être taxé d'arbitraire ; tous ont été dictés par des ordres ou décrets dont j'ai les originaux entre les mains, et dont je mets les copies sous les yeux de Votre Majesté.[...] » (Davout, 1814).

(« Sire,

I have the honor to submit to the justice of Your Majesty the detailed examination of my conduct; Your Majesty will obtain the proof that I only made a legitimate use of the authority of which I was invested. I never abused, Sire, of the power of which I was entrusted; none of the deeds of my command, in the 32nd military division, can be accused of injustice; all of them were imposed by orders or decrees whose originals lie in my hands, and whose copies I put under the eyes of Your Majesty. [...]»)

These are the very first words of Davout's memoirs. This *incipit* highlights the purpose of the work; Marshal Davout, in command of the 32nd French division, and cut off from France for several months, after a period of doubt has become aware of the proven capitulation of Napoleon and of the restoration of the Bourbons on the

throne.

Discussion

As we can see, in essence, Davout addresses to Louis XVIII a report of all the main events, his command, dispositions, and conduct during the siege of Hamburg, of which he was in charge.

The proof of it is provided in the attached documents, which confirm the receipt of the orders dated "*April, 1813*" from Prince Eugène, about his new dislocation, and the dispositions of Marshal Berthier, about the seizure and defense of Hamburg, dated "*May, 1813*".

The following image (see Figure 1) shows the city of Hamburg, which Davout defended against the allied forces during the siege of 1813-14. Here we can easily see many of the recurrent geographical names present in the text, like "*Altona*", "*Hamburgerberg*" or "*Harburg*", which once identified on the map definitely help the reader in having a reference point about space and even military strategy.
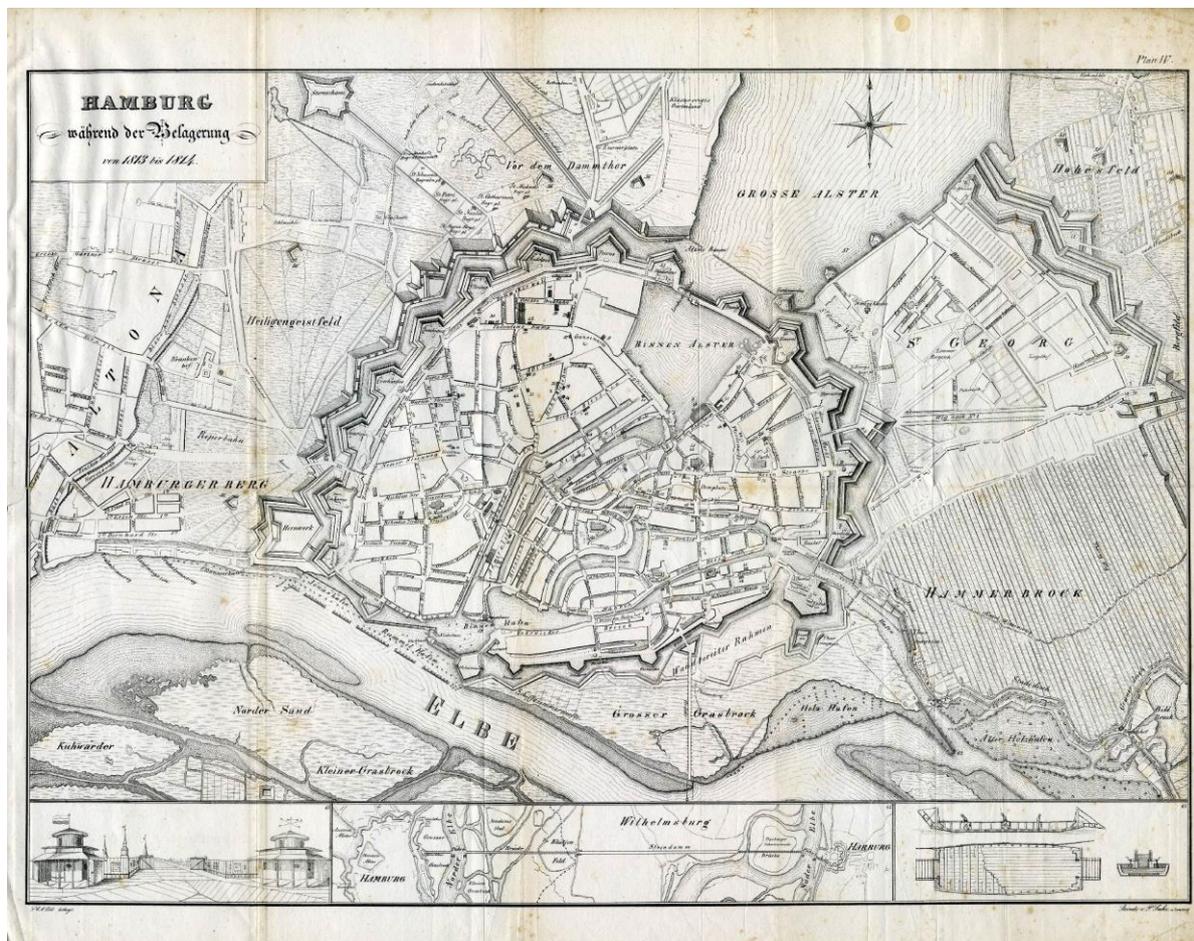

Figure 1. A map of Hamburg in 1813-1814 (Neddermeyer, 1832)

Those who have read Davout's memoir without knowing the city of Hamburg can immediately notice the following key points on the map:

- The river Elbe in the southern part of the city, where the famous port is located.
- The strong line of fortifications on the northern side, oriented towards Altona, and stretching from Hamburgerberg to Lake Alster.
- The "Sternschanze", in the far northwestern part of the map.
- The eastern half-moon fortification line that extends from the southern bank of Lake Alster to the northern bank of the Elbe.
- The suburb of S. Georg, after the first eastern fortification line of Hamburg, occupying the lower bank of Lake Alster, and on this side of the second fortification line, before Hohesfeld.

Already in the opening pages of his memoirs, we can notice that most of Davout's arguments have as aim his defense against three precise accusations of which he has been informed, and from which he desires to clear his name:

« Le ministre de la guerre m'a annoncé (1) que Votre Majesté avait reçu des plaintes graves sur le commandement que j'ai exercé à Hambourg, et m'a ordonné, de sa part, de me justifier sur les inculpations qui me sont faites. Les principales sont :

1°. D'avoir fait tirer le canon sur le drapeau blanc, après avoir eu la connaissance certaine du rétablissement du trône des Bourbons.

2°. D'avoir enlevé les fonds de la banque de Hambourg.

3.° Et d'avoir commis des actes arbitraires qui tendaient à rendre odieux le nom français. Cette dernière inculpation est tellement vague puisqu'elle ne précise aucun fait, qu'il me suffira pour la détruire, de présenter le récit fidèle de mes opérations depuis ma rentrée à Hambourg, jusqu'au moment où j'ai reçu l'ordre de remettre à M. le général de division comte Gérard, le commandement de l'armée. » (Davout, 1814)

(«The minister of war announced me (1) that Your Majesty had received some serious denunciations about my command at Hamburg, and ordered me, from his side, to explain myself about the accusations moved against me. The main of them are:

1° Of having ordered the cannons to open fire upon white flag, after having received the certain knowledge of the return to the throne of the Bourbons.

2° Of having seized the funds of the bank of Hamburg.

3° Of having committed arbitrary acts that tended to make odious the name of the French. This last accusation is so vague, as it specifies no fact whatsoever, that in order to make it fall flat it will be enough for me to present the faithful account of my operations after my return to Hamburg, up to the moment in which I received the order to hand over the command of the army to count Gérard»)

This extract clearly explains the points which Davout desires to clarify, while in the same time we understand the ending point of the analyzed temporal interval, that is, the handing over of his command to General Gérard, which is proved by the attachment N°60, dated "*May 11, 1814*" (Davout, 1814).

The original edition of the book consists of approximately 170 pages, depending on the copy; the original from the Cantonal University Library of Lausanne, printed in Paris in 1814 by Crapelet publishing house, for instance, contains 159 pages of text, excluding the frontispieces and the empty pages.

Of these 159 pages, only about one third represent the very text of Davout's memoirs, which is not objectively that much, while the remaining two thirds are dedicated to sixty attached copies of documents of various kinds as a proof in support of the reasons expressed by the author.

About the documents attached to the main text, we can see that they amount to 60 units, which can be generally subdivided by content and layout as follows:

1. Correspondence – 39 units:

    a) Official service letters to Davout from French ministers and officers: correspondence and duty reports.

    b) Official letters between Davout and Russian army officials.

    c) Official service letters from Davout to French officials.

    d) Official letters between French staff officers and foreign officials.

2. Transcriptions (or their extracts) of French official acts – 9 units:

    a) Transcriptions of official minutes of the State Secretariat.

    b) Transcriptions of imperial decrees.

3. Davout's manifestoes, appeals, and agendas from Hamburg – 9 units:

    a) Appeals to the population of Hamburg and its officials.

    b) Appeals to the French army.

4. Manifestoes and appeals of Russian army officials – 3 units:

    a) Appeals to the population of Hamburg.

For a more accurate analysis of the documents attached to Davout's memoirs, also for the sake and the convenience of future researchers on this topic, we can report the following list of contents:

1.   Attachment 1: Copy of a letter from General Dupont, Minister of war, to Marshal Davout, dated "*Paris, June 17, 1814*".

2.   Attachment 2: Extract of a letter from Prince Eugène to Marshal Davout, dated "*Hoyenb, April 16, 1813*".

3.   Attachment 3: Imperial decree of April 10, 1813, about the suspension of the constitutional regime in the departments of the 32nd division, dated "*Saint-Cloud, April 10, 1813*".

4.   Attachment 4: Extract of an encrypted letter from Marshal Berthier to Marshal Davout, dated "*Waldeim, May 7, 1813*".

5.   Attachment 5: Extract of the minutes from the State Secretariat, dated "*At the Imperial headquarters in Dresden, June 18, 1813*".

6.   Attachment 6: Extract of a letter from Napoleon to Marshal Davout, dated "*Dresden, July 1, 1813*".

7.   Attachment 7: Copy of the amnesty proclamed in Hamburg by Marshal Davout, dated "*Hamburg, July 24, 1813*".

8.   Attachment 8: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to Napoleon, dated "*Hamburg, July 19, 1813*".

9.   Attachment 9: Copy of a letter from Napoleon to Marshal Davout, dated "*Bunzlau, July 7, 1813*".

10.   Attachment 10: Copy of a letter from Napoleon to Marshal Davout, dated "*Dresden, June 10, 1813*".

11.   Attachment 11: Copy of a letter from Napoleon to Marshal Davout, dated "*Dresden, June 10, 1813*".

12.   Attachment 12: Copy of a letter from Napoleon to Marshal Davout, dated "*Dresden, June 17, 1813*".

13.   Attachment 13: Copy of a letter from Naponeon to Marshal Davout, dated "*Dresden, June 17, 1813*".

14.   Attachment 14: Imperial decree of June 17, 1813, about the expenses of the 32nd division and its wages, dated "*At the headquarters in Dresden, June 17, 1813*".

15.   Attachment 15: Imperial decree of June 17, 1813, about the financial measures accorded to General Count Bourcier, dated "*At the headquarters in Dresden, June 17, 1813*".

16.   Attachment 16: Copy of a letter from Napoleon to Marshal Davout, dated "*Magdeburg, July 12, 1813*".

17.   Attachment 17: Extract of the minutes from the State Secretariat, dated "*At the Imperial headquarters in Dresden, June 17, 1813*".

18.   Attachment 18: Exctract of the Imperial decree of December 24, 1811, about the organization and the duties of the general staff.

19.   Attachment 19: Extract of the minutes from the State Secretariat, dated "*At the Imperial headquarters in Dresden, June 18, 1813*".

20.   Attachment 20: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to General Count Hogendorp, Governor of Hamburg, dated "*Ratzeburg, October 16, 1813*".

21.   Attachment 21: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to General Count Hogendorp, Governor of Hamburg, dated "*Hamburg, November 9, 1813*".

22.   Attachment 22: Appeal and Manifesto of Russian General Count Bennigsen, dated "*At the headquarters in Bergedorf, December 13/25, 1813*"(referred to the attachments N° 23 and 24).

23.   Attachment 23: Appeal of Russian General Bennigsen entitled "*ORANGE BOWEN (Dutchmen!)*".

24.   Attachment 24: Appeal of Russian General Bennigsen entitled "*UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE OF HAMBURG!*".

25.   Attachment 25: Copy of a letter from Count Chaban to Marshal Davout, dated "*Hamburg, September 10, 1813*".

26.   Attachment 26: Copy of a letter from Count Chaban to Marshal Davout, dated "*Hamburg, September 15, 1813*".

27.   Attachment 27: Copy of a letter from Count Chaban to Marshal Davout, dated "*Hamburg, October 16, 1813*".

28.   Attachment 28: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to Count Chaban, dated "*Ratzeburg, October 18, 1813*".

29.   Attachment 29: Extract of the minutes from the State Secretariat, dated "*At the Imperial headquarters in Dresden, June 16, 1813*".

30.   Attachment 30: Copy of a letter from Napoleon to Marshal Davout, dated "*Dresden, July 16, 1813*".

31.   Attachment 31: Report from Count Chaban to Marshal Davout, dated "*Ratzeburg, November 2, 1813*".

32.   Attachment 32: Financial dispositions issued by Marshal Davout in response to the report of Count Chaban of November 2, 1813.

33.   Attachment 33: Dispositions issued by Davout about the seizing of the Bank of Hamburg, dated "*At the headquarters in Ratzeburg, November 2, 1813*".

34.   Attachment 34: Extract of a letter from Count Chaban to Marshal Davout, dated "*Hamburg, November 5, 1813*".

35.   Attachment 35: Copy of a letter from Count Chaban to Marshal Davout, dated "*Hamburg, November 6, 1813*".

36.   Attachment 36: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to Napoleon, dated "*Ratzeburg, November 6, 1813*".

37.   Attachment 37: Decree issued by Davout about the replacement of Count Chaban after his death, dated "*At the headquarter in Hamburg, March 25, 1814*".

38.   Attachment 38: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to General Count Hogendorp, Governor of Hamburg, dated "*Ratzeburg, November 7, 1813*".

39.   Attachment 39: Copy of a letter from Danish Lieutenant Colonel Aubert to Marshal Davout, dated "*Altona, April 14, 1814*".

40.   Attachment 40: Copy of a letter from Russian General Bennigsen to Marshal Davout, dated "*Pinneberg, April 1 (13), 1814*".

41.   Attachment 41: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to Russian General Bennigsen, dated "*Hamburg, April 14, 1814*".

42.   Attachment 42: Copy of a letter from Danish Lieutenant Colonel Aubert to Marshal Davout, dated "*Altona, April 16, 1814*".

43.   Attachment 43: Copy of a letter from Count Blücher-Altona, president of Altona, to Colonel Higonet, dated "*Hamburg, April 20, 1814*".

44.   Attachment 44: Copy of a letter from Chief of Staff General de la Ville, to Colonel Higonet, dated "*Hamburg, April 20, 1814*".

45.   Attachment 45: Copy of a letter from Russian Aide-de-camp Prince Volkonskij to Russian General Bennigsen, dated "*Paris, April 1 (13) 1814*".

46.   Attachment 46: Extract of the Imperial decree of December 24, 1811, about the organization and the duties of the general staff.

47.   Attachment 47: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to Russian General Bennigsen, dated "*Hamburg, April 22, 1814*".

48.   Attachment 48: Copy of a letter from Danish Lieutenant Colonel Auber to Chief of Staff General de la Ville, dated "*Altona, April 24, 1814*".

49.   Attachment 49: Copy of a letter from General de la Ville to Russian General Oppermann, General Bennigsen's Chief of Staff, dated "*Hamburg, April 26, 1814*".

50.   Attachment 50: Order of the day, dated "*At the headquarter in Hamburg, April 26, 1814*".

51.   Attachment 51: Copy of a letter from Russian General Oppermann to General de la Ville, dated "*Pinneberg, April 14 (26), 1814*".

52.   Attachment 52: Copy of a letter from General de la Ville to Russian General Oppermann, dated "*Hamburg, April, 28, 1814*".

53.   Attachment 53: Copy of a letter from Danish Colonel Aubert to General de la Ville, dated "*Altona, April 28, 1814*".

54.   Attachment 54: Copy of a letter from General de la Ville to Danish Lieutenant Colonel Aubert, dated "*Hamburg, April 28, 1814*" (*N.B.:* The previous attachment states "*Colonel*", instead of "*Lieutenant Colonel*").

55.   Attachment 55: Order of the day, dated "*At the headquarters in Hamburg, April 29, 1814*".

56.   Attachment 56: Appeal of the Generals of the XIII Corps and the garrison of Hamburg to King Louis XVIII, dated "*Hamburg, April 30, 1814*".

57.   Attachment 57: Copy of a letter from Marshal Davout to His Royal Majesty the Count of Artois, Lieutenant General of the Realm, dated "*Hamburg, May 1, 1814*".

58.   Attachment 58: Order of the day, dated "*At the headquarters in Hamburg, May 5, 1814*".

59.   Attachment 59: Copy of a letter from General Dupont, Minister of war, to Marshal Davout, dated "*Paris, May 2, 1814*".

60.   Attachment 60: Order of the day, dated "*Hamburg, May 11, 1814*".

About the form of Davout's memoirs, as they are a formal appeal to King Louis XVIII, we can immediately notice that of course the syntax is relatively very complex, most of times characterized by very long sentences whit several subordinate clauses.

The layout, in both the text addressed to the king and in almost all the attached documents, appears very formal and fascinating, maybe even with a strong taste of elegance and charm for the modern reader, which are given by the peculiar formulas of the time.

In this regard, there is a curious detail, which draws the attention of the attentive reader for its importance; in the text, there is a frequent grammatical incongruence in Davout's use of the apposition "*emperor*". Indeed, when he writes about Napoleon in the text addressed to the king (twenty-one times), he always uses the term "*emperor*" with a small "*E*", as if to express an already conscious distance from Napoleon, whilst in the correspondence provided by the attached documents we can often see a recurrent use of the same word, but with a capital "*E*" (fourteen times).

Punctuation deserves particular attention: the most extensively used punctuation mark in long sentences appears to be the semicolon, also on account of the very frequent listings and the formal terms of the text.

Vocabulary is generally complex; there is plenty of technical nouns and adjectives, whose nature ranges from the military sphere, passing through the juridical, economic, and political ones as well.

Moreover, at the end of the copy of 1814 quoted before, the reader can notice a page of *errata*, containing five *corrigenda*; this is an absolutely normal phenomenon, but still it deserves to be mentioned for the completeness of the description.

Conclusion

Marshal Davout's memoirs have thus recently become more accessible for a new part of readers, thanks to a first, at present, translation into a foreign language. Their content, consisting of important dates, documents, and thoughts expressed by his own hand, represents an inestimable material for historians, researchers, philologists and even simple enthusiasts of this precise historical period.

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Turkish Classroom and Branch Teachers' Opinions about Smart Board Use in Their Lessons

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Abstract: Technology integration in education has caused some transformations on students, teachers, classroom environments and equipments. In this context, classrooms in Turkey have been equipped with technological tools especially smart boards through the FATIH project. Using a qualitative research approach, this case study aimed to determine classroom and branch teachers' opinions about the use of smart boards in their lessons. The research was carried out with 16 classroom and 20 branch teachers working in three different schools in the city center of Isparta in 2023. The data were collected with a semi-structured interview form and analyzed using descriptive analysis method. In general, teachers think that smart boards are compatible with the textbook and widely used in teaching all skills and the use of smart boards contributes to the lessons and increases the performance of teachers and students. The findings were gathered under three themes: the profile of smart board usage, the difficulties experienced in using smart boards, and the effect of smart board on learning and teaching process.

Keywords: Smart board, Teachers' opinion, Turkey, Case study

Introduction

The production and use of technology has changed people's life skills. Now people are expected to have a set of competencies called 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, effective communication and cooperation, creativity, innovation, media literacy, productivity and accountability, and taking initiative. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) is a globally accepted framework where different institutions in the USA come together to define the competencies and skills that every child should have in this century to be successful in work, life and citizenship (P21, 2015). Undoubtedly, schools play an important role in preparing children for life by gaining these skills. Teachers who will raise children are expected to be able to keep up with

the times, have a good command of technology and be able to use it effectively. According to the standards determined by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), teachers should: encourage students to think creatively and innovatively; develop technology-enriched learning environments, ensure that students become individuals who are responsible for their own learning and can manage their own learning processes; work with students, parents and colleagues in collaboration with digital tools; provide information on digital citizenship and responsibility on regional and global issues and contribute to their professional development with digital tools (ISTE, 2016).

Considering the skills and teacher standards mentioned above, it is seen that schools should integrate up-to-date technologies, teachers should use these technologies effectively and guide students in this direction (Ozturk, 2023; Ozturk & Ozturk, 2022; Ozturk, Kinik, & Ozturk, 2023). In this context, the Movement for Increasing Opportunities and Improving Technology (FATIH) project has been implemented since 2010 under the execution of the Ministry of National Education (MEB) in Turkey. Within the scope of this project, it is aimed to strengthen the information technology (IT) hardware and software infrastructure of schools, meet the need for e-content, update teacher's guidebooks, organize in-service trainings for teachers, and fulfill the needs of conscious, secure, manageable IT and Internet use (MEB, 2011) . In this context, more than half a million smart boards were installed in the classrooms across the country since 2011 and they are still being installed (MEB, 2011). Although smart boards are thought of as a trio of computers, screens and projectors, they have many functions when used efficiently. If smart boards are used efficiently, it is expected that students' interaction with the lesson will increase (Adiguzel et al., 2011).

The smart board is a technological product that can be controlled by touch, without the need for an external electronic device, with a giant screen that allows to do everything that can be done on any computer. Until smart boards came out, computers and projectors were widely used in education. The use of computer alone has made it difficult for teachers, especially in large and crowded classrooms, the projection has solved most of this problem, but it has not been a complete solution to the problem. Towards the end of the 20th century, the integration of smart boards reduced the workload of teachers as well as increased the participation and desire of the students towards learning (Karaca, 2018). It is possible to think of smart boards in two ways. The first projects an image on its own private screen with a projection device and computer while the second supports touch LED panel system without the need for a projector (Emko Egitim Cozumleri, 2020). Most of the smart boards used today are devices with resistive surfaces which do not support more than one contact. These screens are not used as normal blackboards. With the developing technology, the screen becomes thinner and more protective layers can be added on it. These systems allow more than one touch at the same time. This technology is also used on the screens of smartphones, tablets and other touch devices. These systems are also used in the education sector, but they are expensive systems (Bilisim Akademi, 2017).

There are many studies in the literature examining teachers' use of smart boards. Altincelik (2009) stated that teachers who use smart boards made the lesson more efficiently, students' participation in the lesson increased, but some technical problems affected the use of the board negatively and caused time loss. Cicek (2014)

concluded that teachers used smart board effectively, made learning permanent if there were no technical problems, and increased motivation. Hicyilmaz (2015) revealed that teachers could not use the board effectively due to the insufficient in-service training. Similarly, Saruhan (2015) found that the use of boards could be more effective by taking necessary in-service training and eliminating software and hardware deficiencies. Kizilkaya (2018) determined that social studies teachers' skills for smart board use were at a normal level and did not differ according to age, gender, length of service and education level variables. Demirel (2019) reported that teachers' high levels of numerical competence had a positive effect on their use of smart boards. Citil (2019) found that teachers with low computer self-efficacy were more reluctant to use smart boards. Kaya (2019) stated that teachers' technopedagogical education competencies increased their self-efficacy in using smart boards. Kurt (2021) showed that teachers' educational background, marital status, gender, school type they worked in, and having previously received training on smart boards did not cause a significant difference in their intention to accept and use smart boards. Tatli (2014) stated that teachers mostly used smart boards for connecting to the Internet, writing and presenting visual materials. Yalci (2019) concluded that teachers were willing to use smart boards, but schools lacked hardware infrastructure and also needed some training on technology. Var (2019) explored that the demographic characteristics of teachers such as age, seniority, gender, and the smart board education they received, their educational status, and the number of weekly lesson hours they entered did not affect their use of smart boards.

Eynel and Koc (2023) examined master's and doctoral thesis completed in Turkey on this subject and found that prior research thematically focused on teachers' opinions and experiences on smart board use, teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy towards smart board use, and their level of smart board use. In addition, they concluded that research covering all teachers as classroom and branch teachers is limited. Therefore, in this study, it is aimed to determine the opinions of classroom and branch teachers about the use of smart boards in their lessons. It is thought that the findings to be obtained from the study will contribute to the effective and efficient use of the smart board and the professional development activities to be carried out in this direction.

Method

Case study approach within the qualitative research paradigm was employed to take teachers' opinions about the use of smart boards in their lessons. This method is often used to examine a single situation or event with certain boundaries of real environment through the systematic data is collected. With the results obtained, it helps to reveal why the event occurred that way and what should be focused on in future studies (Davey, 1991). The study was carried out with 16 classroom and 20 branch teachers working in public schools in the city center of Isparta, Turkey in 2023. Purposive sampling was used for the selection of participants. According to this method, "observation units in a research may consist of people, events, objects or situations with certain qualities. In such cases, units that meet the criteria determined for the sample are taken into the sample" (Buyukozturk et al., 2018, pp. 94-95). In this context, the criteria of "being a classroom or branch teacher and having a smart board in his/her classroom" were taken into account while determining the study group. Of the

participants, 64% were male 36% were female. The majority (89%) had undergraduate degree whereas others had graduate degree (8% M.Ed. and 3% Ph.D.). Around half of them (42%) were classroom teachers and the remaining comprised branch teachers who taught English (11%), Math (8%), Social Studies (8%), Turkish (6%), Sport (6%), Guidance (6%), Religion (3%) and Technology Design (3%). The majority (81) had teaching experience of 16 years and above.

A semi-structured interview form was prepared to get the opinions of the teachers on the use of smart boards the effect of this usage on their lessons. Deeper information is obtained by obtaining data about the meanings, feelings and thoughts of the people through interviews (Kus, 2012). While creating the interview form, opinions were taken from two academicians who are experts in the field of IT education, and necessary corrections were made in the form. The interview questions were designed to collect data about training received on the use of smart boards, mostly used applications on the boards, part of the lesson that smart boards are often used, knowledge and skills about calibration of touch screen, difficulties encountered in board use, compatibility of textbooks with smart boards, and the effect of smart boards on student and teachers performance.

Interview data were subjected to descriptive analysis since the data is not large and detailed enough for content analysis. In descriptive analysis, direct quotations are used in order to reflect the views of the participants. The purpose of this analysis is to present the findings to the reader in an organized and interpreted form. For this purpose, a thematic framework was determined from the interview questions, then the interview texts were carefully read according to this framework, the meaningful sections were coded with appropriate concepts, and finally, the findings were summarized in tables and supported with direct quotations. Apart from the researchers, data were also coded by two teachers working in the field of mathematics and technology design education in order to ensure coding reliability. The consensus percentage, calculated by the formula proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), was found 87%, indicating that the coding was reliable.

Results

As a result of the descriptive analysis, the opinions of the teachers on the use of smart boards in their lessons were gathered under three main themes: the profile of smart board usage, the difficulties experienced in using smart boards, and the effect of smart board on learning and teaching process.

Smart Board Usage Profile

Participating teachers were asked whether they had received any training on the use of smart boards. It was observed that 72% of the teachers received training on the use of smart boards while 28% did not receive any training. Those receiving training stated that training had a positive effect on their use of the board and that they started using the board earlier than those who did not receive any training. Teachers were asked about the application(s) they used most on the smart board and the answers were coded as presented in Table 1. The most

used applications were the Internet (72%), lecture videos and Web 2.0 tools (67%), FATIH pen and visual presentations (64%). They seem to use the boards mostly for visual purposes and to meet their Internet needs.

Table 1. Applications Used on Smart Boards

Code	f	%
Internet	26	72
Lecture videos	24	67
Web 2.0 tools	24	67
FATIH pen	23	64
Visual presentations	23	64

Teachers were asked at which stages of their lessons they use the smart board more frequently, and the answers were coded as in Table 2. They mostly use the smart board while presenting visual and interactive content (83%), followed by solving questions (81%) and explaining the subject (72%). Looking at these findings, it can be said that teachers actively use smart boards during every stage of the lesson. Some of the participant views on the active use of the board by the teachers are as follows:

"I open the board as soon as the first lesson comes, I leave it open even during the breaks, students play games about the subject on Wordwall."

"I open the board in the first lesson, but close it at the end of the last lesson."

Table 2. Part of the Lesson that Smart Boards Are Often Used

Code	f	%
Presenting visual and interactive content	30	83
Problem/question solving	29	81
Topic narration	26	72

Most participants (67%) stated that they used the FATIH pen application. While FATIH pen application can be installed on the 1st and 2nd phase boards, it comes pre-loaded on the 3rd phase boards. This application provides some conveniences such as marking the question, underlining important places, opening a lined notebook view especially for classroom teachers, opening a checkered notebook view for mathematics teachers, especially while solving questions while explaining the subject on the board. Findings show that the application is mostly known and actively used by teachers.

Difficulties in Using Smart Boards

The participants were asked about the difficulties they encountered in using smart boards and the answers were coded as in Table 3. Half of them had difficulties in downloading and installation, followed by opening some programs (44%), and updating (31%). When they were asked what they did for these difficulties, they stated that

they wanted help from the IT guidance teacher at the school. The opinions of some teachers who received help from the IT guidance teacher are as follows:

"I could not open a pdf file. I asked our IT teacher at our school for help."

"I could not open the file I downloaded from the Internet. An IT guidance counselor friend came and helped me open it."

"I needed to upload z-books, but when I couldn't do it, I asked our IT guidance teacher for help."

Table 3. Difficulties Encountered in the Use of Smart Boards

Code	f	%
Downloading and installation	18	50
Opening some programs	16	44
Updating	11	31
I have enough information	11	31

One of the most encountered difficulties in the use of smart boards is that the touch screen of the board does not work efficiently. This problem is more common especially in the 1st and 2nd phase boards distributed to schools because the touch feature is provided by the cameras in the corners of the board. If these cameras are dusty, the touch does not work. In addition, touch screen calibration of the board is performed with the application installed on the board. The teachers were asked whether they knew about the calibration and 42% of them stated that they knew and 58% of them did not know.

In addition, the participants were asked whether there was any file on the smart board that they could not open, and 72% of them stated that they had problems with this issue. Some answers from the participants are presented below:

"Yes, sometimes pdf and similar cannot be opened, it is necessary to update frequently."

"Yeah, it does. I'm trying to reinstall the program and do it again."

"Yes, I got help from my colleague on duty."

The teachers were asked what they wanted to know on the smart boards and the answers were coded as presented in Table 4. The majority (83%) stated that they wanted to use all the features of boards, 33% wanted to be able to prepare course materials, 28% wanted to be able to change the settings. The fact that the highest rate is related to using all features shows that the teachers actually cannot use all the features of smart boards.

Table 4. Desires To Do on the Smart Board

Code	f	%
Ability to use all features	30	83
Preparation of course material	12	33
Ability to change settings	10	28

The Effect of Smart Board on Learning and Teaching Process

Teachers were asked whether the textbooks were compatible with smart boards and almost all (92%) found them compatible because of the opportunity to use the PDF by uploading it to smart boards. According to the teachers who did not find them compatible, uploading a PDF does not go beyond just reflecting the book in front of the student. Some of the teacher views on the compatibility of smart boards and textbooks are as follows:

"Very compatible for smart board as the books also have pdf."

"Thanks to the education information network (EBA) of the Ministry of National Education, it has been possible to download and use the textbooks approved by the Board of Education, as in pdf or other formats, on smart boards. Their compatibility makes the lesson more effective and efficient."

"It is more attractive to answer the activities by opening the pdfs of the textbooks on the smart board and processing from there."

Some of the opinions of teachers who think that smart boards and textbooks are not compatible are as follows:

"Applicable textbook activities are not prepared on the smart board. This is a big shortcoming. Opening the textbook on the smart board does not go beyond reflecting the student's hand on the board. The student follows the activities only visually."

"I don't think textbooks are fully compatible with smart boards at present."

"Incompatible. There are still monotonous questions that keep the same type of student from reading. There is a gap between technology and print."

Teacher views on the effect of smart boards on teacher performance are presented in Table 5. Almost all (92%) stated that smart boards had a positive effect on teacher performance. The positive effects consisted of saving the most time/effort (39%), effective and productive lectures (25%), providing more activities (17%), active involvement (6%). On the other hand, a few participants (3%) think the need for preparation and the time it needs have a negative effect. The findings show that the use of smart boards has a performance-enhancing feature in the majority of teachers. Based on these views, it can be concluded that the use of smart boards in lessons will have a positive effect on the learning-teaching process in terms of increasing the performance of teachers and enabling them to have a more productive lesson process. Some of the teachers' opinions that the use of smart boards in lessons has a positive effect are as follows:

"It allows me to be more active and active in the lessons. Having samples ready helps save time."

"It helps me to embody the examples I give while giving lectures."

"As I can concretize the topics I am talking about instantly, the information does not stay in the air...I see that the students reach the information more quickly and clearly."

"It has had a positive impact on my performance. Sometimes it makes me tired, but this fatigue is not important. Because in order to use the smart board, I need to prepare materials or search and find them. This shows that I need to spend time. However, I am happy when these activities that I prepare during the course make it easier for students to learn. So it affects my performance positively."

Table 5. Positive Effects of Smart Boards on Teacher Performance

Code	f	%
Saving time/effort	14	39
Effective and productive lectures	9	25
Providing more activities	6	17
Active involvement	2	6

Teacher views on the effect of smart boards on student performance are presented in Table 6. Almost all (90%) think that smart boards affect student performance positively. In addition to increasing student performance (11%), smart boards allow permanent learning (3%), increases the interest in the lesson (28%), facilitates learning (42%), provides an enjoyable lesson process (7%), and enables students to be active in the lessons (11%). A few teachers believe that these tools have negative effects on students as they cause students to break away from the lesson. Some of the teachers' views on the positive effects are as follows:

> "It is positive because students can have more fun in the lesson."
> "For the student, it has both an arousing effect on perception and a facilitating effect on learning."
> "It enables them to be active in the lesson and increases performance."
> "It has a positive effect. As it appeals to more sense organs of the students, more permanent learning takes place."

Table 6. Positive Effects of Smart Boards on Student Performance

Code	f	%
Making learning easier	15	42
Increasing interest in the lesson	10	28
Increasing performance	4	11
Active involvement	4	11
Providing fun	2	6
Making learning permanent	1	3

According to Table 7, almost all of teachers (94%) think that smart boards have positive effects on classroom management. They believe that these tools make management easier as they make students active (31%), reduce disciplinary problems (25%), make the lesson interesting (25%), and increase student motivation (11%). On the other hand one participant believes that smart boards make management difficult as their usage cause chaos and noises. The opinions of some teachers who think that the use of smart boards affects classroom management positively are as follows:

> "Classroom management becomes easier as it ensures that the student is interested and active in the lesson."
> "It is natural for unexpected events to occur in the classroom. In the classroom, anything can happen at any time, unexpected surprises can happen. In order to minimize this, the teacher should come to the

lesson prepared. He should also use the smart board appropriately at the appropriate time, according to the preparation he has made in advance. Therefore, it always keeps the attention of the students alive."

"It has a positive effect because it attracts attention. It increases motivation."

"I think it affects the effective use of the lesson time, increasing the motivation of the students towards the lesson and reducing the discipline problems."

Table 7. Effects of Smart Boards on Classroom Management

Code	f	%
Make students active	11	31
Reduce disciplinary problems	9	25
Make the lesson interesting	9	25
Increase student motivation	4	11
Cause chaos and noise	1	3

Discussion and Conclusion

In the first theme, it was determined that most of the teachers received training on the use of smart boards and this training positively contributed to the use of smart boards in their lessons. Teachers who did not receive such training stated that they were afraid to use the board, that the board might break, that they would not be able to use the board and that they would be funny. Similar findings exist in the related studies as well (Hicyilmaz, 2015; Saruhan, 2015; Solak, 2012). Participants stated that they mostly use applications that have visual effects and meet their internet needs. More professional programs can be used on high-tech and high-resolution boards, but teachers must first be trained to use these applications. Yalci (2019) also saw that teachers are willing to use the smart board, but they need some training on technology.

The second theme includes the difficulties encountered while using the smart board. It was observed that more than half of the participants did not know the smart board calibration. This shows that the teachers do not know the detailed settings no matter how much they use the smart board. Teachers also have some technical problems such as opening files/programs and updating or uploading. Participants stated that they received help from the IT counselor in their school in solving these problems. This situation supports that IT teachers in schools play an important role in technology integration. In fact, such problems are routine problems that may happen to teachers who use technology. The teacher's inability to overcome this problem on his own may be due to the fact that he does not use information technologies effectively.

The third these covers the opinions of teachers about the effect of the smart board on the learning and teaching process. While the participants found the textbooks to be compatible with smart boards in general, some emphasized that the textbooks should have interactive content. This finding can be interpreted as they have a

positive attitude towards technology and/or follow innovations closely. In order for teaching activities to be more effective, course books should be harmonized with smart boards and students should be able to do activities from there. The fact that textbooks have interactive content that is fully compatible with smart boards might increase their contribution to the learning and teaching process. Participants believe that smart boards increase teacher performance because they make lessons more active and fun, save time and effort, are practical and fast, help concretize, and facilitate learning. Kutluca and Tum (2018) also reach conclusions in their study that smart boards increase motivation. In his master's thesis, Tosuntas (2017) states that the use of smart boards reflects positively on the performance of teachers. Polat and Ozcan (2014) state that smart boards affect motivation positively. Participants also believe that smart boards have a positive effect on student performance due to the reasons such as saving time, enabling fun learning, increasing interest in the lesson, making student active in the lesson, facilitating learning, and appealing to different sensory organs. These findings are consisted with earlier studies (Kutluca & Kum, 2018; Polat & Ozcan, 2014; Sancak, 2017). On the other hand, in this study, few teachers stated that the smart board distracts students from the lesson more quickly. While there are dominant findings to the contrary both in this study and in the literature, the reason for such a negative effect may be due to student characteristics or teachers' pedagogical attitudes.

Recommendations

Within the framework of these results, the following suggestions can be presented in terms of practice and research on the use of smart boards by classroom teachers and branch teachers:

- Teachers' knowledge and skills about the applications that can be used on smart boards can be increased by offering in-service training.
- Technical problems that will negatively affect the use of smart boards should be eliminated.
- Every school should have at least one IT guidance teacher and legislation germane to their responsibility should be developed.
- In this study, only 36 teachers were interviewed. In future research, the findings can be enriched by interviewing more teachers.

Notes

This study was produced within the scope of graduate study conducted by the first author under supervision of second author in the Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Suleyman Demirel University, Isparta, Turkey.

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Assessment of Students' Readiness for Online Learning in Higher Education

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Abstract: The pandemic of COVID-19 has accelerated the growth of online education at all educational levels. Due to the risk of being unable to restart in-person instruction, countries have pushed to increase the use of distance learning and make it mandatory. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the readiness levels of higher education students towards online learning. In addition, the aim of this study is to reveal the conceptual framework of online distance education, to emphasize the importance of the concept of readiness in online learning today and to determine the factors affecting success in terms of readiness in online learning and to evaluate the effect sizes of these factors. In this research, readiness level needed for developing education-instruction activities and removing failures in online learning processes in the context of students, who perform learning activities at educational institutions providing distance education approach in Turkey, has been examined by using quantitative research method. In this sense, the related research data has been obtained in from three universities in Turkey employing the "Student Readiness in Online Learning" questionnaire. 74 students were participated to the research. With the obtained data, important subjects within the literature has been discussed in the context of readiness level for students, who perform learning activities at educational institutions providing distance education approach in Turkey.

Keywords: Online education, Readiness, Higher education, E-learning

Introduction

Online learning first emerged as using the Learning Management System (LMS), and its use in education has become mandatory due to the Covid-19 outbreak in recent years (Lockee, 2021; Singh & Thurman, 2019). The prevalence of online learning in the Covid-19 pandemic is that online learning does not occur face-to-face and gives individuals the opportunity to be independent from space and time (Muthuprasad et al., 2021).

For online learning, users must have certain technical knowledge and skills (Smith, 2005). In order to increase the performance of online learning, students' and educators' computer skills, attitudes towards information technologies and online learning, and learner preferences are important (Pillay et al., 2007). In addition, it is known that the situation of learners and educators having the technological equipment necessary for online learning also affects equality of opportunity in education (Widodo et al., 2020).

Many countries around the world had to use the online learning approach in order to continue education and training activities during the pandemic process (Andarwulan et al., 2021; Muthuprasad et al., 2021; Tang et al., 2021; Widodo et al., 2020). However, in this process, the need for educators to have new and technological competencies has emerged apart from the competencies required for formal education.

In order for educators to make online learning more effective, it is necessary to develop materials that motivate learners and prepare assignments suitable for online learning (Bovermann et al., 2018). Mohalik and Sahoo measured pre-service teachers' perceptions of online learning in their study in 2020. The findings obtained in this study showed that 35% of the pre-service teachers had the necessary technological knowledge levels for online learning (Mohalik & Sahoo, 2020). In online teaching, educators experienced difficulties with skill shortages, lesson plan preparation, technical support, and platform overload (Rosak-Szyrocka et al., 2022).

The competence of teachers and students to adapt and participate in the online education system and learning process is expressed as readiness in distance education (Koloğlu et al., 2016). Readiness in online learning is divided into three subcategories: cognitive, social and educational. Learning strategies, motivation, self-regulation and time management are under the category of cognitive, communication, cooperation, social support and community building, social preparation, technology use in learning, accessibility, infrastructure and resources (Martin et al., 2020; Nortvig et al., 2018).

Mattice and Dixon (1999) investigated the students' interest in online learning and, in a broader context, their readiness for distance education. student readiness, access to technology and readiness for use, and readiness for distance education. McVay (2000, 2001) used a 13-item questionnaire to evaluate readiness in online learning in two separate studies, examining students' status in terms of basic technological skills within the scope of online learning and analyzing students' tendencies to work independently. Smith et al. (2003, 2005), similar to McVay, tested the validity of McVay's measurement tool in two separate studies, and revealed that this tool was valid in terms of managing the self-learning process and evaluating readiness within the scope of adaptation to e-learning. In another study based on McVay's work, Bernard et al. (2004) increased the 13 items in the original measurement approach to 38 items, thus aiming to predict students' online learning success. Watkins et al. (2004) took into account access to technology, technical skills, motivation, online audio and video, internet discussions, and factors affecting success in this context in their studies on readiness in online learning.

In this study, it is aimed to evaluate the readiness in distance education and to determine the factors that can positively or negatively affect the online learning process of the students. In this context, the readiness of

students studying in online education in Turkey was investigated by using the "Student Readiness in Online Learning" questionnaire developed by Dray et al. in 2011.

Methodology

In the study, the student readiness questionnaire in online learning was applied to the students in order to evaluate the readiness in distance education and to determine the factors that may affect the students' online learning process positively or negatively. In this context, frequency analysis technique was used in the evaluation method in this study.

Measuring Tool

The "Student Readiness in Online Learning" questionnaire developed by the researchers was used to collect the data. The data collection tool consists of 37 questions and seven sections. The sections are listed as follows;

 – Demographic characteristics of students

 – Foreign language proficiency of students required for online learning

 – Technological competencies for online learning

 – The reasons why students prefer online education

 – Frequency of use of technological devices

 – Frequency of using web-based applications

 – How important some statements about devices preferred in web-based applications are for students.

Sample Group

The sample group of the research consists of students studying online at the university. 74 participants participated in the research. Information about the gender, age, class and education level of these people is listed below. As can be seen in Table 1, 39% of the sample of the study is female and 61% is male.

Table 1. Distribution of the Sample by Gender

Gender	N	%
Male	29	39.0
Female	45	61.0
Total	74	100

As seen in Table 2, 17.6% of the participants were between the ages of 21 and below, 31.1% were between the ages of 21-25, 28.4% were between the ages of 26-30, and 17.6% were It is in the age range of 31-35 years, 5.4% of them are in the age range of 36-40 years.

Table 2. Distribution of the Sample by Age Range

Age Range	N	%
21 and under	13	17.6
21-25	23	31.1
26-30	21	28.4
31-35	13	17.6
36-40	4	5.4
Total	74	100

The education level of the participants is presented in Table 3. Accordingly, 50% of the students are in the 1st grade, 44.6% are in the 2nd grade, 4.05% are in the 3rd grade, and 1.35% are in the 4th grade.

Table 3. Distribution of the Sample by Grade Level

Class Level	N	%
1nd grade	37	50.0
2nd grade	33	44.6
3nd grade	3	4.05
4nd grade	1	1.35
Total	74	100

Findings

There are certain reasons that cause students who want to study with online learning to choose higher education institutions that provide education with this method. According to the findings obtained by cross-tabulating and analyzing the frequency and percentage distributions of the answers to the survey questions related to these reasons, the majority of female students (15) prefer to study in institutions that provide education and training with online learning due to "family obligations". While the majority of male students (24) want to study with online learning due to "scheduling mismatch".

As can be seen in Table 4, 47.29% of the participants consider online learning more advantageous than formal education because distance education provides the opportunity to meet family obligations and 45.94% provides individuals with independence from time.

Table 4. Analysis Results of the Data Regarding the Reasons for Interest of All Students in Online Education

Reasons to Prefer Online Education	N	%
Transportation Problems	13	17.56
Family Responsibilities	35	47.29

Reasons to Prefer Online Education	N	%
Timing Mismatch	34	45.94
Health problems	2	2.70
Sports Activities	2	2.70
Adapting to the Time	20	27.02
Other	18	24.32
Total	74	100

Table 4 presents the frequency table of the data on the reasons why students are interested in online education. When the data in the table is examined, it is seen that 47.29 of the students are interested in online education due to family obligations and 45.95% due to timing mismatch.

Table 5. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I believe that I am competent to use office software at a level that will meet the needs of my department" of the students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	5	6.76
Disagree	5	6.76
Agree	36	48.65
Absolutely Agree	28	37.84
Total	74	100

As seen in Table 5, it is seen that 86.49% of the students can use office software at a level that will meet their needs.

Table 6. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I am someone who does not give up easily when faced with obstacles related to technology" of students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	3	4.05
Disagree	5	6.76
Agree	27	36.49
Absolutely Agree	39	52.70
Total	74	100

When the data in Table 6 is examined, it is seen that the majority of students according to online education do not give up easily when faced with technology-related obstacles. When the data in Table 7 are examined, 91.89% of my students who study online have an awareness of educational responsibility and have adopted learning as a duty.

Table 7. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I am responsible for my own education, what I learn is ultimately my duty" of the students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	3	4.05
Disagree	3	4.05
Agree	29	39.19
Absolutely Agree	39	52.70
Total	74	100

As seen in Table 8, it was found that the students who received online education were more comfortable working in alternative learning environments.

Table 8. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I can work comfortably in alternative learning environments" by the students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	0	0.0
Disagree	6	8.11
Agree	40	54.05
Absolutely Agree	28	37.84
Total	74	100

When the data in Table 9 are examined, it is possible to say that 52.70% of them definitely agree, 35.14% of them agree with the statement that the students studying in higher education institutions providing online education can express their ideas comfortably in writing, so that they can explain what they mean to others.

Table 9. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I can easily express my ideas in writing on their success" of the students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	3	4.05
Disagree	6	8.11
Agree	26	35.14
Absolutely Agree	39	52.70
Total	74	100

When the data in Table 10 were examined, it was found that 95.59% of the participants were competent to perform their tasks independently in online education.

Table 10. Analysis of the data regarding the statement "I am good at completing my tasks independently" of the students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	3	4.05
Disagree	1	1.35
Agree	30	40.54
Absolutely Agree	40	54.05
Total	74	100

When the data in Table 11 are examined, it is possible to say that the majority of the students who receive online education can regulate and adjust their behaviors to complete the requirements of the course.

Table11. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I organize and adjust my behavior to complete the course requirements" of students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	2	2.70
Disagree	4	5.40
Agree	39	52.70
Absolutely Agree	29	39.19
Total	74	100

When the data in Table 12 are examined, the vast majority of students studying online can understand the main ideas and important topics of the reading passages without the guidance of the course instructor.

Table 12. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I can understand the main ideas and important issues of the reading passages without the guidance of the course instructor" of the students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	2	2.70
Disagree	12	16.22
Agree	39	52.70
Absolutely Agree	21	28.38
Total	74	100

When the data in Table 13 are examined, it is seen that the majority of the students who receive online education can easily reach the goals they set for themselves.

Table 13. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I reach the goals I set for myself" by the students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Absolutely Disagree	4	5.41
Disagree	2	2.70
Agree	33	44.59
Absolutely Agree	35	47.30
Total	74	100

Table 14 clearly shows that the majority of students studying online have internet access to complete their homework.

Table 14. Analysis of the data regarding the proposition "I have internet access to complete my homework" of students studying in online education

Category / Feature	N	%
Yes	64	86.49
No	10	13.51
Total	74	100

When the data in Table 15 is analyzed, as a result of the analysis of the multiple selection data on various file types sent to them as attachments to the e-mail, the online education students know how to open and/or print 67 office files and 59 portable documents. It is possible to say that none of them know what it is.

Table 15. "Let us assume that the following files were sent to you as an attachment to the e-mail. If you know how to open and/or print which of these, please specify".

Category / Feature	N
Office Files	67
Portable Documentation	59
Open Source Documentation	44
Video or Audio Files	56
Image or Graphic Files	52
I don't know what these are	4
Total	282

Discussion

In this study, in which the online education readiness of individuals who prefer to study in online education

environments instead of formal education in Turkey is investigated, it has been revealed that there are different factors affecting readiness. In the digital age, online education is an education method that can enable students to become independent learners (Belawati et al., 2023). Belawati et al. (2023) stated in their research on online learning that readiness for independent learning, motivation and love of learning, ability to use technology and comfort are important for online learning. Cebi (2023), in his research on e-learning readiness, stated that student interactions in distance education affect e-readiness motivation. Bazargan (2023), in his study investigating the usability of e-learning systems, stated that students' self-learning, learning preferences, technology skills, study habits and computer hardware abilities affect the quality of online learning and students need to be activated in these five areas. In this study, it is seen that the most important elements in online education are students' attitudes towards online learning, their awareness of taking an independent role, their technical knowledge and skills required for online learning, communication skills, motivation and accessibility to online learning. Unlike previous studies, this study was conducted on individuals who prefer online learning to formal learning. Although the participant group was different from previous studies, it was concluded that the readiness factors affecting online education did not change.

Conclusion

This study is in an important position in terms of analyzing readiness in the online learning process and bringing the comments obtained in this direction to the literature. The study was conducted on the basis of a measurement tool previously tested in the literature, and the data obtained by frequency analysis were evaluated. Individuals in Turkey generally prefer online learning because they have more opportunities to fulfill their family obligations and online learning is independent of time. Today, the majority of individuals who receive online education know their responsibilities regarding their own education, can work comfortably in alternative learning environments, easily share their ideas in online environments, complete their tasks independently, regulate their behaviors in order to complete their educational needs, understand reading passages independent of the educator, and reach their goals. In addition, the majority of individuals who receive online education today can use office software at a sufficient level for online learning, do not give up easily in the face of technological obstacles, have access to the Internet and use e-mail at a level to complete their homework. It has been concluded that the majority of individuals who voluntarily receive online education in Turkey have a high level of online learning readiness in terms of motivation, self-regulation skills, communication skills, technology competence and accessibility level required for online learning.

Recommendations

Within the scope of the study, the readiness status of the students studying online in Turkey was evaluated. In the studies planned to be carried out in the future, it is planned to include the distance education system log records along with the course performance performances of the students in the existing data. Thus, using the data obtained in this study, it is planned to create personalized, artificial intelligence supported distance

education environments supported by chat and support robots.

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The Paris Commune in Russian Historiography: Power, Mistakes and Damages According to the Ideas of Lenin and Skvortsov-Stepanov

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Abstract: After more than one hundred fifty years, the topic of the Paris Commune as a first example of a new form of government, even if it eventually proved to be fragile, is still worth scientific attention. The following work presents an outline of the moments that marked the beginning and the end of the Paris Commune, focusing on the impression perceived by V.I. Lenin and I. I. Skvortsov-Stepanov in Russian historiography about some of the structural characteristics and contradictions of this new politic and social phenomenon. The author starts from the political and economic background of France before the Franco-Prussian War, moving then on to the considerations of Lenin, as one of the most influent thinkers of pre-Soviet Russia, and Skvortsov-Stepanov, as one of the first Soviet scholars who investigated the causes and the damages suffered by Paris as an aftermath of the suppression of the Paris Commune. In the following work, the author illustrates a generous number of extracts in original language complete with professional translation.

Keywords: Paris Commune, Franco-Prussian War

Introduction

In the second half of the XIX century, France, after having seen the strong influence of the events of the French Revolution and of the Napoleonic wars, had managed to survive repeated changes of forms of government, revolutions and other socio-political upheavals.

In fact, after 1814 there had been the Bourbon Restoration of Louis XVIII, even if briefly interrupted by Napoleon's return during the Hundred Days, then the reign of Charles X, the July Monarchy, the Second Republic, and the Second French Empire: six forms of government in a timespan of about forty years.

Strong in her political history, France also had had to cope with the activity of different new political parties, popular movements, different ruling élites and working class actions.

During the years of the Second French Empire, France had built one of the strongest economies in the world. By the end of the 1860s, with a level of relatively stable internal equilibrium and a strong colonial and political influence in the world, her GDP had doubled (Franck, 2014). During these years, France saw a great development of her railway network and trade, a growth of the popularity of her exports of colonial goods and the stunning architectural and urbanistic revolution of her capital.

Then, in 1870, after having failed to solve her political and strategic complaints towards the growing German influence in Spanish dynastic affairs, and in part deceived by Bismarck's cunning diplomatic ability, France found herself dragged into the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871, which eventually turned out to be a fatal mistake for France.

Strong in his confidence in his armed forces, Napoleon III declared war on Prussia on July 19, 1870 and appealed to his people soon afterwards with his famous proclamation on the 23rd of the same month. The last words of this document were (Bibliothèque nationale de France, n.d.):

"Dieu bénira nos efforts. Un grand peuple qui défend une cause juste est invincible.

Paris, le 23 juillet 1870"

"God will bless our efforts. A great people who defends a just cause is invincible.

Paris, July 23, 1870"

The Franco-Prussian War immediately proved to be a disaster for France: the French army was soundly defeated by unexpectedly overwhelming enemy forces in the major battles of Metz and especially Sedan, where the emperor himself was taken prisoner. Ashamed and humiliated by this series of defeats, French republicans dethroned Napoleon III, forming afterwards a popular form of government, and giving therefore birth in the capital of France to the period known as "the Paris Commune".

This revolutionary government in Paris played a significant role for both French history itself and for the later history of socialist idea spreading throughout the world. Besides, it attracted the interest of many countries and intellectuals all around the world, which accurately followed the evolutions of the events at a distance.
The purpose of this work is to present an overview of how Russian historiography perceived this event, and how it wrote about it in the years that came after.

Method

The methods chosen for the following discussion are the historical comparative method, which permits us to compare two or more events, people, or cultures to analyze their similarities and differences; the interpretative method, which is necessary to present an interpretation of the meaning of past events, people, or cultures. Also, the quantitative and the qualitative methods of research are used, in order to present statistic data from historiographic sources and a discussion about their iportance and possible interpretation.

Special attention deserves the translation method chosen in the work, in particular, the literary one; as we are about to see, the work required a wide use of professional, technical, and administrative translation as well, mostly because of the fact that the presented extracts have never been translated into Russian, or, in the case of Lenin's essays, for instance, even today they cannot always boast a 100% accurate translation.

Results

As social disasters in France worsened as a consequence of the Franco-Prussian War, economic stagnation not only persisted, but also took extreme forms, which caused famine among the population. The overspread devastation and decline were reinforced by the difficult foreign policy situation. The newly created National Guard, which was essentially a uniformed and armed mass of Parisians, found itself in an unfavorable position. The government that had capitulated to Prussia was preparing to disband the National Guard, starting from the cancelation of its wages. This and other measures led to the fact that on March 18, 1871, the National Guard organized an uprising, as a result of which, 8 days later, democratic elections were held for the Paris Commune. The idea was to remove the conservative national assembly from command and elect the deputies of a new government at a parliamentary level, instead of a municipal one. So it was: during the Paris Commune, a wide range of measures were taken to abolish various social issues. For instance, rent arrears were abolished and bread prices were set. In addition to those measures, others were introduced to protect the rights of workers, night work in bakeries was prohibited, the remuneration policy in state bodies was changed, and privileged salaries were reduced.

The combination of the measures introduced by the Commune made it possible to abolish the old bureaucratic structure of the state. Having broken the old type of organization, the Commune built a new state, which was not yet familiar to history. This translated into the power of the working class, the first dictatorship of the proletariat, which was intended to carry the highest form of democracy: a (mostly) proletarian democracy. Election, responsibility, turnover, and collegiality were the democratic norms that formed the basis of the state apparatus of the Commune. The Commune abolished bourgeois parliamentarism, with the bourgeois principle of separation of powers (legislative, executive, judicial).

It is not hard to imagine that the study of the history of the Paris Commune, as well as its influence as a political and philosophical historical phenomenon, played a significant role in Russian historiography.

Discussion

Probably, the best known example is represented by Lenin's XIV tome of his "*sochinenija*" (*essays*). Here, among other things, he explores the cause-and-effect relationships of the formation of this phenomenon, as well as its very essence, and draws his conclusions about how the experience of the French can be assessed and analyzed in the context of the formation of a new state system in Russia.

In an article of the "Pravda" dated "April 9, 1917, N° 28" and entitled "*О двоевластии*" ("*about the dual power*"), Lenin identifies the three main characteristics of the power of the Commune (Lenin, 1925):

"1) Источник власти — не закон, предварительно обсужденный и проведенный парламентом, а прямой почин народных масс снизу и на местах, прямой «захват», употребляя ходячее выражение;

(The source of power is not a law previously discussed and enacted by parliament, but the direct initiative of the people from below, in their local areas, a direct "seizure", to use a current expression;)

2) Замена полиции и армии, как отделенных от народа и противопоставленных народу учреждений прямым вооружением всего народа; государственной порядок при такой власти охраняют сами вооруженные рабочие и крестьяне, сам вооруженный народ;

(The replacement of the police and the army, which are institutions separated from the people and set against the people, by the direct arming of the whole people; public order in a state under such a power is maintained by the armed workers and peasants themselves, by the armed people themselves;)

3) Чиновничество, бюрократия либо заменяются опять-таки непосредственной властью самого народа, либо по меньшей мере ставятся под особый контроль, превращаются не только в выборных, но и в сменяемых по первому требованию народа, сводятся на положение простых уполномоченных; из привилегированного слоя с высокой, буржуазной оплатой «местечек» превращаются в рабочих особого «рода оружия», оплачиваемых не выше обычной платы хорошего рабочего."

(Officialdom and bureaucracy are either similarly replaced by the direct rule of the people themselves or at least placed under special control; they not only become elected officials, but also replaceable at the people's first demand; they are reduced to the position of simple delegates; from a privileged class of "nice jobs" with a high and bourgeois remuneration, they turn into workers of a special "armed force", whose remuneration does not exceed the ordinary pay of a good worker.)

According to Lenin's idea, in this, and only in this, was the essence of the Commune. Beside this, Lenin's aim was to formulate a fundament, basing himself on the philosophy of Marx and Engels, able to contribute to the development of this relatively new historiographic trend in the Russian-speaking research environment. This new trend was quite understandable, as the beginning of the XX century was already being characterized by revolutions, struggles between the proletariat and capitalism etc. For this reason, the importance of the Paris Commune as a phenomenon was especially exalted during the formation of a new state with new rules and postulates, as that had been the only massive event of that kind which attracted the attention of the whole world. Therefore, in his works Lenin pointed out the focal moments in the formation of the Commune, including its universality, its readiness to accept and take into account various opinions, and democracy. In addition, he

identified various reasons for the eventual failure in the formation of this phenomenon, namely a weak position in relation to the opponents of the new form.

«Две ошибки погубили плоды блестящей победы. Пролетариат остановился на полпути: вместо того, чтобы приступить к «экспроприации экспроприаторов», он увлекся мечтами о водворении высшей справедливости в стране, объединяемой общенациональной задачей; такие, например, учреждения, как банк, не были взяты, теории прудонистов насчет «справедливого обмена» и т. п. господствовали еще среди социалистов. Вторая ошибка — излишнее великодушие пролетариата: надо было истреблять своих врагов, а он старался морально повлиять на них, он пренебрег значением чисто военных действий в гражданской войне и вместо того, чтобы решительным наступлением на Версаль увенчать свою победу в Париже, он медлил и дал время версальскому правительству собрать темные силы и подготовиться к кровавой майской неделе»

(Two mistakes ruined the fruits of a brilliant victory. The proletariat stopped halfway: instead of proceeding to the "expropriation of the expropriators," it revealed distracted by the dream of establishing a supreme justice in a country united by a national mission; institutions like banks, for instance, were not taken: the Proudhonist theories about "fair exchange" etc. were still dominant among the socialists. The second mistake was the excessive generosity of the proletariat: it was supposed to exterminate its enemies, while it tried to influence them morally; it ignored the importance of purely military actions in the civil war, instead of crowning his victory in Paris with a decisive attack on Versailles, it hesitated and gave the government of Versailles the time to gather dark forces and get prepared for the "semaine sanglante".)

Before moving on to the point of view of the next scholar, we think the following image (see Figure 1) is worth consideration: this is the introductory slide of a famous 1976 Soviet filmstrip about the Paris Commune (see "Recommendations").

Figure 1

As we can see, it shows the title, of course, and a quote from Lenin. More precisely (including the dots):

"...Коммуна боролась...за освобождение всего трудящегося человечества, всех униженных и оскобленных. ...Дело Коммуны...до сих пор живет в каждом из нас."

("The Commune fought...for the liberation of all working mankind, of all the humiliated and insulted. ...The cause of the Commune...still lives in every one of us.")

The meaning of these words does not need particular interpretation or explanation. Nevertheless, it deserves to be underlined that, in the quote, Lenin uses the expression "*humiliated and insulted*" (*униженные и оскорбленные),* which in our opinion is a clear allusion to Dostoevskij's famous work. The author, in fact, already in the 1860s had tried to condemn the dark sides of capitalism in Russia, depicting the defenseless existence of miserable people against the cynicism of the rich.

Analyzing the position of the Paris Commune in Russian historiography, Skvortsov-Stepanov deserves attention as well, as he was one of the first Soviet scholars who studied the issue of the formation of this phenomenon. In his work "*The Paris Commune of 1871 and Questions of Tactics of the Proletarian Revolution*", the author aimed to draw the main conclusions about this phenomenon as a whole. Besides, although this work is not initially a deep study of causal relationships, it remains important in the context of studying the stages of formation and fall of the Paris Commune (Skvortsov-Stepanov, 1937).

In our opinion, particular attention deserves the author's well-argued and very precise consideration about the impressive damages, in terms of both lost work force and human lives, which Paris suffered as a result of the suppression of the Commune:

"Некоторым отраслям парижской промышленности был нанесен жестокий удар истреблением работников. Генерал Аппер в отчете следственной комиссии о 18-м марта дал такие сведения о профессии осужденных: литераторы 2.901, слесари и механики 2.664, каменщики 2.293, столяры 1.659, торговые служащие 1.598, сапожники 1.491, служащие 1.065, маляры 863, типографские рабочие 819, каменотесы 766, портные 681, столяры-полировщики 636, ювелиры 528, плотники 382, кожевники 347, скульпторы 283, жестяники 227, литейщики 224, шапочники 210, портнихи 206, басонщики 193, часовых дел мастера 179, позолотчики 172, печатники обоев 159, формовщики 157, картонажники 124, переплетчики 106, преподаватели 106 и т. д."

("Some branches of Parisian industry suffered a severe blow by the extermination of the workers. General Appert, in the report to the investigation committee about March 18, gave the following information about the profession of the convicts: writers 2,901, locksmiths and mechanics 2,664, masons 2,293, carpenters 1,659, trade employees 1,598, shoemakers 1,491, employees 1,065, decorators 863, printing workers 819, stonecutters 766, tailors 681, planer operators 636, goldsmiths 528, carpenters 382, leather workers 347, sculptors 283,

tinsmiths 227, casters 224, hat makers 210, dressmakers 206, cutters 193, watchmakers 179, gilders 172, wallpaper manufacturers 159, moulders 157, cartoners 124, bookbinders 106, teachers 106, etc.")

And again:

"К осени 1871 года новый парижский муниципалитет предпринял обследование парижской промышленности и торговли и получил следующие данные: в сапожном производстве до 18-го марта было занято 24.000 рабочих, оно потеряло 12.000, т.-е. как раз половину, убитыми, арестованными и эмигрировавшими; в производстве готового платья убыль рабочих составила 5.000 человек, в мебельном производстве предместья Сент-Антуан – 6.000, в малярном производстве пришлось заменить мастеров учениками; убыль кровельщиков, жестяников и т. д. составила 3.000 человек; сильно пострадали все отрасли производства так называемых «парижских изделий» […]"

("By the autumn of 1871, the new Parisian municipality undertook a survey of Parisian industry and trade and received the following information: in the shoe industry of the city were employed 24,000 workers until March 18. It lost 12,000 of them, that is, exactly half, all killed, arrested and emigrated. In the production of ready-made dresses, the loss of workers amounted to 5,000 people, in the furniture production of the suburb of Saint-Antoine 6,000, in the painting industry, the masters had to be replaced by apprentices; the loss of roofers, tinsmiths, etc. amounted to 3,000 people; every sector of production of the so-called "Parisian products", suffered greatly […]")

And again:

"В самых беспощадных национальных войнах побежденному врагу дается пощада. Никакой пощады не знает буржуазия по отношению к восставшему и побежденному пролетариату. Это показал конец Парижской Коммуны, — это показали расправы контрреволюции после русской революции 1905 года, это много раз показало временное торжество контрреволюции в некоторых областях современной России."

("In the most merciless national wars, mercy is given to the defeated enemy. The bourgeoisie knows no mercy towards the insurgent and defeated proletariat. This was shown by the end of the Paris Commune: this was shown by the reprisals of the counter-revolution after the Russian Revolution of 1905, this was shown many times by the temporary triumph of the counter-revolution in certain regions of today's Russia")

Russian historiography of the Paris Commune did actually prove able to offer a great contribution to its philosophical and scientific study; many of the most brilliant minds of the time of all scientific spheres worked on it. However, we should keep in mind that actually it was unprofitable for Soviet historiography, with its obvious guidelines, to speak and highlight the real problems within French society; the key passage to be understood in this regard is that scholars presented them as mistakes, rather than serious social problems with short-term and long-term consequences.

For instance, in Soviet sciences it was generally explained that one of the reasons why other cities in France did not support the capital was actually the irresponsibility of citizens or their unpreparedness for transformations. The solving of real problems, food shortages etc. was of secondary importance for obvious reasons. The political situation and, consequently, the impossibility to talk about the problems of the system represented a kind of sword of Damocles for historians.

Of course, speaking about Soviet historiography, we understand the extremely positive and high assessment of such a phenomenon as the Paris Commune. This is quite understandable, because to some extent it represented *de facto* a first project of dictatorship of the proletariat, a *topos* that was perceived with great excitement in all aspects of Soviet society.

The weak communication between the Commune and the country, the underestimated importance of the military and strategic situation, and the powerful and active support offered by Germany led to the blockade of the Paris Commune inside its own capital, which eventually culminated in a merciless and bloody eight-day massacre inside the city. Therefore, on May 28, 1871, after having existed for 72 days, the Paris Commune collapsed, having lost a huge number of prominent figures of its movement and civilians.

The formation of the Commune became for many a symbol of the beginning of a new era, an era of a new and to some extent experimental state policy. It represented a new model for the political structure of a single democratic republic. In practice, the Paris Commune, while maintaining a bureaucratic component, as well as some authoritarian features, began to implement the ideas of a welfare state.

This complex historical phenomenon existed only for a few months; few months during which some people saw the end of the French bourgeois revolution of the XVIII century, while others believed in the revival of medieval communes. In fact, this was the realization of a new type of state, the first world experience of proletarian dictatorship characterized by elections, an idea of responsibility, and turnover as the main features of a democratic form of government.

Conclusion

In Russia, the phenomenon represented by the Paris Commune became a subject of heated controversy between anarchists and Marxists, and about which Soviet scholars developed thousands of analyses and theories. In general, it was considered erroneous to believe that the only goal of the Commune was to ensure local self-government through the means of armed rebellions; this was, first of all, the first experience of dictatorship of the proletariat, which became an important example and an exciting first record in history for the socialist movement as a whole.

In Paris there is a famous cemetery, the cemetery of Père-Lachaise, in which today visitors can see a commemorative plaque on a wall that is called "the Communards' Wall" (in French: "*le Mur des Fédérés*"). Here Parisians and visitors bring flowers to remember the soldiers and the officers who were executed during the last day of the *Seimane Sanglante* and buried in a common grave at the foot of the wall. This tablet is one of the very few commemorative symbols left for posterity in France.

What about Russia? Actually, today in Russia we can still see a few signs of the homage paid by the previous generations to the historical memory of this event. For instance, in the district of Bor, in Nizhnyj Novgorod Region, there is a settlement whose name is "*Pamjat' Parizhskoj Kommuny*" (*Память Парижской Коммуны*), which literally means "*The memory of the Paris Commune*" (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

This village was originally founded in 1869 with the name of "*Zhukovskij Zaton*" (*Жуковский Затон*), then it was renamed with its current name (see Figure 2). Another interesting example of memorial we can see today is that dedicated to the Paris Commune in the city of Omsk (see Figure 3 and Figure 4).
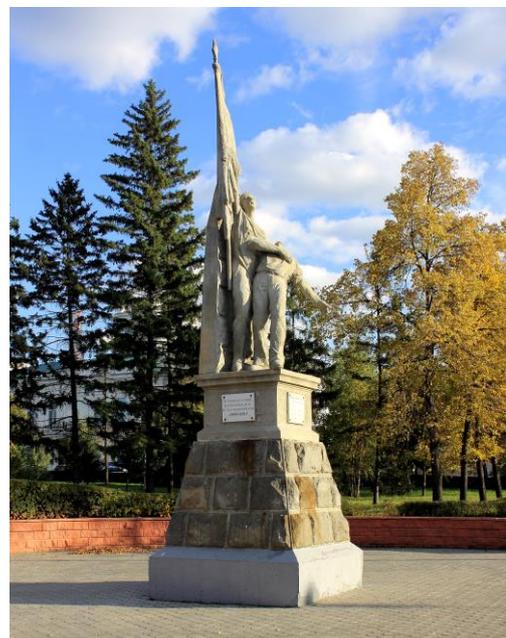

Figure 3

Figure 4

The very creation of this memorial is still today object of debate: one thesis argues that it was originally thought to commemorate the victims of the massacres perpetrated by the White Army which took place in 1919, just before the seizing of the city by the 3rd and the 5th Red Armies. The project was ready in March 1920, but it was soon afterwards suspended because of a shortage of funds. What we do know is that in March 1921, on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the Paris Commune, next to the Drama Theater was erected this monument in memory of the fallen communards. The author was Nikolaj Vinogradov, who afterwards proposed to move it to the spot where the victims of the Whites had been buried; the opening ceremony took place in July 1923 (Naumov, 2017).

Leaving aside the political background of the events which led to the construction of this monument and moving on to its description, we can see a man and a woman, both dressed in a way that resembles the simple workers of the time, and a banner. The man, wounded and with his right arm touching his chest, is falling backwards, while the woman is supporting his body with her left arm and is raising the banner with the right one. The scene is dynamic and swift, an impression that is suggested by the contrast between the movement of the man in one direction and that of the woman in the other; a sensation of continuity. On the banner we can see the inscription "*C.C.C.P.*" (*USSR*), which aims to underline another kind of continuity: the continuity of the deeds of past generations through time.

About the tablets on the pedestal of the sculpture, they were changed many times in the years, but one of them stated:

"Коммунары Парижа! У вас вырвали Красное Знамя, рабочие России отняли его и победили!"

(Communards of Paris! The Red Banner had been snatched from your hands, the workers of Russia took it away and won!)

Recommendations

For a deeper and clearer understanding of the importance of the Paris Commune for Russian history, and to get acquainted with a huge selection of materials, many of which translated into Russian, we strongly recommend to visit the dedicated section offered by the project called "*Исторические материалы*" (Proekt "Istoricheskie Materialy", (n.d.)). Another great source that is worth mentioning is the content of the famous filmstrip about the Paris Commune commissioned by the Ministry of Education of USSR in 1976 for ninth-grade pupils (Diafilm Parizhskaja Kommuna, (n.d.)): a very fine source of vignettes and illustrations that gives us a clear look of the Soviet perception of the topic and of its presentation for the masses.

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Assessing High School Students' Conceptual Understanding of Physics: A Cognitive Approach

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Abstract: This study used a descriptive quantitative method and mainly aimed at putting forward the idea that the select-and-fill-in (SAFI) concept maps could be used as a valid instrument to assess the conceptual understanding of thermodynamics among students. For this purpose, the concurrent validity of the SAFI concept map was evaluated according to the Thermodynamic Concept Survey (TCS) in order to develop a standard conceptual assessment test in thermodynamics. The TCS had a total KR-20 of approximately 0.78, an acceptable value, which could be employed as a valid test to assess the expert-developed SAFI concept map in this study. The study population included 60 students from two physics classes. An evaluation of the conceptual understandings of thermodynamics students was made concurrently using two assessment tools. Results showed that there is a moderate to strong correlation (0.6) between the SAFI concept map and TCS. This leads us to the conclusion that SAFI concept maps are valid tools, at least, as a complementary test in science classrooms.

Keywords: concept map, assessment, conceptual understanding, physics, high school

Introduction

Thermodynamics is considered one of the most fundamental topics in physics and chemistry encountered by many students at different educational levels (Dreyfus et al., 2015; Saricayir et al., 2016). Nevertheless, many of the core concepts in thermodynamics are considered to be abstract and difficult for novices to grasp and usually bound in misconceptions for students (Anderson et al., 2005; Cox et al., 2003; Dukhan, 2016; Mulop et al., 2012; Schönborn et al., 2014; Sokrat et al., 2014). These misconceptions hinder students from acquiring a

conceptual understanding of thermodynamics concepts and cause many difficulties for them to grasp the scientific ideas behind them (Saricayir et al., 2016).

Many scholars state that to promote conceptual understanding in science one needs to determine and solve these misconceptions through appropriate assessment and remedial approach (Clement et al., 1989; Halim et al., 2018; Kaltakci-Gurel et al., 2016; Sözen & Bolat, 2011; Weingartner & Masnick, 2019). Appropriate interpretations of students' existing conceptions might help educators design teaching approaches targeting conceptual understanding (Edwards, 2013). Scholars argued that in most cases, the focus of student evaluation is on propositional knowledge, which is aimed at determining the level of content and factual knowledge they have mastered, not the degree to which they have developed a well-integrated understanding (Edmondson, 2005; Shavelson & Ruiz-Primo, 1999). However, for propositional knowledge to be usable, the information needs to be interrelated conceptually (Kauertz & Fischer, 2006) to produce highly structured mental models such as experts (Toker & Moseley, 2013). Therefore, alternatives to traditional achievement tests must be sought, which probe mental models by eliciting the structural aspect of scientific knowledge.

In this regard, concept maps proved to be useful for portraying learning that traditional methods of assessment have not captured effectively (Edmondson, 2005; Stoddart et al., 2000). According to Novak and Cañas (2008), concept maps are tools for organizing and representing knowledge, which consist of nodes representing concepts and labelled lines denoting the relationship between pairs of nodes. Trowbridge and Wandersee (1996) found concept mapping to be a "highly sensitive tool for measuring changes in knowledge structure" (p. 54), particularly for depicting changes in students' selection of superordinate concepts, which have a significant impact on students' conceptions of the subject matter.

However, despite its benefits, concept mapping is challenging when applied in classrooms. Concept maps are considered ill-structured tasks since different correct solutions are possible (Jonassen, 1997). In science education, concept maps are regarded as cognitively demanding tasks given the cognitive efforts they require in order to recognize the concepts related to the subject and the relationships among them (Pérez Rodríguez et al., 2009; Schau & Mattern, 1997).

Several types of support have been considered to ease the cognitive demands of drawing concept maps, in terms of providing the concepts (Farrokhnia et al., 2019), linking phrases (Yin et al., 2005), and fill-in maps (Ruíz-Primo, 2000; Schau et al., 1997). In the latter, by keeping an expert-drawn concept map structure intact, some or all of the concept words and/or linking words are omitted. Students fill in these blanks either by generating the words to use or by selecting them from a set that may or may not include distractors, which is called Select And Fill In (SAFI) concept maps (Schau et al., 2001).

Some attempts have been made to use SAFI concept maps (Hassanzadeh et al., 2016; Hatami et al., 2016; Naveh-Benjamin et al., 1995; Turan-Oluk & Ekmekci, 2018), but so far, no study has been found to evaluate their validity as an assessment tool in science classes. As a result, in this study, by considering the importance of

thermodynamics in science education, we attempt to evaluate the validity of SAFI concept maps for assessing the conceptual understanding of thermodynamics. This is done by making a comparison with the Thermodynamic Conceptual Survey (TCS) (Wattanakasiwich et al., 2013) as a valid concept inventory test for evaluating the students' conceptual understanding of thermodynamics. Therefore this study mainly seeks to answer this question:

Research question: What is the correlation between students' scores in the SAFI concept map assessment test and TCS?

Methodology

Participants

The participants ($N = 60$) were eleven-graders enrolled in the physics course at an Iranian high school. All the participants were males, and their average age was 16 years. The students were randomly divided into two groups of 30 students, which groups were randomly assigned to one of the assessment tests, i.e., SAFI concept map and TCS.

Materials

Concept inventory test

Concept inventories are test-based assessments of a concept or set of concepts, usually using multiple-choice questions (Furrow & Hsu, 2019). The incorrect choices for a question are ideally based on common student misconceptions (Sadler et al., 2010). Therefore, at their most useful, concept inventories can be used to diagnose areas of conceptual difficulty prior to instruction, and evaluate changes in students' conceptual understanding (Sands et al., 2018).

The present study employs a concept inventory test, which is the product of a study carried out by Wattanakasiwich and her colleagues (2013). In their study, they have developed the TCS containing 35 multiple-choice questions that assess students' understanding of the different concepts and principles related to thermodynamics, such as temperature, heat transfer, the ideal gas law, different processes, and the first law of thermodynamics. To determine the internal consistency (i.e., reliability) of the survey, Wattanakasiwich et al. (2013) utilized the Kuder-Richardson formula 20 (KR-20). The computed KR20 of the test was .78. According to Ding and Beichner (2009), one should attempt to generate a KR20 reliability coefficient of .70 and above to acquire a reliable score. This value of KR20 appears to be reliable, thus revealing that the TCS is a reasonably reliable instrument. Also, Ferguson's Delta (δ) determines the discriminating ability of the whole survey by measuring how broadly it spreads the distribution of scores. The valid value range for Ferguson's Delta is from 0.0 to 1.0, and the survey is considered to provide adequate discrimination when $\delta > .9$ (Ding & Beichner, 2009). In their study, each group had δ value above .9; therefore, based on both the item analysis and the whole

survey analysis; the TCS is considered to be a valid and reliable test. Furthermore, the reliability of the TCS is also confirmed in the present study (KR-20 = .71), by employing the test in a pilot study with 35 students.

SAFI reference map

In order to use the SAFI concept map as an assessment tool, we need a reference map that serves as a criterion for measuring student's conceptual knowledge about the target domain by determining those propositions (nodes and links) that are deemed "substantial" and students are expected to know about a topic at a particular point. In this line, we utilized the SAFI concept map produced by experts in the given domain. In generating a SAFI reference map, it is assumed that: (1) there is some "agreed-upon organization" that sufficiently demonstrates the structure of a content domain, (2) "experts" in that domain can settle on the structure, and (3) concept maps of the expert offer an acceptable representation of the subject domain (Ericsson, 1996). We followed Ruiz-Primo et al.'s (2001) seven steps to develop our reference map of thermodynamics (Figure 1).
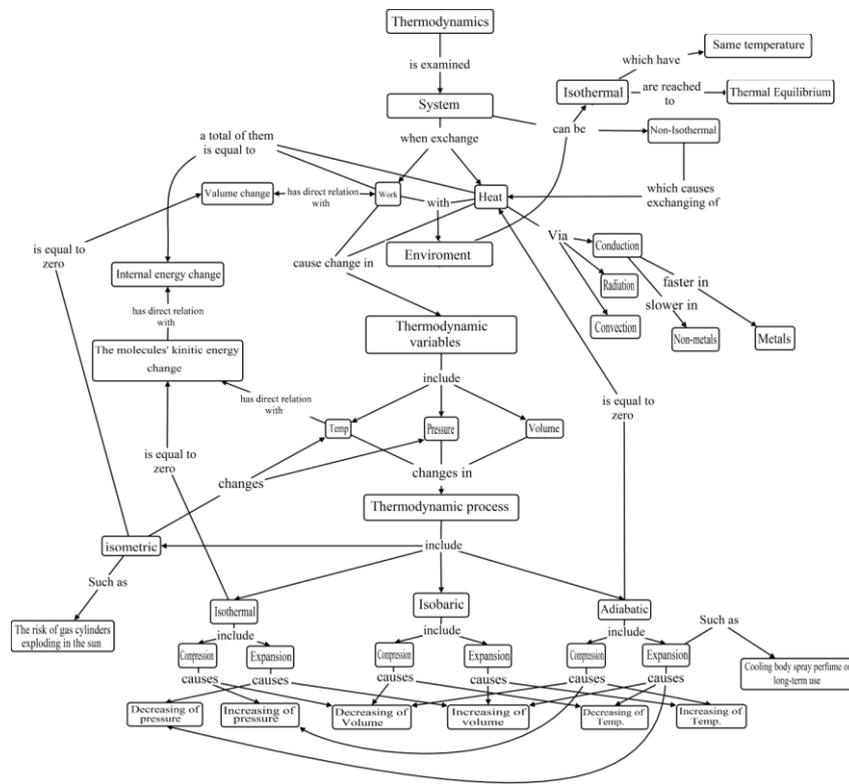
Figure 1. Reference map of Thermodynamics developed by the expert panel.

In general, SAFI formats are created in two steps: (1) the creation of a reference map by an expert panel, and (2) the omission of some or all of the concepts or linking phrases by the experts. Afterwards, the students are asked to fill in the blanks by choosing from a list of provided concepts (Schau et al., 1997). As a result, we omitted 33 concepts from the original map to develop our conceptual assessment tool, i.e., the Thermodynamics SAFI concept map (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Thermodynamics SAFI concept map

KR-20 was used to evaluate the reliability of the final SAFI concept map. The map was examined with 35 students who had not participated in our study. The measured reliability was 0.887, which is an acceptable value.

Procedure

As previously mentioned in the introduction, the main goal of the present study is to examine the validity of the SAFI concept maps as evaluative tools for assessing students' conceptual understanding of thermodynamics at the high school level. The validation was assessed in two phases. In the first phase, content validity was assessed. As the SAFI concept map was made by the expert panel, it can be concluded that a final map is a valid tool for evaluating the conceptual understanding of students in the field of thermodynamics. Furthermore, the final map is also consistent with the curriculum objectives. In the second phase, concurrent validity was assessed. Concurrent validity is established by demonstrating high correlations between a given test and presently employed tools that have revealed valid knowledge assessment characteristics in the domain. Therefore, the TCS was selected as a potential tool for evaluating the concurrent validity of the SAFI concept map, which was prepared by the expert panel in this study.

Generally, the correlation level between the scores of two instruments shows whether or not each test is assessing certain similar abilities, and to what extent. Examining the difference between the obtained mean scores in two instruments helps show if the tests have comparable performance outcomes for examinees, and helps identify if there are differences in scores that might be significant to how factors correlate with each other (Anastazi & Urbina, 1997).

For this purpose, the required data was collected from TCS and SAFI concept map tests. Students have answered TCS and SAFI questions, respectively, during a 60 minutes exam. Then, the results for each student were obtained by comparing their answer sheets with the reference ones. In scoring the SAFI test, the answers of students need to be compared with the reference map prepared by the expert panel. If placed in the correct place, each concept would receive the positive value '1' and no value if not. Thus, the TCS test has 35 values, while the SAFI test has 33 values in accordance with the number of empty places.

Results

The final scores obtained from the two tests for each student are illustrated in Figure 3. As the scores of the two tests have been measured on an interval scale, we have used Pearson's Correlation Coefficient in order to calculate the correlation coefficient between TCS and SAFI in the current study, after examining the normality of the data (Table 1). The final results are shown in Table 2.
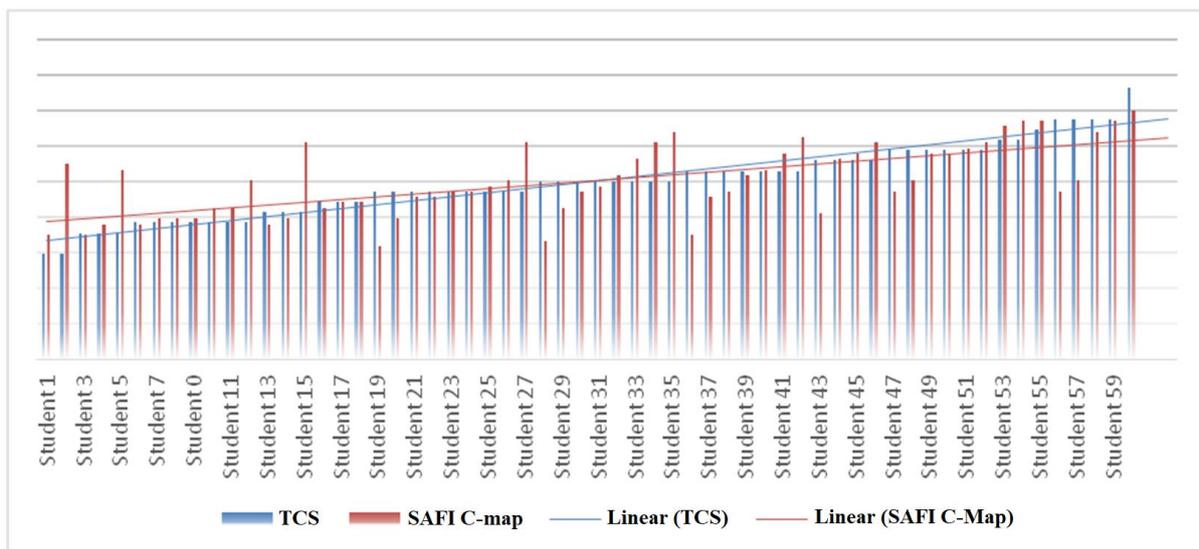

Figure 3. The final scores obtained from the two tests for each student

Table 1. Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
TCS	.089	60	.200	.980	60	.422
SAFI Cmap	.095	60	.200	.967	60	.109

Table 2. Pearson correlation

		TCS	SAFI C-map
TCS	Pearson Correlation	1	.611**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Based on the data shown in Table 1, the scores of both concept map tests, i.e., TCS and SAFI, are normally distributed at the 5 % significant level ($p > .05$). Also, the correlation between TCS and SAFI concept map scores is 0.611 at the 0.01 level ($p < .01$). This suggests a moderate to a high positive correlation between the designed test (i.e., SAFI concept map) scores in thermodynamics and the standard test in the field (i.e., TCS).

Discussion and Conclusion

The current study's findings indicated that fill-in concept maps are a suitable instrument for measuring conceptual learning in students in thermodynamics. In fact, as these maps are simple to use and do not require instruction as to how to be used, they can be helpful in measuring the conceptual knowledge of students. Furthermore, it is recommended that due to their correlation with common conceptual knowledge tests, these tests can be used as supplementary or even predicting instruments. The results from the fill-in concept mapping tests can provide a good basis for measuring conceptual learning in students. Furthermore, by considering the obtained results from such tests, the misconceptions or misunderstandings of students can be identified, and before giving classroom or problem-solving tests, they can be provided with separate and remedial instruction.

Based on the findings of this study, also we can conclude that failing to get good grades or doing badly on science tests can be explained by a lack of proper understanding of the questions by students. As can be seen in Figure 3, students' numbers 2, 5, and 15 obtained very good scores on the concept mapping test, while they obtained very low scores on the TCS test which indicates these students did not have a proper understanding of thermodynamics. This inconsistency was explained by conducting an interview with each student whose descriptions threw light on the cause of this inconsistency. All of these students believed that their weakness on the TCS test was because they did not understand its questions. Indeed, while some of the students were able to understand this test's questions well, others had difficulty understanding them. The results from this part of the study are highly consistent with the results obtained from the test by TIMSS and PIRLS (2011) where they found a strong correlation between a student's ability to read and comprehend a given question and his/her ability to solve it (Martin & Mullis, 2013). Therefore, concept maps and particularly fill-in concept maps can be utilized as supplementary instruments for measuring students' conceptual understanding; and rather than relying only on classroom tests for analyzing a student's weaknesses, the results from these assessment tools can be used to form more comprehensive and appropriate judgments.

Limitations and suggestions for future research

One of the main limitations of this study is its 60-student statistical population. In fact, the larger the population of students, the more valid would be the calculated correlation coefficient between the scores. These 60 students were selected as the sample at hand through convenience sampling procedures, as conducting random sampling was not possible for the author. It is recommended that other studies be done for measuring the validity and reliability of fill-in concept mapping tests in other domains of science and with larger statistical populations. Moreover, this instrument can be used more often for measuring students' understanding of conceptual knowledge who are generally weak at literature and reading comprehension, and for assessing their competence in these circumstances. In this study, learners used pen and paper to fill in concept maps for conceptual learning in classrooms. However, enhancing students' conceptual understanding of difficult concepts can be more inspiring and effective for learners using advanced technology-enhanced learning environments (Farrokhnia et al., 2019; Taghizade, et al., 2020) compared with traditional settings. It would be interesting to explore how such advances in educational technologies can be applied for enhancing students' conceptual understanding. As explained before, concept maps are considered ill-structured tasks which require deep cognitive elaborations. Literature suggests that sharing individual concept maps with the peer fosters cognitive group awareness and thus their conceptual understanding (Farrokhnia et al., 2019). Peer feedback, peer interaction, and peer review strategies as promising active learning methods in classrooms (see Latifi & Noroozi, 2021; Noroozi & Hatami, 2019; Noroozi et al., 2016; Valero Haro et al., 2023) may have the potential to ease the cognitive demands of drawing concept maps for individual students. Future studies could explore how and under what conditions such peer learning activities could maximize the effects of drawing and analyzing concept maps for enhancing learners' conceptual understanding of difficult concepts such as in physics classrooms. Moreover, future studies can explore how using concept maps as an evaluation tool in high school science classes can be facilitated by implementing proper game elements (see Dehghanzadeh et al., 2023). Finally, due to the emergence of new artificial intelligence technologies such as ChatGPT and learning analytics (Banihashem et al., 2022; Banihashem et al., 2023; Farrokhnia et al., 2023; Noroozi et al., 2019), for future studies, we suggest taking steps forward and examining how these new technologies can facilitate the evaluation of students' conceptual learning of physics.

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The Role of Epistemic Beliefs and Gender in Online Argumentative Essay Writing

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Abstract: This study explores the role of students' epistemic beliefs and gender in argumentation performance in essay writing within an online learning environment. In this exploratory study, data were collected from 148 undergraduate students from a Dutch university specializing in life sciences. In this study, both male and female students were asked to follow an argumentative essay writing module for three weeks. In the first week, students write an essay on given topics. In the second week, students provided peer feedback and in the third week, students revised their essays based on the received feedback from peers. In the end, students filled out a survey about epistemic beliefs. The results showed that students' beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge did not influence argumentation performance, while beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge had an influential role. Results showed no overall gender differences in argumentative essay writing. The interaction effects of beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge and gender in argumentation performance, overall, were reported to be neutral. However, there was an interaction effect between students' epistemic beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge and their gender in argumentation performance. These findings provide evidence for guiding students' argumentation performance in higher education.

Keywords: Argumentation; Epistemic Beliefs; Essay Writing; Gender; Online Learning

Introduction

Online learning is an important part of education in the post-Covid era (Banihashem et al., 2023b; Hassanzadeh et al., 2016; Gholami et al., 2021; Stevens et al., 2023; van Puffelen et al., 2022). In the post-Covid education, writing an argumentative essay is the most common genre of writing in higher education (Latif et al., 2021; Kerman et al., 2023; Noroozi et al., 2012; 2023; Vale Haro et al., 2023). Scientific evidence suggests that some factors can influence students' argumentation competence in essay writing such as their beliefs about the nature of knowledge (Baytelman et al., 2020; Noroozi, 2018; Noroozi & Hatami, 2019) and their gender (Asterhan et al., 2012; Banihashem et al., 2023a; Kerman et al., 2022; Noroozi et al., 2020, 2022). Epistemic beliefs generally refer to one's beliefs about the nature and structure of knowledge (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). In the context of education, epistemic beliefs explain how students approach education and learning (Muis et al., 2006). According to the literature, epistemic beliefs entail different dimensions and differ from one person to another (Hofer & Pintrich, 199). Prior studies suggest that not all students have the same understanding and justification of knowledge (Hofer & Pintrich, 1997; Muis et al., 2006). For example, it might be an intellectual question for a student with the objectivist or the absolutist perspective that "Is there a point to argue?" (Baytelman et al., 2020, p. 1201). This needs to be investigated to know to what extent students' epistemic beliefs influence their argumentative essay writing. Scientific evidence also confirms that students' argumentation performance could be influenced by their gender (Noroozi et al., 2020; 2022). Gender affects the way students think, argue, and reflect (Asterhan et al., 2012). For example, Noroozi et al. (2020) found that female students deliver deeper argumentation compared to male students.

Although in previous studies, the effects of students' epistemic beliefs and gender on argumentation performance have been separately studied (e.g., Noroozi et al., 2020), there is little to no empirical evidence to investigate the interaction role of epistemic beliefs and gender in students' argumentative essay writing performance. What we know is that gender plays a key role in shaping one's thoughts, and epistemic beliefs are related to gender (Asterhan & Schwarz, 2016). There is a lack of empirical findings to explain how the interacting role of students' epistemic beliefs and gender can affect their argumentation performance in essay writing. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by addressing the following questions:

1. To what extent students' epistemic beliefs are related to their argumentation performance in essay writing?
2. To what extent students' gender is related to their argumentation performance in essay writing?
3. What is the interaction role of students' epistemic beliefs and gender in their argumentation performance in essay writing?

Method

Study design

In this study, 148 undergraduate students (Female: N=101, 68%; Male: N=47, 32%) participated in this study

from Wageningen University and Research. Ethical approval from the Social Sciences Ethics Committee at Wageningen University and Research was obtained. To conduct this experimental study, a module called "Argumentative Essay Writing" was designed and implemented in the selected courses on the Brightspace platform. Students were requested to follow the module for three consecutive weeks and each weak students performed one task (Figure 1).
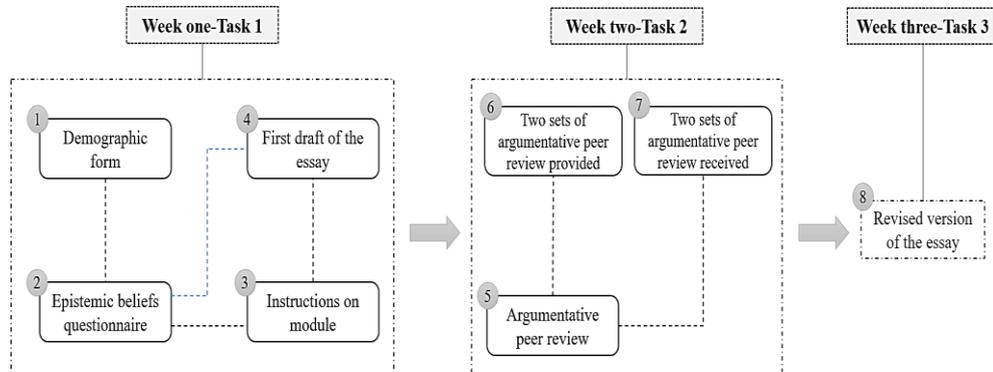

Figure 1. Study design

Measurement

Students' epistemic beliefs were assessed in two categories including students' epistemic beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge and the nature of scientific knowledge (Cheng et al., 2021). The Internet-specific justification of knowledge entailed 12 items to measure three dimensions including (a) personal justification (4 items), (b) justification by authority (4 items), and (c) justification by multiple sources (4 items). Students' beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge were measured in two categories including certainty of knowledge (6 items) and development of knowledge (6 items). Students' argumentative essays were measured in eight dimensions including: introduction on the topic, position on the topic, arguments for the position, (4) justifications for arguments, coutner-arguments, justifications for counter-arguments, response to counter-arguments, and conclusion.

Analysis

To analyze essay data, five coders cooperated and Fleiss' Kappa statistic results showed [75% (Fleiss' Kappa = 0.75 [IC 95%: 0.70-0.81]; z= 26.08; p<0.001) indicating significant agreement between the coders. Pearson correlation coefficient test and a multiple linear regression test were used to address research questions.

Results

Results for the first research question showed no significant relationship between students' epistemic beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge including personal justification (r=0.039, p>0.05), justification by authority (r=0.174, p>0.05), and multiple sources (r=0.062, p>0.05) with their argumentative

essay writing performance. Only, students' justification by the authority was positively correlated (r=0.244, p<0.01) and could predict (F (3,110)=3.29, p<0.05) their arguments in favor of the position. Students' beliefs about the certainty of knowledge were negatively (r=-0.251, p<0.01), and the development of knowledge positively (r=0.207, p<0.05) correlated to their argumentative essay writing performance. The results showed that students' epistemic beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge could predict overall argumentation performance in essay writing (F(3,110)=3.80, p<0.01). Results for the second research question showed no significant effects of students' gender on their argumentative essay writing performance was reported (F(1,146)=0.00, p=0.98). However, female students compared to male students showed a higher argumentative essay writing performance in terms of taking a position on the topic (F(1,146)=9.64, p<0.01). Results for the third research question showed that the overall interaction role (F(4,109)=0.32, p=0.86). However, an interaction role of the Internet-specific justification of knowledge and gender was found in the arguments in favor of the position section (F(4,109)=2.48, p<0.04). Male students' beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge in all category was positively correlated with their arguments in favor of the position section (personal justification, r=0.492, p<0.05; justification by authority, r=0.492, p<0.05; justification by multiple sources, r=0.492, p<0.05). In addition, the interaction role of beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge and gender in argumentative essay writing performance was reported to be significant (F(3,110)=3.24, p<0.05). Female students' beliefs about the certainty of knowledge were negatively correlated to their argumentative essay writing performance (r=-0.268, p<0.01) while it was positive for the development of knowledge (r=0.297, p<0.01).

Discussion and conclusion

The findings showed that, overall, students' different epistemic beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge including personal justification of knowledge, justification by authority, and multiple sources did not differently influence students' overall argumentation performance in essay writing. This finding did not align with the results of most prior studies where it has been found that the students' epistemic beliefs are associated with their argumentation performance (e.g., Baytelman et al., 2020). A plausible reason for this overall contradictory finding with most previous studies could be the specific instructions and guidelines that were provided for all students in this study which might result in alleviation of the effects of students' epistemic beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge on their argumentative essay writing performance. Our expectations in terms of the effects of students' beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge on argumentative essay writing were met where students' beliefs in the development of knowledge were positively correlated to their higher performance in argumentative essay writing, while students' beliefs about the certainty of knowledge were negatively influenced their performance in essay writing. This finding is consistent with most prior studies where an influential role of epistemic beliefs on argumentation performance in essay writing has been reported (e.g., Baytelman et al., 2020; Noroozi & Hatami, 2019). This finding can be explained by the theoretical findings for argumentation as it indicates that argumentation requires beliefs on the relativeness of the knowledge and related issues which opens the door for discussion, reasoning, and shaping discourse on the

argued topic. Our findings revealed that female and male students, overall, did not perform differently in their argumentative essay writing. However, for taking a position on the topic, female students outperformed male students. This finding, in general, is in line with a few prior studies where no gender differences were reported for argumentation performance (e.g., Asterhan et al., 2012), and in contrast with main previous studies (e.g., Noroozi et al., 2020). Although the overall performance of female and male students was not significant, better performance for female students for taking a position on the topic can be an indication of females' better performance to a small extent. This means that boys need more support than girls in argumentative essay writing. Our findings revealed that the interaction effects of epistemic beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge and gender on argumentative essay writing were neutral. This means that. Overall, female and male students' beliefs about the Internet-specific justification of knowledge did not differently influence their argumentative essay writing performance. This finding implies that even though females and males shape their thoughts and beliefs in different ways (Noroozi et al.., 2020; 2022), this is not an influential factor when students with different beliefs use the Internet as a source of knowledge to write their argumentative essays. Finally, our findings for the interaction role of epistemic beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge and gender in argumentative essay writing performance were reported to be significant. This means that female and male students' beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge including certainty and development of knowledge differently influence their argumentative essay writing performance. Female students with beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge could perform better in their argumentative essays compared to male students with beliefs about the nature of scientific knowledge. The findings of this study contribute to the literature and can provide implications for educators on how to guide, facilitate, and scaffold students' argumentative essay writing. In addition, due to the emergence of new artifiticial intelligence technologies such as ChatGPT and learning analytics (Banihashem et al., 2022; Farrokhnia et al., 2023; Noroozi et al., 2019), for future studies, we suggest taking steps forward and examining how these technologies can impact the epistemic beliefs of male and female students with different profiles in online learning (Banihashem et al., 2023c) and support their argumentation performance.

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Integrating Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and Technology into a Training Model for Facilitating Language Learning at the Undergraduate Level

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Abstract: This paper seeks to explore the amalgamation of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) and Integrative Learning Technologies (ILT) into a training model for fostering language learning. To this end, an action-research project at the undergraduate level proposes and tests the online delivery of English courses in which, under a socio-cognitive perspective of SRL, learners are guided to learn the language while using technological and pedagogical features of Web 2.0 to scaffold self-regulatory processes following three cyclical phases (Forethought, Performance, and Self-reflection). The results of this research demonstrate that seven internal factors (attention, perceived relevance of content and learning activities, confidence and computer/Internet self-efficacy, satisfaction with learning, cognitive overload, online social interaction, and technology problems), one external factor (learner support) and one personal factor (learning styles) should be addressed to better embed SRL and ILT. The interconnection of the previous factors (internal, external, and personal) that influence learner motivation and engagement in technology-rich learning environments led to five concrete implications for enhancing the model: 1) sustaining the motivation to learn, 2) strengthening computer/internet self-efficacy, 3) reducing cognitive overload, 4) ensuring distributed scaffolding and, 5) engaging learners to learn to integrate Web 2.0 into their learning. The resulting improved version of the training model is presented.

Keywords: Language learning, Self-regulated learning (SRL), Integrative learning technologies (ILT), Technology enhanced language learning (TELL), Training model.

Introduction

Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) is critical to academic success in online learning due to the high degree of learner autonomy this learning modality requires (Broadbent and Poon, 2015). Following this train of thought, the significantly higher drop-out rates observed when comparing online learning with face-to-face learning can be explained by the inability of students to self-regulate (Kulusakli, 2022). Evidently, controlling and regulating one's own learning is more difficult when it takes place via the Internet and other technological devices (Lim & Park, 2015). These issues were more apparent recently, when due to the COVID-19 pandemic, for a few years, online learning became the new normal for learners worldwide. As evidence shows (for example, Paris & Paris 2001; Perry, Phillips & Hutchinson, 2006; Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 1996; Zimmerman and Kitsantas, 2002) self-regulatory processes can be taught (Zimmerman, 2002) and SRL is positively associated with academic achievement (for example, Zimmerman, & Schunk, 2011, Schunk, & Zimmerman 2007, Panadero, Klug, Järvelä, & Malmberg, 2019; Pintrich, & De Groot 1990). In this context, the centrality of today's technology-mediated SRL appears to lie on researching how to effectively integrate SRL and the affordances of technology into a sound pedagogical learning design centred on students who live in the information and knowledge society.

Important research gaps have been identified in the context of research into the above integration. Firstly, given the potential of technology to enhance SRL, Urbina et.al (2021), claim the need to determine to what extent technology-enriched learning environments promote SRL. Secondly, considering that instructional design aims to improve learning outcomes, Huh and Reigeluth ponder that the field of instructional technology would benefit from examining "how instructional design can facilitate students' SRL" (Huh and Reigeluth, 2017:205). Thirdly, and more specifically involving the role of SRL in online learning *for second language learners*, Yu (2023) recently addressed to two gaps of empirical research and research application. In terms of empirical research, this author estimated necessary to "thoroughly investigate the self-regulation process and related influencing factors in second language online learning and then provide learners with support" (Yu, 2023:04,05). Concerning research application, Yu observed that "the transformation from research conclusions to teaching application should be enhanced, especially the use of technology to enhance SRL in the online environment, develop more technical tools to support learners to self-regulation, and carry out action research and design-based research in teaching for continuous optimization" (Yu, 2023: 05).

In line with the previous research gaps, the current research is aimed at exploring the integration of SRL and Learning Technologies into a training model for effectively scaffolding language learning at university level. Accordingly, three research questions were formulated. These were focused on

1) the impact of the training model embedding SRL and technology for language learning,

2) the personal, internal and/or external factors that hinder or facilitate the effectiveness of the model and

3) the main aspects that need to be considered in a revised version of this innovative system.

Review of Literature

Self-regulated learning

Self-regulation, self-regulated learning, self-regulated learners and self-regulated strategies

According to Dettori (2014:56), both the knowledge turn occurring in technology and society and the dissemination of networked communication have had a real impact on all spheres of human activity, resulting in new learning needs and opportunities. Interestingly, it would still seem to be true that, as Dettori acknowledges, potential learners cannot take advantage of these opportunities unless they are "able to self-regulate" (Ibid.). This last statement inevitably leads to the need to define "self-regulation"(SR), "self-regulated learning" (SRL), and "self-regulated learners". "SR", an umbrella term for SRL which shares a common foundation with "metacognition", is a process behavior-mediated that highlights the reciprocal determinism of the environment on the person (Dinsmore et al., 2008). Originally, Self-regulation only focused on behavioural and emotional regulation. However, after Bandura's works on self-efficacy, motivation became a third regulatory area (Saks and Leijen, 2014). "SRL" appears to have originated in the 1980s with the recurrent attention of "SR" in academic settings. This concept gained in momentum in the 1990s with the increasing presence of hypermedia in the educational literature (Dinsmore, et al, 2008). As it has been acknowledged, in "SRL", learners assume a role allowing them to "instigate, modify and sustain" goal-directed activities (Shunk and Zimmerman, 2003:59). Accordingly, "SRL" is an active and constructive process learners follow to set their own learning goals and achieve them through monitoring, regulating, and controlling their cognition, motivation, and behaviour (Pintrich, 2000). Consistent with the above definition of SRL, a well-known conceptualization of "self-regulated learners" states that they can be considered as such to the extent that they are metacognitive, motivational, and behaviorally active participants in their own learning (Zimmerman, 1989). As research has shown, these learners are characterized by self-monitoring their learning, seeking support from appropriate sources, strategically selecting tasks that match their perceived level of competence, and constructively adapting to challenges when following feedback (Bembenutty, 2023).   Self-regulated learners used different self-regulatory processes or SRL strategies to achieve desired learning outcomes. Research evidence demonstrates the significant role these processes play in optimising learning (Zimmerman, 2000).Given the common origin of self-regulation and metacognition, it is understandable that the latter definitions of SRL and self-regulated learners agree with Dinsmore et.al.'s (2008) suggestion that "most models of SRL incorporate aspects of both *metacognition* and *self-regulation* to shape its lens on learner monitoring", (the author's italics) (2008:394). These models are the focus of the following section.

Models of Self-regulated learning

According to the most comprehensive and up-to-date review of SRL by Panadero (2017), six models from the field of educational psychology discussed below, explain this latter process. The first four models assume that the SRL is cyclic, but their stages are not consistent. The first model is "self-regulation empowerment programme" (Zimmerman, 2000). The second model is "learning conceptual framework" (Pintrich, 2000).

These two models which are grounded in a sociocognitive perspective, detail both the SRL process and its main components (feedback and regulation). However, the "learning conceptual framework" highlights the role of motivation in SRL and includes a widely known instrument to measure it: the Motivated Strategies Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ). The third model is "information processing". This model is based on a metacognitive perspective and as such highlights the role of monitoring and the use of metacognitive strategies (Winne and Hadwin, 1998). The fourth model is "dual processing", based on behaviour control theory. This model emphasises the role of emotions in developing strategies to prevent oneself from being damaged (well-being pathway) when experiencing negative emotions (Boakaerts, 2011). The fifth model is "metacognition and emotion". This model is based on classical socio-cognitive theory. In contrast to the previous models, which consider SRL in cycles, this model uses micro and macro levels to clarify the associations between metacognition, motivation, and affect (Efklides, 2011). The sixth model is "shared regulation". This model, which is heavily influenced by the "information processing" model, explains regulation in terms of social and interactive features of learning. For this purpose, the model proposes self-regulation, co-regulation, and shared regulation, three modes of regulation in collaborative settings (Hadwin, et.al, 2017).

The potential of Technology to enhance self-regulated learning

In connection with the potential of technology to enable educational processes, the term "Technology-Enhanced Learning" (TEL), also known as "e-learning" "educational technologies" or "cyber-learning" (Duval and Sutherland, 2017:V) was created. Accordingly, TEL has been defined as "the collection of all approaches in which technology is used to support the learning or teaching process" (Schweighofer, & Ebner, 2015:28). In this context, the advances in technology have made possible "Technology Enhanced Learning Environments" (TELES), real, virtual or hybrid spaces that offer learners both freedom and choice to strategically decide about their own learning and thus practise SRL (Persico and Steffens, 2017). Integrative Learning Technologies (ILT) is one of the approaches to technology referred in the above definition of TEL encompassing different categories of TELES to support SR. This approach integrates both technological and pedagogical characteristics of the web to for the purpose of designing, developing, delivering, and managing online and distributed learning (Kitsantas and Dabbag, 2010). According to this approach, ILT tools can be divided into five categories considering their characteristics:1) collaboration and communication, 2) content creation and delivery, 3) administrative, 4) learning, 5) assessment. For example, a discussion forum, google docs and facebook are examples of collaborative and communication tools. In a similar vein, a Learning Management System (LMS), Weblogs and Youtube can be considered examples of content creation and delivery tools. The application of TEL to language education has led to the development of "Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)", a recognised field of study also known as "Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL)" (Chang and Hung, 2019).

The theoretical background of the pedagogical learning design behind the proposed training model

In the context of the previous review of literature, the current research was conducted under a pedagogical

learning design leading to propose an innovative training model for language learners. This learning design combines two SRL models under a sociocognitive perspective with the described approach to technology. Thus, the "self-regulation empowerment programme" (Zimmerman, 2000) and the "learning conceptual framework" (Pintrich, 2000) were aligned in terms of equivalent stages and SRL strategies to operationalise them. Following mainly the first of these models as a basis, this alignment considered three sequential stages (Forethought, Performance and Self-reflection), each containing two of six SRL strategies (goal setting, strategic planning, self-monitoring, task strategies, help-seeking/giving and self-evaluation). Different ILT categories were selected to apply these strategies in the context of the three cycles. For example, collaborative and communication tools were used for implementing goal setting, and learning tools and assessment tools were used for practising self-monitoring. As evidence of the repeated implementation of this learning design through an online English language course organised in Learning Units, learners individually created a process ePortfolio (Abrami and Barrett, 2005).

Methodology

In order to offer a better picture of the phenomenon under investigation, (i.e. the integration of Self-Regulated Learning and Integrative Learning Technologies into a training model for scaffolding language learning), mixed-methods research is followed (Ivankova and Greer, 2015). This research paradigm leading to a multidimensional perspective of the studied phenomenon enhances the interpretative validity (Schraw, 2010).

The research design

In connection with the above research paradigm, the research design of this study is action-research. Considering that action-research has a number of definitions, for the purposes of this study, this term should be understood as "a type of research conducted by practitioners in their own classrooms to trial innovation in teaching practice to improve learning and teaching practices or to solve problems" (Rose et al., 2020:269). In this case, as the research aim states, the innovation considered to be trailed is the training model that embeds SRL and ILT and, with the support of this model, what is attempted to improve is language learning (intended to be *scaffolded).* This action research-based research design was developed through "carefully planned cycles of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection for further planning" (Rose et al., 2020:9). These iterative processes allowed the proposed model to be amended and re-implemented on a solid foundation based on a combination of research, theory, and practice. Accordingly, four consecutive cycles were developed: 1) exploratory study (2016), 2) pre-study (2017), 3) main study (2017), and 4) follow-up (small scale) study (2021). Next, each of these phases are described along with the main lessons learnt from them.

The exploratory study was aimed to better define the scope of the research. Participants in this cycle were 19 Common European Framework of Reference (henceforth CEFR) B2 student-teachers on a mandatory Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) course at a public university in northern Mexico. In this cycle,

the researcher was also the course designer and facilitator of the course. The main lesson learnt from this initial phase was that in order for the model to be effective, it should be based on a sound pedagogical theory. In addition, it was considered that if technology and SRL were to be the means to support language learning, a language course might be more ideal than a CALL course to implement the next cycle of the research design.

The pre-study intended to formulate the final design of the main study. In this cycle the participants were 22 CEFR A2 learners on a non-mandatory English course at a BA in Mechanical Engineering at a public university in western Mexico. The researcher was the course designer but not the facilitator of the course in this phase. Having developed a strong pedagogical model to follow by this time, the researcher intended that this phase work as a main study. However, learners demotivated and dropped out when after the initial week they learned not English but *about* online tools and SRL strategies. Most of the learners eventually dropped out the course, possibly considering its non-compulsory nature. This demonstrated the need of limiting as much as possible any training on online tools while embedding them with SRL strategies into the course and showing learners the purpose of using these affordances to facilitate language learning and learning beyond. Next follows a detailed description of the main study, which precedes the report of the follow-up study.

The main study

Following all the lessons learnt from the previous two cycles, the main study aimed to implement a training model embedding SRL and ILT for scaffolding language learning. This main cycle is described below in terms of context, participants, course sequence, learning modality, research methods and instruments, data collection methods, data analysis method, ethics, and the role of the researcher. The main study was conducted at the School of Nursing at a public university in northern Mexico. At this School, learners should demonstrate to have a CEFR B1 level as a pre-requisite for completing the profession (BA in Nursing). To this end, these learners are offered with unexpensive opportunities to learn and/or certificate their levels of English through a university cross-sectional programme. In connection with these opportunities, they can take English courses in line to their level of English at their own School. Such a level is usually the starting point to be taught in face-to-face courses based on a coursebook. A group of 13 CEFR A2 learners registered for one of these courses running from September to November 2017. This class was taught by a colleague of the researchers who had been typically teaching past English courses at the same School. As he is very skilful at technology he gladly accepted to teach under an online modality. The researchers gave this colleague a brief induction for him to understand the course philosophy, its contents, tools, resources and expected outcomes.

Convenience sampling was used to select these participants for this main cycle. From the group described above, six students (1 male and 5 females) aged from 20-22, volunteered to participate. The gender imbalance reflects the fact that there were only two males in the class. In line with the general level of these learners, that is CEFR A2, the selected course to use was a pre-designed online course called "Oxford Online Skills Program A2 Academic Bundle" delivered through the Platform Oxford Learn (available at https://lms.oxfordlearn.com). In this context, the following sections describe the organisation of this pre-designed course and the features of the

LMS used to deliver this course. This description serves as a background to explain how the course content was merged with the sequential stages of the pedagogical learning design materialised in the form of a new online course serving as a basis for conducting this research. In its original design, the online course, is organised into three main modules of aligned contents for the development of the four communicative skills in English. Consequently, each module follows a fixed structure that starts with the receptive skills (reading followed by listening) and continues with the productive ones (speaking followed by writing).

Internally, this pre-designed course is developed under the following sequence of three sections *Engage-Explore-Task-Reflect.* The objective and content of *Engage* and *Reflect* are consistent in terms of the four communicative skills: motivating the learners to learn (*Engage*) and reflecting on their own learning (*Reflect*). In contrast, even if in all cases *Explore* prepares for the task(s) ahead, due to the nature of the skills (receptive or productive) some differences in content are found if comparing the way in which they are approached. For example, concerning Reading and Listening, *Explore* is aimed at familiarising learners with key language and vocabulary from the upcoming text or to introduce the learners to the concepts in it. Two *Tasks* are then included: the first require learners to read or listen for the main idea while the second one, which is more intensive, require them to read or listen for details. However, concerning Writing and Speaking, two *Explore* activities are included: the first is focused on structure, language, and purpose of the model text and the second one is focused on its functional language or vocabulary. Then, as part of the *Task*, learners create a final product based on all the previous sections.

Evidently, the use of the abovementioned learning pattern, that is, *Engage-Explore-Task-Reflect*, fully corresponds with the cyclically sustained phases in the social cognitive models. This is the main reason that to use this course as a basis for implementing the proposed training model. For instance, the fact that *Engage* is aimed at motivating learners to learn and *Explore* pretends to prepare the learner for the task to come, suggests clear connections with the first phase of the social cognitive model expressing them in the name of the phases themselves ("Forethought" in Zimmerman's model and "Forethought, planning and activation" in Pintrich's). Similarly, if considering that *Task*(s) refer(s) to the practice of skills and the implementation of a number of strategies, it/they is/are clearly associated with the next phases of the models under consideration ("Performance in Zimmerman's model and "Monitoring and Control" in Pintrich's). Likewise, since *Reflect* intends that learners reflect on their own learning, it is an obvious reference to "Self-reflection" in Zimmerman's model and "Reflection" in Pintrich's). In this respect, it should be noted that this section of the pre-designed course was not used considering that in many ways it overlaps with the final SRL strategy under the Self-reflection/Reflection stage.

The online Learning Management System "Oxford Learn" (available at https://lms.oxfordlearn.com) re-uses web multimedia resources including images, audio, video, text and animation, by means of a systematic set of modules with data which is aligned, tagged, and stored to allow easy access and modification or re-tagging (Aldaij and Berri, 2017: 156). The above-described features of the pre-designed course were considered to apply several changes and additions aimed at making it fit with the proposed model for embedding SRL and ILT for

scaffolding language learning. To this end, the different steps of the original scaffolding sequence (*Engage-Explore-Task-Reflect)* were situated in the social cognitive models of SRL by Zimmerman and by Pintrich. At the time of developing this alignment, it was found that the need of adding, re-ordering and/or hiding some sections to integrate specific SRL strategies under the stages of the combined framework of Zimmerman and Pintrich, that were identified in the theoretical chapter: Goal setting, time management, self-monitoring, task strategies, help seeking/giving, and self-evaluation. These strategies correspond to the three successive stages of Zimmerman's model and to the four successive stages of Pintrich's model.

Firstly, in relation to Zimmerman's and Pintrich's first phase, (correspondingly, "Forethought" and "Forethought, planning and activation"), a new section with the Learning Unit's can dos was added for learners to individually create Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (hence SMART) goal statement. This section titled "Set your goal", was added before *Engage*. After this section, the researcher-designer included "Organise yourself to work in this Learning Unit" another new section, in this case, for learners to develop a plan for allocating time to complete the activities of each Learning Unit.

Second, regarding Zimmerman's "Performance" phrase which corresponds to Pintrich's "Monitoring and Control" phases, following *Engage, Explore*, *Task(s)*, (without considering *Reflect* that was replaced with a written personal final reflection at the end of each learning Unit), the opportunities for monitoring performance were provided in an online forum titled "Monitor your progress". After self-observing the root cause of their personal learning difficulties for the development of the previous sections (including the communicative/skills or language systems involved), learners used this online space to post comments about these problems. In response to these posts, the teacher provided feedback comments with suggestions of resources on the weak issues learners had identified. Then, another section was added for the learners to complete a task demonstrating the achievement of their initial personal goal (stated at the very beginning of the Learning Unit). This section titled "Apply your learning", consisted of creating a rubric-based multimedia presentation using the Powtoon, a free online video maker (The rubrics, simplified because of previous experiences in the cycles of research, focused on specific time, use of multimedia, and language content).

Third, regarding the last phase referred as "Self-Reflection" by Zimmerman and simply as "Reflection" by Pintrich, following the instructions of another new section, learners gave and received feedback comments on the task they had created. The rubrics provided for the task were basis for these comments. The teacher also offered feedback comments on this task. In addition, following a series of guiding questions, learners individually authored a written reflection on progress made through the Learning Unit and outlined alternatives to improve the work done. This final new section (replacing the *Reflect* section) was titled "My own reflection". The evidence resulting from these stages in each Learning Unit (i.e. the initial SMART goal, the plan, the evidence of working with problematic sections and/or skills, the multimedia presentation, the feedback comments (given and received), and the personal reflection) was published in an individual ePortfolio on Weebly, a free website builder. In connection with the experience derived from the previous cycles of research, it was considered the need of facilitating a "smother transition" from a teacher-centred paradigm to a learner-

centred one and fostering an awareness of SRL. Thus, after providing the learners with a rationale for knowing their current level of English and working with SRL, the implementation started with a two-day introduction aimed at getting learners ready for developing the course learning tasks. As part of this initial stage, learners took a diagnostic exam and worked with specially developed interactive online resources on how to 1) set goals, 2) give feedback, and 3) conduct self-assessment which remained permanently available in the Oxford Learn Platform (LMS), for further reference. A short needs analysis was also conducted at this point.

The follow-up study

The follow-up study was especially included in the research design for testing the impact of the implementation of the changes made to the training model in the main study. This section presents a comparison and contrast of the main study and the follow-up study as the basis for instrumenting various changes in the stages of the training model. Although a language level diagnostic was applied along with the provided SRL strategies (through ad hoc interactive learning objects) in the main study, there was a two-day introduction but not a proper preparation stage. This phase, called Stage 0 (Preparation) was added since the follow-up study, after concluding that in the main study learners were really unfamiliar with one of the main online tools used (i.e. The Powtoon) and that learning to use it while responding to online course requirements led learners to a cognitive overload. For this reason, in Stage 0, learners are surveyed on the tools they know. The outcome of this survey and the group consensus is the basis for deciding which tools to use and determine whether direct training on a particular tool/tools is required. Notably, almost all participants in the follow-up study were familiar with Google technologies, so training on these 2.0 tools was minimal.

Both online scaffolding activities for fostering SRL strategies under the Stage 1(Forethought) had changes. In goal setting, the SMART objectives were created individually during the main implementation. However, after finding the learners' difficulties with the "higher order psychological process" involved in the creation of SMART goal statements, in the follow-up study this task was approached differently: Initially, these statements were created in pairs and then, once the learners developed the required skills, these objectives were done independently. Concerning time management, Google Calendar replaced the planning form template, after concluding that this latter resource was impractical for some learners in the main study. In addition, the results of the survey of the follow-up study participants showed that most of them were familiar with aforementioned Google shareable tool. In terms of the SRL strategies, the Stage 2 (Performance) had the most significant changes of the whole re-implementation of the Model. These modifications are discussed next. Regarding the first SRL strategy of the second stage, that is, self-monitoring, the original tool (discussion forum at Oxford Learn VLE) was retained. However, the results of the main study showed that even when the learning needs of the participants were considered when selecting the materials to deal with improvement areas, the suggested resources were not at the proactive level these learners needed. Accordingly, in the follow-up study, a variety of these types of materials were provided on the forums. Likewise, in response to another finding of the main study, the selection of these proactive resources also considered the learners' approaches to different learning tasks (learning styles). In addition, since it was found that in the main study the infrequency and delay of

feedback comments from the teacher were a major cause of participant demotivation, special care was taken to ensure frequent and immediate feedback comments to follow-up study participants. About the second strategy at the second stage of the main study, that is, task strategies, learners were requested to create a generic task to show evidence of their learning at every Learning Unit. However, the research findings showed that this task along with unfamiliarity with the online tool (Powtoon video maker) greatly led learners to cognitive overload resulting in a lack of motivation to learn. As a result, during the follow-up study, different Web 2.0 tools and tasks were considered to show evidence of learning in connection with the communicative skill(s) of a given Learning Unit.

Regarding the SRL strategies at the third stage (Self-reflection) that is, help seeking/giving and Self-evaluation, it should be noted that, considering the findings from the main study, no changes were made to the online scaffolding activities. However, as it happened for the rest of the Stages, based on the findings, it was surprisingly proved that learners were unfamiliar with the three online tools used (particularly with Powtoon). For this reason, it was decided to survey follow-up study participants on the Web 2.0 tools they know. In addition, according to the steps taken to strengthen online/Internet self-efficacy in response to another insight from the main study, the decision on the tools to use with the follow-up study participants derived from the group consensus. As explained above, Google sites was the selected tool, substituting in this way Weebly as the individual ePortfolio technology for learners to publish all the evidence created from the different stages of the Model.

Research instruments

Two qualitative instruments and three quantitative instruments were considered for the research. The qualitative instruments were a semi-structured interview (conducted with the six research participants after concluding the online course) and the individual ePortfolio (developed during the online course). The quantitative instruments, (applied both before and after the course) were the Diagnostic Language Assessment System (© 2006-2015 Lancaster University), better known as DIALANG (free online diagnostic assessment of language (Brancaslion, 2009)), the Motivated Strategies for Learning (MSLQ) (a paper based-self report that measures both motivation and learning (Pintrich, et al, 1991), and the OLVSES (Online Learning Value and Self-Efficacy Scale) (Artino & McCoach, 2008) (applied only after the course). The following paragraphs give details of these instruments and/or the rationale for using them.

The DIALANG is an online diagnostic system aimed at assessing a person's language abilities, which examines reading, writing, listening, grammar, and vocabulary. This instrument was selected since it offers immediate results that are aligned to the CEFR, adopted by the Mexican Ministry of Education (SEP, after its Spanish Acronym) as the national framework for teaching, learning, and assessment. Furthermore, this diagnostic system is based on different combinations of items and offers results per area which can be easily compared in search of increased learning.

The MSLQ is a paper-based self-report questionnaire that measures both motivation and learning, two SRL aspects corresponding to its two sections. Accordingly, the motivation section (six scales) is divided into 1) learners' goals and value beliefs for a course, 2) learners' beliefs about their skill to succeed in a course and 3) learners' anxiety about tests in a course. Similarly, the learning strategies section (nine scales) is divided into 1) cognitive strategies, 2) metacognitive strategies and 3) learner management of different resources. The selection of this instrument, intended to be applied before and after the intervention, responds to several reasons: Primarily, the MSLQ matches to the perspective of SRL adopted for this research (social cognitive). In this reference, Pintrich (2004:390) notes some overlap between the components of his social cognitive model of SRL and the scales measured by the MSLQ; in a similar vein, the adopted taxonomy of learning strategies, that is, cognitive, metacognitive, resource-oriented and affective SRL strategies is also clearly reflected on the MSLQ. In addition, as acknowledged by Pintrich himself (1991), the self-report questionnaire being discussed is targeted at higher education learners, where this research project is conducted. Likewise, as Winne and Perry (2000) say, the MSLQ is one of the two self-report inventories, which have an accompanying manual, so that it can be easily used by individual learners in a course.

The use of a survey like the OLVSES reflects the idea that "the constructs [related to SRL] reside within the individual and are relatively stable, and they de-emphasize contextual and temporal variability" (Patrick and Middleton, 2002:27). The use of a semi-structured interview is based on the idea that "interviews enable researchers to take a grounded, inductive approach to understanding student' thoughts and behaviours, rather than imposing their theoretical perspectives on pre-established categories on what students say" (Patrick and Middleton, 2002:28).

Triangulation of data collection methods

Methodological triangulation and in particular "triangulation of data collection methods" (Rose et. al, 2020:244) was implemented because of two main reasons: 1) To gain a better understanding of the phenomenon under consideration (i.e embedding of SRL and ILT for scaffolding language learning) and 2) to support the validation of the analysed data. In this regard, the evidence from the ePortfolio, that is, SMART Goal statements, completed planning form templates, forum posts, peer feedback comments, and final reflection entries were cross verified with the results from the semi-structured interview. The results of the MSLQ were cross verified with the results of the interview and the analysis of the SMART Goal statements. Equally, the results of the OLVSES were cross verified with different extracts of evidence from the ePortfolio. Thus, although triangulation tended to be applied between qualitative data, it also applied between qualitative and quantitative data. In all the cases, however, qualitative methods subordinated the quantitative ones.

Data analysis

The outcomes of the data analysis resulted from an examination based on a "template organizing style". As its name indicates, in this coding method "the analysis is guided by a basic codebook or template that is taken to

the data as part of the process of identifying meaningful units in the text" (Crabtree and Miller, 2022: 236). Given the central role of SRL strategies in the proposed training model, it was decided to create this code manual with SRL strategies as categories (that is, goal setting, time management, self-monitoring, task strategies, help seeking/giving and self-evaluation). This list facilitated the process of coding and while conducting it, new codes emerged to provide a more complete picture. The role of technology as an enhancement/barrier for developing the training model and the positive/negative features of its implementation (associated to learner motivation) were among the most representative new codes. The data analysis process was supported by the N*Vivo software (version 1.6.1), "a qualitative research tool for classifying, sorting and arranging data in order to analyse them for patterns and to identify themes" (Vandergrift, 2015).

A framework for dealing with findings

With the aim of organising, analysing, and interpreting the main results of this research, Kim and Frick's theoretical framework of factors affecting learner motivation in self-directed e-learning (2011) was adopted. This framework, emerging from previous studies in the context of computer-based instruction and distance education, considers Song's (2000) classification of internal, external, and personal factors. *Internal factors* correspond to the course features that influence learner's motivation; *external factors* represent the aspects of the learning environment that influence learner's motivation; and *personal factors* are the motivational influences emanating from the learner himself/herself.

Results

The implementation, which combines SRL and ILT to promote language learning, resulted in findings associated with several factors affecting learning motivation and engagement to learn. These factors are examined next. With the conceptual framework of Kim and Frick (2011) in mind, previous research will be used to interpret findings relevant to the research questions, as follows:

1. Most of these (relevant) findings will be discussed in terms of the three motivational influences (*internal, external, and personal factors*);

2. Findings associated with *technology problems* (an internal factor) -representing a major outcome of the implementation- will be widely discussed.

Internal factors

Among the eleven internal influences listed in Kim and Frick's (2011) conceptual framework, the findings from the present research match with 1) learner *attention* (task engagement), learner perceived *relevance* of content and learning activities, 3) learner *confidence* and self-efficacy, 4) learner *satisfaction* with learning and 5) cognitive overload and 10) online social interactions and 11) technology problems. These first five factors are approached next.

Learner attention

Learners were initially enthusiastic and ambitious when it comes to setting goals, which was the very first step of the sequence. However, this enthusiasm and ambition was not sustained over the online course, which suggest that learner attention was obstructed at some point, possibly due to cognitive overload (another internal factor to be discussed below) (Hartley, 1999). This unwanted change represents a key finding for the current research because learner attention is a pre-requisite for learner engagement (Kim and Frick, 2011).   The abovementioned obstruction of attention might have resulted in a variation of learner motivation during the online course (Coldeway, 1991). To explain this change, it is useful to conceptualise Song's three types of motivation under the ARCS Model: 1) *motivation to initiate*, 2) *motivation to persist* and 3) *motivation to continue* (Song, 2000). This conceptualisation is based on the idea that the reasons for each learner to participate, persist, and continue, vary according to the abovementioned factors (internal, external, or personal). From this perspective, it can be said that the learners in the current research had the *motivation to initiate*, but no *motivation to persist*, and no *motivation to continue*. According to Song (Ibid.), learner's lack of *motivation to persist* may stem from not-motivating interactions between instructors and learners, content and learners, and/or learners and learners. Similarly, this author explains that learner's lack of *motivation to continue* could be due to a lack of intrinsic motivation (Ibid.). For what refers to this research, the non-motivating interactions occurred between instructor and learner, and between content and learners.

Learner perceived relevance of content and learning activities

The structure of the planning form templates was not entirely practical to all. However, Jorge, Laura and Alma recognised the importance of carefully structuring their study time to successfully complete the online course activities by highlighting various benefits of strategic planning. Consistent with the awareness of these learners, the study by Miertschin et. al. (2012) aimed at examining the possible relationships between the development of time management skill and online course experiences, found that learners had a generalised perception that time management is important to their academic success in online instruction.

Learner confidence and computer/Internet self-efficacy

Learner computer/Internet self-efficacy proved to be a critical component of learner motivation leading to successful online learning, which corresponds with insights from the study by Joo et.al, (2000) on the effects of several self-efficacy perceptions on learning outcomes of Web-based instruction. This was confirmed through findings related to the overall creation of video presentations, task strategies, and self-evaluative standards to be discussed next. In doing so, again in agreement with Joo et. al. (Ibid.) it should be considered that, as in the traditional classroom, in the online setting where this research was conducted, "self-efficacy for self-regulated learning significantly relate[s] to learners' confidence". (Joo et.al, 2000:14). Concerning the overall creation of video presentations, the lack of knowledge and skills about the Powtoon and task requirements prompted Laura and Alma to suggest other more conventional and simple tasks to replace the creation of videos. However,

according to the interview, those learners who were confident of successfully developing their samples of learning with the Powtoon, dramatically changed their initial negative perception of this task and effectively managed to create the expected videos. As Cheng and Yeh (2009) explain in the context of the ARCS Model, the reason for this significant variation and positive outcome lies in the fact that "confidence influences the learner's persistence and achievement" (Cheng and Yeh, 2009:601).

In terms of task strategies, the findings of the current research focus on the use of cognitive strategies, the *exclusive* use of affective strategies (that is, the sole implementation of affective strategies with no consideration of cognitive strategies) and the combination and variety of these two types of strategies. These three findings are explained next. The use of cognitive strategies (that is, rehearsal, elaboration, and metacognitive) by three people resulted a positive factor in the creation of the expected type of videos. In contrast, the *exclusive* use of affective strategies (that is, positive talk and situational interest enhancement) by three people is associated with the anxiety they experienced in their attempts to regulate the online learning processes (computer use anxiety or computer anxiety).

The two previous findings can be understood considering the research by Zarei et. al.(2016) aimed at finding relationships between learning styles and strategies and the variables of computer use anxiety, computer competency, and computer/Internet self-efficacy. According to the findings from this study, cognitive strategies were positive predictors of computer/Internet self-efficacy, while affective strategies were negative predictors of computer/Internet self-efficacy. Respecting the importance of cognitive (and metacognitive) strategies, Shunk et. al. (2016) considered that their implementation "result in deeper processing of the material to be learned, not just more effort at the task, and should be related to higher levels of understanding and learning" (Shunk, Meece and Pintrich, 2016:62). Furthermore, Zarei et. al. (2016), also found a negative correlation between computer anxiety and computer/Internet self-efficacy. All in all, these findings suggest that anxiety, a concept inversely related to self-efficacy, is "an affective barrier" and "a constant thread" that decreases learner's motivation to do tasks in online settings (Zarei et.al., 2016: 83). Within these insights, it can be concluded that *exclusive* users of affective strategies in the current research -those who used these strategies to cope with computer anxiety- were significantly less self-efficacious than users of cognitive strategies. This had a negative effect on the quality of video presentations created by the learners.

The remaining finding on task strategies concerns the combined and varied use of both cognitive and affective strategies, which resulted in the most effective samples of learning (i.e. Laura's and Alma's). This positive outcome can be explained by considering learning from a social cognitive theoretical perspective. Such perspective assumes an inseparable connection between cognitive and affective dimensions. This link is explained by Stefanou & Salisbury-Glennon (2002), when they observe that "learning takes place through a complex interplay between both cognitive and motivational [that is, affective] variables interacting in a synergistic manner" (Stefanou & Salisbury-Glennon, 2002:80). Beyond the previous (ideal) justification of the bonds between cognitive and affective strategies, the varied use of them is noticed and contextualised by Joo et. al. (2000), who cite the study by Horn et. al. (1993) to illustrate that the use of various of these strategies along

with a greater sense of self-efficacy led to better performance. Accordingly, it can be concluded that in order to create the above-mentioned samples of learning, learners must not only have had the ability to "assemble" an appropriate "set" of cognitive (including metacognitive) and affective strategies but also had used them through self-efficacy for successfully advancing from *what they felt capable of doing* to *what they were in fact able to do* in terms of the video presentations.

Concerning self-evaluative standards in the current study, the findings show that the use of graduated standards (i.e., flexibility to sense any improvement), seemingly associated with self-efficacy (and therefore confidence), resulted constructive and favoured effective self-evaluation practices. In contrast, the use of absolute standards (i.e. strict interpretation of performance outcomes), which might have resulted from a lack of the prior belief, seemed unconstructive and impeded these practices. Consistent with these results, Kitsantas and Zimmerman's (2006) study of the role of graphic and self-evaluative standards for enhancing self-regulation of practice, found that those who set absolute standards were significantly less aware of their learning progress than those who set graduated standards. The same study also showed that using graduated standards led students to increase their judgements of performance and their self-satisfaction reactions with this performance. Evidently, applying graduated standards proved to be much more beneficial than applying absolute standards.

Learner satisfaction with learning

Learners' overall unsatisfactory experience with video creation had a negative impact on their intrinsic motivation to learn. This interpretation comes from Keller's perspective in the context of the theory and research that support his ARCS model. Interestingly, for him, *intrinsic motivation* is a synonym of *intrinsic satisfaction*, which results from "feelings of mastery and from the pleasure of having succeeded at a task which was meaningful and challenging" (Keller, 2010:166). Seemingly, the participants in the current research did not experience these positive feelings. Following Keller's perspective, the reason of this unsatisfactory experience with the video creation appears to come from designing instructional content and learner activities not meeting an appropriate level of challenge such that these students did not find them worthwhile in terms of, for instance, the level of novelty, sense of competence, building knowledge and skills in desired areas, and experiencing a degree of control/autonomy. This interpretation also matches with learner attention on the idea that learner's lack of "motivation to continue" comes from a lack of intrinsic motivation.

As observed in this case, the creation of the samples of learning did not meet the abovementioned conditions so that intrinsic satisfaction was not sustained. In fact, Keller (2010) highlights that due to the nature of school settings, creating the conditions for intrinsic satisfaction/motivation represents a challenge. Therefore, extrinsic reinforcements are normally fostered to establish a presumably self-sustaining behaviour. As will be shown, in the current research, an extrinsic reinforcement on the videos came from feedback comments from peers and teacher. The main findings on this type of reward, to be discussed next, focus on the comments themselves and the attitudes taken by the feedback recipients.

In terms of feedback comments, those from Carla and Laura are illustrative. These comments only partially met the content requirements that they were supposed to cover according to the rubrics. At the same time, these remarks approved appearance elements and attempted to motivate feedback recipients with general encouraging expressions that ultimately were a powerful extrinsic reward. Despite this positive outcome, according to Patchan et. al., (2016), a rhetorical feedback involving praise and compliments like this, certainly increases its uptake (that is, its likelihood of implementation); however, this surface-based feedback is not as effective as localised, meaning-based feedback.

Concerning the attitude assumed by feedback recipients, the findings of the current research documents two main reactions: some valued feedback comments from both peers and teacher while some only valued feedback comments from teacher. Following Wang (2016), this type of reactions can be explained within one single adjacent factor: trust. As this author also observes, some students consider that their peers are not capable of providing useful feedback while trusting their instructors' capacity to do it.

Cognitive overload

In order to produce the expected learning samples in the online course, the participants learned English while finding and applying appropriate cognitive, metacognitive, and affective strategies to cope with the task requests, as well as learning how to use the Powtoon. For instance, in Interview Extract 16 (lines 1-5) Iliana describes her difficulties in this step and acknowledges the video was '*the most deficient thing that she did in the whole course*'. This "learn-all-at-once" situation had a negative impact on the participants' motivation to learn and resulted in poor quality of their language learning and self-regulated training. Such negative motivational outcomes can be explained within cognitive load theory (Sweller, 1988). In line with this perspective, Kim and Frick (2011) observe that cognitive overload may inhibit the learner attention to the learning material and overwhelm him/her due to the high mental effort required, leading to a decrease in motivation. Clearly, three simultaneous requests from the "learn-all-at-once" situation (i.e. learning English, finding and using appropriate cognitive, metacognitive, and affective strategies and learning to use the video maker tool), resulted in exceeding by far the learner's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1963) understood as "the difference between an upper limit of task difficulty that the learner can accomplish without help and an upper limit of task difficulty that the learner can accomplish with help". (Schnotz, Fries & Horz, 2009:89).

Online social interactions

Despite the positive features of the teacher's reply in the online forum after learner self-monitoring (concrete, enlightening and providing additional information on the learning point), two adjacent characteristics negatively affected learners´ motivation to learn. These features were 1) The type of teacher's suggestion of online resources and 2) his infrequent and late feedback. These issues are explained below. Regarding the type of teacher's suggestion of online resources, it was found that the only provided hyperlink did not meet the level

of interaction with content that these learners required, resulting in poor quality learning. This can be explained by considering the three-level categorisation of interaction for web-based material referred by Gao and Lehman (2003):

1) *low-level*, which incorporates typical, static hyperlinks,

2) *reactive level*, that provides an immediate feedback strategy and

3) *proactive level*, based on a strategy that prompts students to generate a new example scenario following previous a learning point.

On the one hand, the resource proposed by the teacher was a reference website, which corresponds to a static hyperlink. Therefore, this website can be categorized as "low interaction" material. However, due to the confusions about the construct under consideration (verb collocations) in the online forum the learners under consideration not only required to read an explanation and examples of this type of collocation but also *an active interaction with this construct.* This type of interaction can only be provided using proactive web-based materials. In this respect, Gao and Lehman (2003) highlight that the example scenario generation resulting from the use of proactive web-based materials enhances student performance by "help[ing] the learners reflect on learning content, implement what they learn, and incorporate the learned information into their own subject areas" (Gao and Lehman, 2003: 383). On the other hand, the infrequent and late feedback from the teacher can explain the low learner participation on the online forums of the course. This can be concluded from the works of Mason (2011) and Balaji and Chakrabarti (2010). Regarding the level of participation of the teacher, Mason (2011) found that increasing postings by the moderator lead learners perceive the moderator as more enthusiastic and having more expertise. This results in "increased student interest and motivation" (Mason, 2011:262). Concerning the desirable types of teacher-student interaction and feedback and their valuable effects, Balaji and Chakrabarti (2010) found that "constant student-faculty interactions and immediate feedback in C[omputer] M[ediated] C[ommunication] are suggested to raise the student comfort levels with technology and encourages them to be more proactive" (Balaji and Chakrabarti, 2010:6). Thus, the lack of these three key pedagogical features, that is, increasing posting, constant interaction, and immediate feedback resulted in the obvious ineffectiveness of these online spaces.

External factors

According to Kim and Frick's (2011) framework under consideration, there are two external factors or aspects of the learning environment that play a role in learner motivation. These are 1) learner support and 2) the overall climate of the learner's instructional and organisational setting. The results of this research are consistent with the first factor, which will be discussed next.

Learner support

The participants received support to help them go through the different phases of implementation of the considered model. However, the type of assistance provided was ineffective as illustrated by the interpretation

of the next findings on goal setting and task strategies. In terms of goal setting, it should be remembered that, at the beginning of the online course, these learners were trained to develop SMART objectives through interactive learning objects (ad hoc created). Despite this, most of the goals they set were poorly achieved because the goal statements were unrealistic. In addition, participants such as Iliana and Jorge made the same mistakes repeatedly in their goal statements through the Learning Units, confirming that they were not receiving any feedback from the teacher. About task strategies, it should be considered that despite written instructions and feedback on the platform along with verbal explanations from the teacher, most of these learners failed to understand the task requirements and were also unable to complete the 3-minute length of the video (which they found too long). As a result, they did not know what to include to show evidence of learning gains. In this train of thought, the samples of learning created by Carla, Melisa, and Alma proved task confusions. For example, some included assessment comments of their own performance, others assumed that they were complete free to develop the videos or believed that their focus was simply on explaining personal goals.

The evident ineffectiveness of the support provided relies on the fact that it was not *distributed,* that is, gradual and instrumented through different forms and resources. In this respect, Tabak (2004) defines distributed scaffolding as "marshaling and orchestrating multiple resources to support learners" (Tabak, 2004:307). This interpretation is linked to the idea of ensuring that the learner performs in his/her current ZPD and can eventually extend it to work independently (Cazden, 2001: 71). This is the type of assistance that was not provided during the implementation of the online course and resulted in learner-demotivation to learn under the considered model.

Adherence to distributed scaffolding implies using different means to progressively provide multiple support in response to "complex and diverse learning needs" (Tabak, 2004:305) which, in this case, arise during the implementation of the considered model. For example, fostering goal setting through this approach implies considering that this SRL strategy has been classified as a "higher order psychological process" which is "hard to operationalize due to the complex organization of the meta-ability" (Korchagina et al., 2019:1235). Therefore, in order to cope with the complexity of learning to develop SMART goal, the research participants needed constant feedback to create their SMART goal statements in addition to the training with online learning objects implemented at the beginning of the course. In connection with this pedagogical perspective, Leggett et. al. (2019) explain that "[f]eedback should have a focus on how clear and specific the learner's goal setting is and encourage them to set appropriately challenging, relevant, process focused, and specific goals." (Legget et. al 2019:148). Then, these authors acknowledge a correlation between setting clear and specific goals focused on procedural aspects and higher levels of performance and more effective learning from it. Likewise, adhering to distributed scaffolding regarding task strategies implies more than providing written instructions and rubrics along with verbal explanations of expected video presentations. Certainly, this might have encouraged learners to use task strategies, but, as the findings showed, it was not enough for them to implement these self-regulated processes effectively. In fact, Kitsantas and Dabbagh (2010) suggest that beyond supporting and promoting student use of task strategies, teachers should guide learners to identify:

    1)   What specific strategy they can use for a given learning task,

2)   When to use a particular strategy,

3)   Why a particular strategy is appropriate for a given learning task, and finally,

4)   How students can use strategy to perform or accomplish the assigned task (Kitsantas and Dabbagh, 2010:85)

In order to carry out the guidance described above, social cognitive theory proposes that the teacher models or exemplifies the use of task strategies. According to White (2017), research provides evidence that, as a cognitive pattern of instruction, modelling is very effective on the self-regulation of learning in instructional settings and is valid and practical in the 21st century classroom. In the same train of thought, Kitsantas and Dabbagh (2010) highlight the role of the teacher in modelling effective strategies and explain that this pattern of instruction "can provide opportunities to enrich students learning by illustrating creative applications of strategy use, which may involve modifications and integration of multiple strategies" (Kitsantas and Dabbagh, 2010:82). In the case considered, the teacher might present the learners an exemplary Powtoon video presentation showing the implementation and integration of specific cognitive, metacognitive, and affective strategies aimed at achieving the initial goal of a given Learning Unit. In addition, he/she might show these students an analysis of the video presentation and explain them how it follows task instructions and responds to rubrics.

Personal factors

Consistent with the considered framework (Kim and Frick, 2011), there are two personal factors or aspects emanating from the learner that influence learner motivation. These are 1) learning styles and 2) learner media preferences. The findings from the current research agree with the first factor, which is discussed next.

Learning styles

The individual's learning approach to different learning tasks, that is, his/her learning style plays a role in online student motivation. In the current research, this understanding was reflected through the findings derived from the relationship between 1) learning styles and instructional strategies and 2) learning styles and self-evaluation. Regarding the relationship between learning style and instructional strategies, two illustrative cases emerged in connection with the instructional strategy that asked learners to create a personal language goal for each Learning Unit of the online course: This strategy did not correspond to the learning style of Melissa but corresponded to the learning style of Iliana. Accordingly, the request under consideration was not motivating for Melissa but was motivating for Iliana. In this respect, Mitchell's (2000) study, which focused on the effect of matching teaching style and learning style preferences in a web-based environment, found similar results to those above. These findings indicate that participants who received instruction that corresponds to their learning style had more positive attitudes than their classmates who received instruction that did not correspond to their learning style.

About the connection between learning styles and self-evaluation, the implementation of two different self-

evaluation procedures, repeatedly observed in the final reflection entries of the Learning Units, provides insights into the nature of the above-mentioned connection. On the one hand, Laura and Melisa used to analyse the different sections of each Learning Unit to identify its learning content, evoked the objectives they initially set, and linked those goal to sections and/or contents of the Learning Unit. On the other hand, Iliana created an "adjustable paragraph template" she used to follow every time she had to write her final reflection entry for a Learning Unit. Relevant in this context is Cassidy's (2006) study, aimed at assessing the evidence for a possible association between learning style and self-assessment. This piece of research considers a model of four approaches to learning frequently used in higher education research: deep, surface, strategic and apathetic. The results of the study show that the deep and strategic approaches correlated positively with self-assessment skill while there was a negative correlation between the surface approach and this latter skill. This suggests that, compared to surface learners, deep and strategic learners are better equipped to assess themselves and recognise their potential to perform well. In the light of this conceptualisation and findings, Laura and Melissa's self-evaluative procedure showing evidence of an intention to understand and relate ideas corresponds to a deep approach to learning. However, Iliana's self-evaluative procedure demonstrating her intention to replace information within a "template" matches with a surface approach to learning. Therefore, compared to Laura and Melisa, Iliana may have been less aware of her own cognitive and learning performance while struggling to recognize her potential for improvement. After interpreting relevant results of this research in connection with the three motivational influences (internal, external, and personal factors), the following section separately discusses technology problems: an internal factor that proved central to the entire research in terms of motivation and engagement.

Technology problems

In the context of the implementation of the training model, the learner responses to the use of technology resulted in much more barriers than enhancements for self-regulated language learning. This can be concluded from the following interpretation of the findings.

From the identified barriers to SRL, it was found that only one of them was attributable to the learners. The rest of them, beyond the learners' control, were:

1)   Intermittent and poor internet connection,

2)   The malfunction of Weebly, and

3)   The dedication of too much time to working independently with computers.

In connection with the first two identified barriers beyond the learners' control, that is, the intermittent and poor internet connection and the malfunction of Weebly, the study by Essex and Cagiltay (2001) on exploring learner satisfaction with a web-based distance education course is relevant. This research follows Hara and Kling's (2000) definition of distance education 'distress' as "situations that the students find particularly troublesome" (Essex and Cagiltay, 2001:235). These researchers found that technical problems were one out of three causes of students 'distress'. Intermittent and poor internet connection and Weebly malfunctioning clearly correspond to this type of problems. Notably, the other two causes of student 'distress' found by Essex and Cagiltay (2001)

were "ambiguous instruction", which research participants may also have faced given their task confusions and "the lack of instructor feedback". This later source of 'distress' correspond with a previously discussed finding.

The third observed barrier beyond the learners' control is the dedication of too much time to working independently with computers. This barrier implies that during the online course, human-computer interaction, that is, academic interaction, shaped the online course. In this regard, the study by Jung et. al. (2002) on the effects of different types of interaction on learner achievement, satisfaction, participation, and attitude in Web-based instruction is relevant. This research found that social interactions with the instructor and collaborative interactions with peers are key for online adult learners to improve their learning and increase their participation in a course. Similarly, the study also found that "collaborative peer interaction, interpersonal encouragement and instructor assistance needed to be built in order to create a more effective and more satisfactory Web-based learning experience" (Jung et. al., 2002: 160). In addition, according to the already revised work of Song (2000) "collaborative peer interaction" appears to correspond to the interaction between learners and learners. Likewise, "interpersonal encouragement and instructor assistance" seemingly match with the interaction between instructors and learners. Problems with these types of online interaction are associated with a lack of "motivation to persist" (Ibid.). Obviously, the additions of these interactions to human-computer interaction were necessary to ensure the active participation and high-quality performance of these learners.

The only barrier attributable to research participants, that is, their unfamiliarity with the tasks implicit in the course's main content creation and delivery tools (Powtoon video maker, the Oxford Learn Platform (LMS), and Weebly) led them to performance problems. Such unfamiliarity was unexpected given these young learners' apparent engagement with 2.0 technologies but indicates that they had null or minimal experience with these tools. This finding agrees with those obtained from the study by Benett et al. (2012) aimed at understanding how today's students use of ICT to support their learning. The research found that they "had little prior experience with relevant technologies and that many struggled to see the value of using Web 2.0 technologies for learning and teaching" (Benett et. al., 2012: 524) Jones and Shao also found that "[i]n relation to the newer Web 2.0 technologies learners do not naturally make extensive use of many of the most discussed new technologies such as Blogs, Wikis and 3D Virtual Worlds" (Jones and Shao, 2011:40). Both the participants in Benett et al. study and those in the current research quickly learned and valued the necessary technology skills. However, referring to Mayer (2010), Benett et al. (2012) argue that "the workload in learning new skills, however useful, should not be underestimated" (Benett et al., 2012:532). In fact, for learners in the current research, learning these "new skills" while performing other tasks contributed to the previously discussed cognitive overload that caused them to be unmotivated to learn in the online course.

Mixed results were obtained in the case of the Powtoon video maker: It was an enhancement for Alma and Jorge, but it resulted a barrier for Iliana, Carla, Laura, and Melisa. These findings are discussed next.
Concerning the Powtoon as an enhancement, Alma and Jorge acknowledged how this tool proved to have several features that helped them improve their learning process. Conversely, in terms of Powtoon as a barrier, Iliana, Carla, Laura, and Melisa reported that they spent a lot of time developing their videos and that they

experienced preliminary basic difficulties to publish them. These opposing results correspond with those derived from the study by Purnamasari, and Maolida (2018) aimed at exploring the implementation of Powtoon to design presentations and the students' responses to the process involved. These researchers found positive reactions to the implementation of this video maker such as its interactive features and the combination of media. However, they also found negative issues including that 70% of the research sample was unfamiliar with the tool, technical issues (i.e. use across devices, use of many data connection), and a perception that "it took more time to think about the design rather than composing the content […] (Purnamasari, and Maolida, 2018:413). Notably, the first of these three negative aspects agrees with the finding discussed in the previous paragraph: most of the research participants had null or minimal experience with the use of 2.0 technologies, particularly with those aimed at content creation and delivery. All in all, the previous two interpretations of findings denote that, in terms of content creation and delivery tools, the selected 2.0 technologies were not aligned with educational practices, resulting in the wrong tools being used for these learners. This problem also evidences a strong need of engaging learners to integrate Web 2.0 tools into their learning.

Discussion and Conclusion

After examining the research findings, this section states the resulting implications of the research. These new insights are presented in terms of an improved training model that better considers the motivational aspects, technology, and the role of scaffolding.

As already explained, this research is aimed at exploring the embedding of SRL and technology into a training model for scaffolding language learning. In this attempt, the experience of implementing the Model of SRL with Technology by means of an online course, resulted in implications leading to:

1) Sustaining motivation to learn.
2) Strengthening of computer/Internet self-efficacy.
3) Reducing cognitive overload.
4) Ensuring distributed scaffolding.
5) Engaging learners to integrate Web 2.0 tools into their learning.

From these implications, it follows that, technology and/or SRL does not automatically represents the scaffolding for language learning. In practice, these two elements are influenced by issues of a highly motivational nature. Thus, appropriate consideration of these influences will ensure using the potential of SRL and ILT to provide 21st century language learners with a high-quality and effective learning. The improved training model resulting from a series of iterative processes combining theory, research, and practice, reported in this research, represent the know-how to achieve such a relevant goal.

This research has shown the importance of emphasising motivational issues in a model that embeds SRL and technology for language learning. A key lesson learnt in this regard, is that especially at the implementation phase of the proposed design, this integration should ensure a distributed scaffolding characterised by graduality

and multiple types of support for 21st century learners. Concerning the latter ones, who are ultimately the reason for the developing the model, another important lesson learnt is that, despite their knowledge and use of technology in everyday life, especially for "private purposes" (Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021), they should be explicitly trained and, above all, be given with a purpose for using and taking advantage of affordances of technology to learn language and other academic contents. This training and purpose will impact not only their language learning but also on their "lifelong and lifewide learning" (Aoki, 2020).

The five research implications discussed above represent five general current issues that any similar learner-centred model promoting language learning through SRL with technology should highlight in the context of high-quality and effective learning with 21st century language learners need. All in all, the research seems very timely considering that as stated by Urbina et. al. (2021), following the competency-based model currently being implemented in universities worldwide, to respond to the challenges of the labour market and ultimately to the challenges of their lifelong learning, learners need to be "competent in the use of technological tools in their future professional performance in a sustainable manner" and, accordingly, "learn to self-regulate in educational processes, acquiring sustainable and long-lasting habits". (Urbina et. al., 2021:02). Overall, this research offers the kind of detailed self-regulated instruction in synergy with technology that Huh and Reigeluth (2017) consider "rare" in the information-age educational paradigm. Therefore, the model and the five implications are subject to be considered in pedagogical praxis beyond the field of TELL. Two main limitations are imposed on this study: the generalisation of the findings to other settings and the variations in the implementation of the model between the research stages. These constrains admittedly make the training model an in-progress work open to further testing and validation.

Recommendations

Given the research limitations above, particularly regarding the generalisation of results, future research should aim to test and validate the training model with much larger groups of students from diverse backgrounds. In addition, since the training model is supposed to be a know-how for effectively supporting language learning, the impact of implementing this framework on learners' language proficiency should be explored, possibly paying attention to specific language skills or systems in which the model demonstrates to have more/less impact on; in this regard, another relevant area to focus on is the effectiveness of using different Web 2.0 tools in learners' motivation and engagement. Likewise, considering the key role and competencies of teachers or facilitators of the model another possible focus of further study may be the ideal profile and training they require to better assist learners in learning through this training model.

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An English Language University-Exit Test: Test-Takers' Content Expectations and Actual Test Content

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Abstract: Many higher education institutions from non-English speaking countries worldwide have incorporated English as part of the curricula or as an exit requirement. This cross-sectional mixed methods research design study looks at the opinion of university test-takers regarding the domain assessed by the university-exit English test. It has been argued that non-English speaking graduates need English to join the global working environment (BUAP, 2019; Crystal, 2003; IMCO, 2018; SEP, 2017; UJED, 2014).   A Likert-type questionnaire was applied to 886 undergraduates at the exit point after taking the university-exit test to explore the suitability and validity of the in-house developed exit test applied at the university where the study took place. Results reveal a mismatch between the test content and test-takers' expectations regarding test content. This data aids the discussion on test use (Knoch et al., 2016; Knoch et al., 2017; Qian, 2007) and on a jagged skills profile which will be more relevant and useful for future professionals in the workplace (Cambridge English, 2016; (COE & ALTE, 2016).

Keywords: Exit-test, Test content, Test-takers, University, Validity

Introduction

English has become an important communication tool for non-native English-speaking countries and individuals. As a global language, English is widely used for business, entertainment, travelling, research, and updating purposes (BSC Education, n.d.). For countries, English proficiency is associated with innovation, economic productivity, competitiveness, fairness, openness, and gender equality (Education First, 2022). For

individuals, English proficiency (EP) may open the door to higher education, job opportunities, scientific information or higher salaries. It is easier for someone who can communicate in English to meet new people, interact with speakers of other languages, and travel to many places without knowing the local language. English is the most widely used language on the internet and the primary language of entertainment and the media industry (BSC Education, n.d.). English plays a key role worldwide in many areas of modern society (Brooker, 2018).

Many young adult or adult language learners can identify their language learning purpose (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Real-world language communication needs have been identified to fall into one or more of four domains of language use: "public, personal, occupational and educational" (COE, 2018). Identifying the most commonly used domains in language use has been useful for learning and teaching purposes. The ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) presented a series of CAN DO statements organised into three domains: "Social and Tourist, Work and Study" (COE, 2001, p. 245). These describe what learners can do at different levels of their language-learning journey. However, these language descriptors are not exclusive to the domain in which they are categorised, as they may overlap between domains; i.e. socialising may occur in the personal, work or study domains.

The use of English varies according to its status within a country. In countries where English is the first or second language, English is spoken daily in all or almost all scenarios or situations (Kachru, 1992). For most countries worldwide, English is a foreign language (EFL); this implies that English is not restricted to certain places or situations and not all the population can speak it (Lowenberg, 2002). Even though English is taught in many countries with a non-official status, the English proficiency level of most individuals is far from desirable (Education First, 2022). In many EFL countries such as México, university graduates are expected to join the global professional interactive community (SEP, 2017); however, they join universities with a low or very low proficiency level.

In most public Mexican universities, English is not a priority in study programmes and is rarely used outside English classes (if taken). Where English classes are taken, these focus on English for general purposes and have little or no relation to students' disciplinary areas. The use of English during students' disciplinary studies is, in many contexts, limited to reading, or better said, translating journal articles. The extent to which these are used is related to disciplinary areas. It is more likely for students within health, technology or science related areas to read journal articles in English than those within accounting or law related areas. Many students in the Mexican university where this study took place are unaware of the relevance English may have in their current personal or future professional life. Moreover, it is unknown what are the language use activities that test takers may need to fulfil in the local workplace. Therefore, students' motivation to learn English may be limited to passing the required language courses.

Many universities in EFL countries have incorporated English in their learning programmes because they consider it essential if students pursue higher education (Barjesteh & Shakeri, 2013) or because they want them

to use it in their professional activities (Ferrari Fermín & Torrealba M, 2009). It has been broadly acknowledged that the type of language used is related to the context in which it is used (L. F. Bachman, 1990); (Brunfaut, 2014); (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Therefore, the language required in academic settings differs from the language of the workplace (Douglas, 2000). Language courses or exit tests focusing on English for General Purposes (EGP) will not likely help students develop language for academic or work purposes (Jordan, 1997). Exit tests that will be used to predict the degree to which graduates are prepared to study in an English-speaking university need to consider the language and skills required in academic life. Similarly, to determine graduates' readiness to fulfil job-related language activities, the test needs to assess the language required in the workplace (O'Loughlin, 2008).

Some public Mexican universities (UAA, 2012); (UAEH, 2013); (UCol, 2016); (Reyes Fierro et al., 2008); (UNAM, 2018) have established a language level as an exit requirement which is assessed using either an international or a locally-designed test. These tests focus on assessing EGP purposes; therefore, they are unrelated to their disciplinary areas. The Mexican university where the study took place established a B1 level according to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) (COE, 2001) as the exit requirement, which would be fulfilled by passing a locally-designed test. The decision to design a test was taken mainly due to the high cost of international reputable tests. Some test-takers in this university did not receive the exit requirement well. Besides learning about negative comments from test-takers about the test, it was found that it was starting to become a funnel. Many students had to delay their degree-awarding plans because they had not passed the test. It was hypothesised that the negative impact on students' degree awarding plans and their resulting displeasure was not precisely due to the exit requirement but rather due to the language domain of the test. However, what test takers thought about the need to use English in the local context was unknown.

As language tests are used as door-openers or gate-keepers (L. F. Bachman & Purpura, 2008), it is imperative that the decisions made based on test results can be justified to all interested parties (Messick, 1980). It is possible to justify the use of IELTS (Davies, 2008) or TOEFL (TOEFL, 2020) results for university admission purposes, as these were designed for such purposes. Language assessment tools are relevant because they provide scores which are data used to make claims about individuals' language knowledge and skills (Kane, 2013). A validation process is the means through which the claims made about the language performance of individuals are evaluated (L. F. Bachman, 2015). In his influential argument in favour of a unified concept of validity, Messick discussed the interpretations made based on test results and the resulting unintended consequences when not pondering the use of a test for a purpose other than the one it was initially designed (Messick, 1989).

It is not unusual that scores of a test designed for purpose *X* are used to make decisions about purpose *Y* without the required validation process. Watt et al. (2003) argued that tests designed as university entrance tests were not good predictors of the language ability of international medical graduates. They recommended using an assessment tool that considered the communication demands of physicians and reflected the language and skills required for medical practice before integrating candidates into the Canadian physician workforce. Similarly,

Qian (2007) reports it was found there was little evidence to believe that using the IELTS Academic could be used to help graduates in their future job and, at the same time, as a tool for students' further studies. Elder (2017) questioned the usefulness of the information provided to employers by tests designed for university admission purposes. Many tests designed for purpose *X*, i.e., university admission in an English-speaking environment, placement or assessing EGP proficiency, are used to fulfil university exit requirements without considering the context in which the language is likely to be used by most graduates: the workplace.

The use of tests for purposes other than those which motivated their design raises questions of validity because of the difficulty in establishing a solid relationship between test results and the target language use domain (TLUD) (L. F. Bachman, 2015). It is unclear how using test results designed for a different purpose can be justified. Test-takers who perceive an unclear relation between the test purpose and test content may question the test's validity and consider it *unfair*. Even though frequently undermined, this perception, known as face validity (Jin, 2023), "has important implications for other aspects of the test's validity" (Phillips et al., 2020).

Test-takers' perception of a test may strongly influence their attitude towards it (Brown, 2004). A positive attitude may encourage them to become better language learners (Dawadi, 2021) or perform well on test tasks (Alderson et al., 1995) (L. Bachman & Palmer, 2010), while the opposite may cause test-takers to answer it carelessly (Phillips et al., 2020). Even though test-takers are the ones who experience the consequences of test development and use (Hamid et al., 2019), they are seen as the target of assessment rather than valuable sources of insights (Jin, 2023). Despite the fact of the strong impact test perception may have on test-taking motivation and test performance (Messick, 1989) and the positive effect learning about the topic may have (Sato & Ikeda, 2015) on these issues, the area is understudied (Zhou & Yoshitomi, 2019).

Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was adopted for this case study research to learn about test-takers' expectations regarding test content and the domain assessed. The research aimed to explore the suitability and validity of the in-house developed English language exit test to fulfil its purpose: assess test-takers' readiness to use the language in the workplace. The in-house test applied has two components, a written paper and a speaking component. The former was first applied, followed by the speaking component, which was applied to pairs of students. Pairs were dismissed from the facilities after the speaking component.

Participants were test-takers in their last semester of studies or undergraduates who had already completed their studies but needed to fulfil the language requirement to award their degree. Test-takers belonged to three disciplinary areas: health sciences (HSc), social sciences (SSc) and physical and natural sciences (PNSc). Their age ranged between 24 and 43 years old. They were all approached by researchers at the test premises' exit point. Data were collected during four testing sessions (two years). Data collection instruments were in the test-takers' mother tongue (Spanish) to ensure understanding of the language and the ability to express their opinion.

It was also thought that applying the instruments in English may have discouraged participation.

A Likert-type questionnaire was applied to 586 undergraduates. Upon explaining the purpose of the study, participants were asked to answer the questionnaire. They were ensured their participation was voluntary and anonymous. Only four participants excused themselves from participating, arguing they had to go to work. The only factual information asked was the participants' disciplinary area. The questionnaire consisted of eleven items. Seven items asked test-takers to state their level of agreement regarding their opinion about test content. The statements belonged to the three areas identified by the ALTE (COE, 2018) discussed above: the personal and tourist domain, the work domain and the study domain. The questionnaire offered four options: the lowest degree of agreement was represented with number 1 with the label *disagree*, with the opposite extreme represented with the number 4 and the label *agree*. Numbers 2 and three had the labels *quite disagree* and *quite agree*, respectively. İt also contained four items asking test-takers how frequently they thought they would require to use each of the four skills in the workplace. Test-takers were asked to choose from: number 1: very rarely; number 2: with very little frequency; number 3: rather frequently, and number 4: frequently. Data were analysed using the statistical analysis program SPSS to obtain the mean value of the Likert-type items.

Besides answering the questionnaire, some participants were asked to participate in a short semi-structured interview. Its purpose was to confirm questionnaire findings and to learn what test takers said about the need to use English in the local workplace. Two hundred and thirty-one test-takers were asked to state which domain they would like the test to assess: work, personal or study and justify their answer. Logistics did not allow researchers to ask all test-takers to participate in the interview, as they were interviewing students when others finished answering the questionnaire. When participants were asked to participate in the interview, they were only asked to state their disciplinary area and to grant permission to audio-record the interview. No participants decided not to participate in the interview. Data was analysed using the qualitative data management system Nvivo 10. Responses related to the preferred domain were grouped into a theme called Domain, and child notes for each domain were created. Arguments given by participants regarding their domain selection were nested within each domain.

Results

Questionnaire results

Data analysis reveals that the three test-taker groups seem to have the same opinion regarding some domains but differ in others. The highest mean value that each disciplinary group could obtain was 4. The personal domain is the most important for the three groups, with a mean value of 3 for the social and the physical and natural (PN) sciences groups. The mean value from the health sciences group was not as high (2.9) but was within the *agree* range; this can be seen in Figure 1. The second domain of importance for all three groups was the work domain, though it was more important for the physical and natural sciences group, with a mean value of 2.8. The mean value of the work domain was the same for the social and health sciences groups.
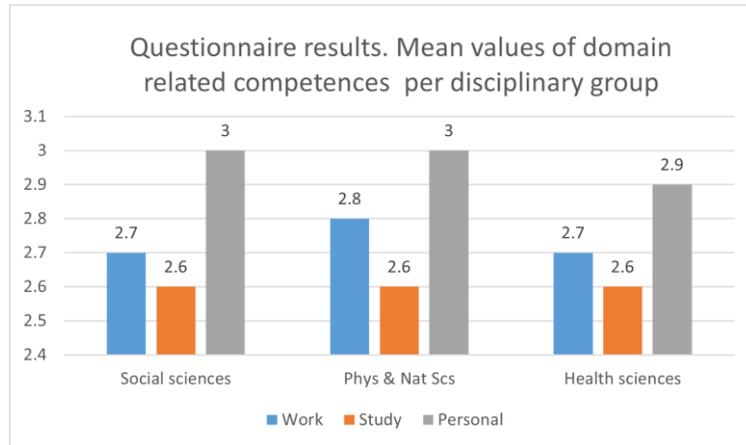
Figure 1. Questionnaire results. Mean values of domain-related language use activities per disciplinary group

Regarding test-takers' opinions about the need to use the skills in the workplace, Figure 2 below shows that receptive skills are the most important for the three groups. Values for these skills are similar for the three groups but slightly lower for the health sciences. Writing is the second place of importance for all groups; however, the mean value is also slightly lower for the health sciences. Speaking is the least important skill for the three groups; however, mean values show that it is slightly more important for the SSc group than for the PNSc and the HSc group, which has the lowest mean value. All the skills report mean values within the quite agree/agree range, revealing that test-takers would need to use the four skills, however some more frequently than others.
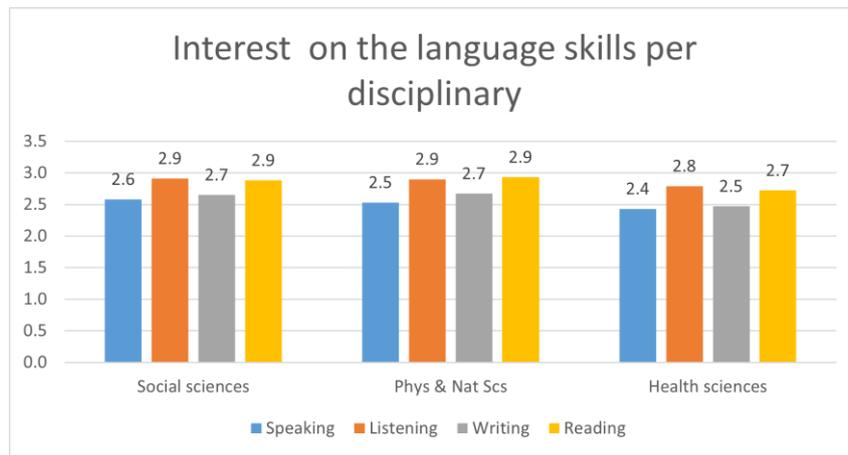
Figure 2. Frequency of expected test-takers' need to use the skills in the workplace.

Interview results

Test takers were asked to select one of the three domains for the exit test to focus on. They were asked to think which one would be more relevant for them. Figure 3 below shows that the disciplinary groups have different opinions regarding the more important domain for them. The work domain is the most important for the PNSc

and the SSc groups, while it is the second most important for the HSc group. The study domain is the most important for the HSc, but the second and third most relevant for the PNSc and SSc, respectively. Finally, the personal domain is the second most important for the SSc and the third most important for the health sciences. The personal domain seems irrelevant for the PNSc group, as the percentage value is 0.
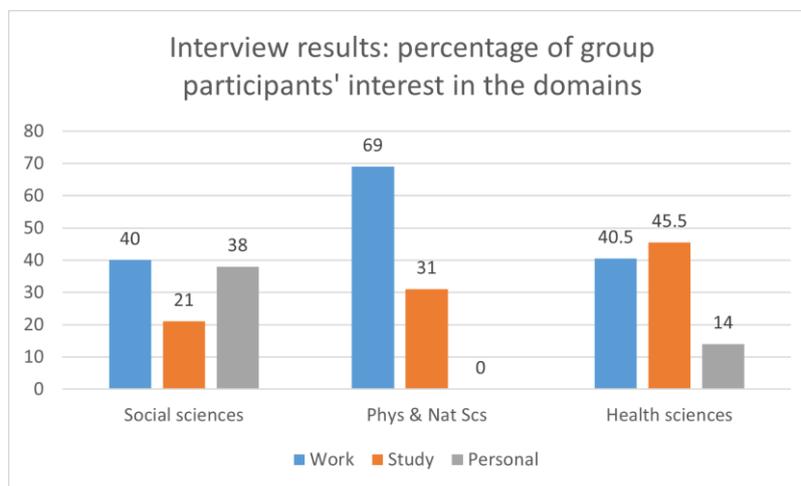

Figure 3. Interview results. Percentage of domain selection of test-takers by disciplinary group

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to learn whether test-takers' test content expectations were being met by the exit-test applied. The aim of the questionnaire was to learn which domain and skill(s) were more important for test-takers. The aimof the interview was, on the one hand, to confirm questionnaire findings and, on the other, to learn about the reasons test-takers have for choosing a domain.

Interview (I) responses did not confirm the questionnaire (Q) findings. For the SSc group, the order of importance of the study domain is the only one that did not change, as it still occupies the third place. However, the personal and the work domains shifted places in order of importance. While the personal domain was the most important in the Q responses, interview responses reveal it occupies the second place. For the PNSc, the order of importance also changed. The Q responses report the order of importance was the personal domain, followed by the work domain, with the study domain in the last position. Interview responses report that the work domain is the first, the study domain occupies the second place, and the is no interest in the social domain. Finally, changes in the order of importance were also revealed for the HSc group. The personal domain shifted from being the most important to the least important. The study domain levelled up from the third place to the first one. The work domain kept its position in second place.

It could be argued that it is not possible to compare the mean values of the quantitative results, which represent mean values, with the qualitative data, which represent percentage values. However, it can be contended that the comparison made is the tendency of the data analysed. It is claimed that if the preference for the domain had not

changed after answering the first instrument, the tendency of the data would have been retained. The discrepancy between the results of both instruments may be attributed to several aspects. The most important one is that the questionnaire expected test-takers to choose an answer for each statement; they could choose the highest value (4) for each statement. The interview did not ask them to rank the three domains in order of importance but to choose one. When asked which domain they would choose, some participants showed interest in the three domains, giving answers such as:

"*the three* (of them)." (HSc103)

There were several responses similar to the above, which suggests that there could have been many participants interested in more than one domain, and they expressed it so in the questionnaire; however, in the interview, they were asked to choose one.

Another aspect that may have played an important role in the results obtained may have been awareness. Test-takers may not have given much thought when answering the questionnaire, while during the interview, they may have reflected on their responses to the researchers because they had to justify their choice. Additionally, as some participants were interviewed in pairs or small groups, they may have changed their opinion when they listened to their peers' responses. The following excerpt may be an example of a participant's change of opinion:

Researcher: "*Do you think English is important for medics here in Durango?*"

HSc28:   "*Here in Durango? I, I don't think so. Not here in Durango. But…because here there are almost no…hum, situations like…taking care of foreigners or…something like that. And… there aren't emergencies in which you need to have an ability…here in Durango. (…)*"

HSc29:   "*Well, I think we do, because well, (…) the best books, the best bibliography…the best articles, the…updates, really, well…are in English, so…it would be good that we learned to interpret that*".

HSc28:   "*Yeah! Uh-huh!*"

Participant HSc28 seems to think that the use of English implies speaking to an English speaker foreigner; however, when HSc29 refers to a different skill (reading), HSc28 seems to reconsider the previous answer and utters an expression that suggests agreement with what HSc29 stated.

The importance of the domains

Interview results revealed that the work domain is more important for two groups and the second most important for the third one. Their justification for the domain chosen helps understand the test-taker population. Several responses reveal participants think the work domain could be an asset for their professional development, as PNSc5 stated:

"*English is very used in any job and more in my degree.*" PNSc5

Other participants referred to English as a door opener, as argued by BSC Education (n.d.), as was expressed by an HSc participant:

"*…because the opportunities where we can work are widened.*" HSc50

Justification for choosing the work domain also included its usefulness:

"...because it would be more useful." SSc47

However, SSc47 did not specify how the language would be useful in the workplace, another participant mentioned some of the activities where English would be required:

"…*either talk in English with our patients, understand texts, and well, being able to translate articles downloaded from the internet, they frequently come in English".* HSc3

Even though they are from the same disciplinary group, HSc3 has a different opinion of the need to use English in their hometown (Durango) than HSc28 above.

Regarding the academic domain, which is the second most important for the HSc group, the second for the PNSc and the third for the SSc, many participants' comments refer to the need to understand journal articles, which are shared in English:

"To be able to understand the articles that come in English more easily". HSc22

Even though most responses justifying the importance of the academic domain referred to the reading skill, understanding academic spoken language was also mentioned:

"Well, because in this and all (degrees), it is necessary to…it is necessary to be updated, and the recent articles are only available in English; besides, many conferences and academic events are in English, and we need the level to understand them". HSc20

Most comments regarding the importance of understanding academic written texts belong to the HSc group even though the PNSc also commented on the need to keep up to date by reading academic material. There were very few comments from the SSc group on the need to understand written academic texts. The comments above exemplify what the English Proficiency Index (Education First, 2022) published in their 2022 issue. As English is more commonly used for international information exchange, it is "a key component for accessing knowledge and expertise" (p. 5). As mentioned by the HSc29, HSc20 and HSc22 above, reading discipline-related articles is necessary to learn about the latest discipline-related innovations. However, keeping up to date is not limited to reading comprehension, as through video streaming, it is possible to attend international conferences that take place in distant locations (p. 13).

There were also some comments against the need to use English for work or study purposes. These comments came mainly from the SSc group. Some of these refer to the fact that the nature of their degree requires them to conduct their studies in their mother tongue (Spanish), as expressed by SSc 26:

"...it is unnecessary for many degrees. I am studying to be a lawyer, and my degree is based on Mexican law; therefore, I do not see why we have this English level". SSc26

SSc26's comment reveals dissatisfaction regarding the language requirement. This comment may be closely related to the perception that English is not required for study purposes, and it is considered that the workplace will likely require Spanish only. However, even though studying Mexican law does not need English, SSc26 may be surprised, as SSc61 and SSc95 were (below) when they found that English was required for a job-related activity:

> *"For example, the title (deed) of a foreign truck."* SSc61

> *"Because, for example, in my degree, there are many legal translations that are needed in my job, for example, the seizure that comes from foreign courts, then, it is necessary to have a good command, not basic, more thorough, of English, for the translations."* SSc95

Both participants (SSc61 and SSc95) provided examples of the need for English in a profession many would consider only the mother tongue would be required. Because of the country's northern border, the United States of America, many American vehicles are brought to México due to their lower cost; however, they need a special permit that lawyers need to process.

Some participants chose the social domain because they consider that English will not be required in their studies or the workplace. For them, studying English would be for personal reasons:

> *"(...) it is necessary, but in other jobs, not in my case, it is not so necessary, as would if I travelled or interacted with people from other places."* SSc64

Even though participants justifying their choice of the social domain said they needed English for travelling, they did not specify they were considering visiting English-speaking countries. These participants consider English as the language that enables them to communicate with speakers of other languages when travelling to non-Spanish speaking places (Education First, 2022).

The importance of the skills

Some of the comments above regarding the academic domain refer to the need to understand journal articles in English to be updated, as HSc1 below also states:

> *"...the most advanced things, almost all of them are in English, articles, books, all of that is in English."* HSc1

HSc1 also mentions books and suggests other updated material, also available in written English, will be relevant. However, the need to understand written texts is not limited to academic material. Some test-takers think they may work for an international company where other types of texts may be received, as the following excerpt exemplifies:

> *"How are we going to limit ourselves if we get a proposal that is in English? We need to be able to cope with it."* SSc87

Even though the specific type of document that may be encountered is not specified, the comment reveals not all test-takers are thinking about academic texts. The comments made by SS61 and SSc95 above provided examples of job-related written material that participants have encountered.

Participants also provided examples of situations when they may need to understand what others are saying. HSc20 mentioned above may attend academic events where speakers share their findings in English. Participants may attend these events during their student life or when they have joined the workforce. Other participants shared a situation where the need to understand spoken language in the workplace may be required. An HSc participant thinks it may be necessary to interact with English-speaking patients:

> *"…to understand what their problems are."* HSc89

while an SSc participant considers a client or visitor may arrive at the workplace:

> *"...it could happen to us that we could be working at a place and someone who speaks English*
>
> *arrives... or be able to understand, be able to explain."* SSc88

Examples of situations in which participants may need to write in English were only provided by members of the HSc group. Undergraduates from several disciplines may need to take a national test to be awarded their degree. This national test is a requirement of health-related disciplines. This test includes a component where test-takers need to write in English. This situation was mentioned as an example of when writing in English may be important for them:

> *"For example, in the national test, there is an English part in it."* HSc55

An HSc participant seems to be interested in doing research; the writing skill would be necessary for sharing research findings:

> *"I think that knowing that I could publish in English, that is, that I carry out research and publish in*
>
> *foreign countries' journals".* HSc17

Most comments about speaking are job-related; only one was related to the academic domain. A PNSc participant provides an example of other test-takers' interest in interacting with foreign speakers when attending conferences; he stated:

> *"...I believe that also speaking because generally all the conferences we attend are in English, and*
>
> *then well, there are...there are researchers that...that are very well known and if we do not know*
>
> *English, we can't interact...then, well...imagine!"* PNSc2

Other examples of the need to speak in English are patients or foreigners entering their workplace. Test-takers would need to interact with them to provide the services required, as exemplified below:

> *"Yes, they could come from out of town to have their dental work done here."* HSc89

In HSc89's experience, it is common for American people to come to México for healthcare reasons, specifically to take care of their teeth, given that it is much cheaper in México than in the United States. HSc89 comments about a medic that knows English that has many English-speaking patients:

> *"...yes, yes, well, a medic we know has many patients from out of town, maybe because he is an*
>
> *excellent medic and it is easy for them to talk to him."* HSc24

Test-takers' examples about the situations in which they may require to use English in the workplace or the academic context shed light on learning their language use needs.

Conclusion

The study aimed to learn whether the content of the exit test, which is general English, was meeting test-takers' expectations regarding what they consider useful for them, either as students, professionals or individuals. The results from the interview do not confirm the questionnaire results. The latter report more interest in the personal domain for the three groups; however, the work and study domains are not considered unimportant. The results

of the former are different, and no pattern of behaviour can be observed as it happened with the questionnaire results. The interest in the domains differs among disciplinary groups. Regarding the interest in the skills, the results from the three groups are similar. It was learned that receptive skills are required more frequently in the workplace than productive skills; however, all the skills seem relevant to them.

These results and examples of situations in which the use of English in the workplace or academic settings reveal that test-takers' expectations are being partially met. The current exit test focuses on EGP, while most students are more interested in the work and study domains. The examples of situations where English is required in these contexts support the need to consider revising the content of the current test. Provided the university-exit test aims to determine the extent to which undergraduates are prepared to join the global market, the language required in the workplace is the target language use domain (TLUD). Then, it is argued that there is a mismatch between the content of the current EGP exit test and the TLUD. This mismatch questions the content validity of the test. Using a test that measures X to determine whether test-takers can perform Y may also raise issues of fairness. Further studies must be conducted to confirm the adequacy of test use in this particular situation.

The questionnaire responses regarding the importance of the skills, supported by test-takers' examples of language use situations, reveal that test-takers do not consider all language skills equally necessary. Most international tests give equal weight to each of the skills; however, if the language used in the real world does not require the same frequency or level of proficiency (Ashton, 2008), a differentiated skills profile may benefit learners in achieving the knowledge and proficiency that is useful for them (Chairat, 2016).

The results of the present study are relevant because it suggests that university and student efforts are not aligned. The university offers a test that assesses EGP rather than the language required in the situations that test-takers are interested in: the academic and workplace contexts. The test offered may not accurately predict the extent to which test takers are prepared to join the global international community, which is the purpose of test use. Test-takers' efforts in preparing for the test may not be ensuring the language learned and assessed will be useful in fulfilling the purpose of the assessment. It is contended that this scenario is not unique to the context in which this study took place.

Acknowledgements

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Bibliometric Analysis of Publications in the Web of Science Database on Accounting Education

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Abstract: In this study, it is aimed to present the bibliometric analysis of the publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database. In this context, 1,277 records were found as a result of the search made under the heading of accounting education in the Web of Science database and these records were analyzed by bibliometric analysis method. The findings obtained from the study revealed that studies on accounting education mainly focus on business finance, education, educational research and business disciplines. In addition, it was determined that most of the publications were published in Taylor & Francis, Emerald Group Publishing and Elsevier journals with high joaurnal impact factor. According to another finding obtained from the study, the institutions that published the most studies in the relevant field were determined as Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Rmit and Deakin University, respectively. It has been determined that the author with the most publications in the field of accounting education is Steven Dellaportas with 9 publications. The most cited publication was the publication titled "Insights into Accounting Education in a Covid-19 World" created by Sangster, Stoner and Flood in 2020. In addition, according to other findings obtained from the study, publications related to accounting education are mostly published in the form of articles. In addition, 10.18 percent of the publications were created in the USA, and 10.18 percent of the publications were published in English.

Keywords: Accounting, Accounting education, Bibliometric analysis, Web of science.

Introduction

Studies on accounting education in national and international literature are in a continuous development as a result of information and communication technologies and global developments. In this context, it is possible to say that studies on accounting education have evolved in accordance with today's developments. Therefore,

stakeholders interested in accounting education need to closely follow the innovations, deficiencies, opportunities and developments in accounting education.

Studies carried out on accounting education undoubtedly play an important role in the development of accounting education. In this context, studies on accounting education enable solutions to problems related to accounting education, and the development of new practices by evaluating existing practices. At this point, it is important to closely follow the studies related to accounting education and to analyze these studies (Oral, 2021: 35). At this point, bibliometric analysis method is used to evaluate the development and course of publications related to accounting education and to provide information to stakeholders about publications related to accounting education.

The bibliometric analysis method, which is frequently used by researchers in analyzing the trends of publications in a particular field, is an analysis method that aims to obtain certain results by performing the analysis of data with the quantitative analysis method regarding the past and current status of scientific studies in a particular field. Therefore, with this analysis method, it becomes possible to reveal the development and change of the related discipline. Thus, the findings obtained from the bibliometric analysis of scientific studies in a certain field are presented to other users, allowing the information in the relevant field to be built on each other (Culnan, 1986: 156; Koç and Bayri, 2023: 163; Yolal, 2016: 89-90).

In this context, it is aimed to examine the publications in the Web of Science database related to accounting education with the bibliometric analysis method. All publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database until 09.07.2023 were included in the study without any date limitation. In the study, 1.277 records were accessed as a result of the search made with the term accounting education under the title title, and these accessed records were classified according to certain criteria in the Web of Science database and examined by bibliometric analysis method. In this context, a summary representation of some studies in the literature in which bibliometric analysis method in accounting education and accounting researches is discussed is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Information on Some Studies in the Literature in which Bibliometric Analysis Method in Accounting Education and Accounting Researches is Discussed

Authors	Year	Purpose of Study	Results Obtained from The Study	Type of Work	Identification of The Study
Abdüssamed Koç & Selahattin Karabınar	2021	With this study, it is aimed to calculate the place of Turkey numerically among these studies by examining scientific	The findings of the study revealed that the author with the most publications on accounting education was Steven Dellaportas, the country with the most publications was the USA, and the	Article	(Koç and Karabınar 2021: 181-195)

		publications in the field of accounting education. In this context, a total of 719 publications were examined.	institution with the most publications was Deakin University. In addition, the findings revealed that there were 21 publications on accounting education in Turkey, so that they were above the average and 3 of these publications were included in the SSCI index.		
Tolga Oral	2021	In this study, it is aimed to examine 119 theses related to accounting education with bibliometric analysis method. Within the scope of the study, the university, the most used research method and the topics covered were determined.	As a result of the study, it was revealed that the most thesis related to accounting education was written in Gazi University and Sakarya University. In addition, it has been concluded that the empirical research method is mostly used as a research method in theses related to accounting education.	Article	(Oral 2021: 34-45)
Oğuzhan Çarıkçı & Bahar Yaman	2019	The aim of the study is to examine the publications of accounting-finance students in scientific journals in the field of accounting and finance in Turkey from a bibliometric perspective.	The findings revealed that 54 of the 2,662 publications in the related journals were related to accounting and finance students. These journals are classified in terms of their publication years, the sample taken in the research, etc.	Article	(Çarıkçı and Yaman 2019: 359-381)

Carmen Queiro & José Marti-Parreño & Angelito Calma	2018	In this study, it is aimed to present a bibliometric analysis in order to examine the extent to which gamification is discussed in publications on accounting education. In this context, the keywords used in the publications and the themes discussed by the researchers were examined.	Findings from the study revealed that researchers' interest in gamification in accounting education has increased in recent years. Financial issues, motivation and production-related issues are among the main themes determined within the scope of the study.	Procee-dings Paper	(Queiro-Ameijeiras et al., 2019: 7212-7220)
Jose M. Merigo & Jian Bo Yang	2016	The aim of the study is to examine the publications in the field of accounting from a bibliometric perspective and to identify the most influential researches in the field.	The findings revealed that "The Journal of Accounting and Economics", "Journal of Accounting Research", "The Accounting Review and Accounting", "Organizations and Society" journals are the most influential scientific journals in the field of accounting. In addition, it has been concluded that the most influential country in the relevant field is the USA.	Article	(Merigó and Yang, 2017: 71-100)

The contributions that can be made with this study, which is aimed to deal with the publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database, with the bibliometric analysis method are presented below;

- In the Web of Science database, it will be possible to determine the disciplines in which the publications related to accounting education are discussed most, the journals in which they are published the most, the institutions and universities that have published the most studies on the relevant subject.
- It will be possible to determine the titles in which the publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database can be classified in general.
- The authors with the most publications on accounting education, the most cited authors, and the most

cited publications will be determined.

- The types of publications published on accounting education, the publication performance of countries on the relevant subject and the languages of the publications will be determined.
- Researchers who want to prepare a study on accounting education in the future will be able to provide information about the trend of this field.

Bibliometric Analysis Method

Rapid developments in technology in today's digital age allow researchers to quickly access a large number of resources on a particular subject. However, it takes a long process for researchers to distinguish the publications they want to reach from other publications among these many sources and causes researchers to lose time in this process. This situation has revealed a need for researchers to eliminate the sources they do not need from among the many sources they can access and to turn to the sources they really need (Koç and Karabnar, 2020: 182). At this point, the bibliometric analysis method is a quantitative analysis method that allows researchers to quickly analyze publications related to a particular field and to determine the trends of studies in a particular field.

With the bibliometric analysis method (Merigó and Yang, 2017: 72), which allows to analyze the bibliographic material by quantitatively classifying it, the most influential points and the trend of the field over time can be determined by presenting a general picture of a particular field (Bar-Ilan, 2008: 1-52). As a matter of fact, with the bibliometric analysis method, which is frequently preferred by researchers in studies in many different disciplines, the most influential publications, the most influential authors, the most influential countries, institutions, the most cited publications and authors, etc. some features can be identified. Therefore, these findings obtained by the bibliometric analysis method provide researchers with information about the development and trend of a particular field.

According to the literature, the first study in which the bibliometric analysis method was discussed is based on the study published by Cole and Eales in 1917, in which the studies in the field of anatomy related to the years 1550-1850 were analyzed with a statistical method (Lawani, 1981: 295).

Findings of The Research and Results

Under this title, the findings obtained as a result of the bibliometric analysis method of the publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database are presented. In this context, the first ten disciplines in which publications related to accounting education are presented in Table 2. According to the data presented in Table 2, it is seen that 38.22 percent of the publications on accounting education are prepared in business finance and 36.81 percent in education research disciplines. These disciplines are followed by business, management, economics, social sciences interdisciplinary, ethics, education scientific discipline, humanities and public disciplines, respectively.

Table 2. Top 10 Disciplines Regarding Publications on Accounting Education in the Web of Science Database

Research Area	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
Business Finance	1.182	38.22
Education Educational Research	470	36.81
Business	107	8.38
Management	95	7.44
Economics	76	5.96
Social Sciences Interdisciplinary	57	4.46
Ethics	31	2.43
Education Scientific Disciplin	26	2.04
Humanities	20	1.57
Public	18	1.41

In Table 3, information on the number of publications published on accounting education between the years 2013-2023 is presented.

Table 3. Number of Publications on Accounting Education Published Between 2013-2023

	Years										
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Record Count	31	72	91	77	100	81	94	94	74	87	74
Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)	2,43	5,64	7,13	6.03	7,83	6,34	7,36	5,48	5,80	6,81	5,80

According to the data presented in Table 3, it can be said that the publications on accounting education in Web of Science do not follow a regular course and more studies on accounting education were published in 2016, 2017, 2019, 2021 compared to other years.

In Table 4 below, information about the first three journals in the Web of Science database that published the most studies on accounting education is presented.

Table 4. Top Five Journals Publishing the Most Studies on Accounting Education in the Web of Science Database

Journal Name	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
Taylor & Francis	271	21.22
Emerald Group Publishing	108	8.48
Elsevier	84	6.58

When the data presented in Table 4 above are examined, it is seen that 21.22 percent of the publications on accounting education in web of science were published in Taylor & Francis, 8.48 percent in Emerald Group Publishing and 6.58 percent in Elsevier.

In Table 5, information about the first five institutions scanned in the Web of Science database and to which the most studies on accounting education depend are presented.

Table 5. Top Five Universities to which Publications on Accounting Education in Web of Science Database are Most Affiliated

University	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
"Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Rmit"	22	1.72
"Deakin University"	18	1.41
"Macquarie University"	15	1.18
"Griffith University"	14	1.10

When the data presented in Table 5 above are examined, it is seen that the publications related to accounting education were prepared by "Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Rmit", "Deakin University", "Macquarie University" and "Griffith University", respectively.

In Table 6 below, information on the top five classifications in the classification of the titles of publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database is presented.

Table 6. The Most Classified Titles of Publications on Accounting Education in the Web of Science Database

Publication Titles	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
Accounting Education	830	10.18
Issues in Accounting Education	51	3.99
Routledge Companion To Accounting Education	29	2.27
Routledge Companions in Business Management and Accounting	29	2.27
Advances in Accounting Education Teaching and Curriculum Innovations	27	2.11

When the data presented in Table 6 above are examined, 10.18 percent of the publications related to accounting education are Accounting Education, 3.99 percent are Issues in Accounting Education, 2.27 percent are Routledge Companion to Accounting Education, 2.27 percent are Routledge Companions in Business Management and Accounting. and 2.11 percent are classified under the heading Advances in Accounting Education Teaching and Curriculum Innovations.

Table 7 below contains information about the top three authors who have the most publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database.

Table 7. The Top Three Authors with the Most Publications on Accounting Education in the Web of Science Database

Author Names	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
"Steven Dellaportas"	9	0,705
"Kim Watty"	9	0,705
"Beverley Jackling"	8	0,626

According to the data presented in Table 7 above, the top three authors with the most publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database were determined as Steven Dellaportas, Kim Watty and B Jackling, respectively.

In Table 8 below, some information about the top five most cited publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database is presented.

Table 8. Most Cited Publications on Accounting Education in Web of Science Database

Publication Titles	Authors	publication Year	Web of Science Citations	Google Schoolar Citations	References	Web of Science Categories
"Insights into Accounting Education in a Covid-19 World"	Alan Sangster, Greg Stoner and Barbara Flood	2020	90	254	22	Business, Finance
"The Expectation-Performance Gap in Accounting Education: An Exploratory Study"	Binh Bui and Brenda Porter	2010	155	501	80	Business, Finance
"Towards a 'Critical Cultural Political Economy' Account of the Globalising of Education"	Susan L. Robertson, L. and Roger Dale.	2020	104	284	44	Education & Educational Research
"The Expectation Performance Gap in Accounting Education: A Review of Generic Skills Development in UK Accounting Degrees"	Jill Webb, J. and Caroline Chaffer.	2016	45	138	71	Business, Finance
"Graduates' Vocational Skills for the Management Accountancy Profession: Exploring the Accounting Education Expectation-Performance Gap"	Douglas Howcroft	2017	38	113	48	Business, Finance

According to the data presented in Table 8 above, it is seen that the most cited publication about accounting education is the publication titled "Insights into Accounting Education in a Covid-19 World", which is in the category of Business, Finance and created by Alan Sangster & Greg Stoner and Barbara Flood. There were 90 citations in the Web of Science Citations database and 254 citations in Google academic for this publication.

In Table 9 below, some information about the citations of the publications published on accounting education is presented.

Table 9. Citation Information for Publications on Accounting Education in the Web of Science Database

	Times Cited
Total	8,662
Without Self-Citations	7,570
Average Per İtem	6.78
H-Index	39

When the data presented in Table 9 above are examined, it is seen that a total of 8,662 references were made to the publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database. Of these citations, 7,570 are related to publications that are not self-cited. The average number of citations per publication is 6.78 and the number of H-indexed citations is 39.

Information on the first three document types published in the Web of Science database regarding accounting education is presented in Table 10.

Table 10. The Top Three Types of Documents Most Published in Accounting Education in Web of Science Database

Document Types	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
Article	830	64.99
Proceeding Paper	221	17.30
Book Chapters	103	8.07

According to Table 10, it can be said that 64.99 percent of the publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database are articles, 17.30 percent are Proceeding Paper and 8.07 percent are Book Chapters.

Information on the first three index types in which the publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database are indexed are presented in Table 11. According to the data presented in Table 11, it can be said that 43.62 percent Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), 25.92 percent Social Sciences Citation Index

(SSCI) and 14.96 percent Conference Proceedings Citation Index - Social Science &Humanities (CPCI-SSH) indexes of the publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database.

Table 11. Index Information of Publications in the Web of Science Database on Accounting Education

Index of Web of Science	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
"Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)"	557	43.62
"Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)"	331	25.92
"Conference Proceedings Citation Index – Social Science &Humanities (CPCI-SSH)"	191	14.96

In Table 12 below, information on the top five countries that have published the most studies on accounting education is presented.

Table 12. Countries Publishing the Most Studies on Accounting Education in Web of Science Database

Countries/Regions	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
USA	258	20.17
Australia	151	11.81
England	128	10.01
China	116	9.07
Brazil	57	4.46

According to Table 12, 20.17 percent of the publications on accounting education were created in the USA. The USA is followed by publications created in Australia, England, China and Brazil, respectively. Türkiye, on the other hand, ranks 18th in the list with 18 publications.

In Table 13, information on the first five languages in which the publications on accounting education are most frequently published are presented.

Table 13. Languages of Publications on Accounting Education in Web of Science Database

Languages	Record Count	Total Enrollment Rate (%1.277)
English	1,151	10.18
Spanish	50	3.99
Portuguese	45	2.27
Chinese	7	2.27
German	7	2.11

According to the data presented in Table 13 above, 10.18 percent of the publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database were published in English. Following the publications in English, the Web of Science database includes publications on accounting education in Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese and German, respectively.

Methodology

Under this title, explanations about the purpose, scope, importance of the research and the method applied within the scope of the research are given.

Purpose of The Research

In this study, it is aimed to examine the publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database by bibliometric analysis method by classifying them in terms of certain criteria.

Scope of The Research

The scope of the study consists of the publications listed on accounting education in the Web of Science database as a result of the search made on 09.07.2023 without any date limitation. Within the scope of the study, 1.277 records were accessed as a result of the search made with the term accounting education under the title title, and these accessed records were examined by classifying them according to certain criteria.

Importance of Research

This study is important in that it examines the trend of publications on accounting education in the Web of Science database with the bibliometric analysis method and can guide researchers who will prepare publications in this field in the future.

Method of Research

In this study, the bibliometric analysis method was used to classify and analyze the publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database until 09/07/2023. In this context, 1,277 records accessed as a result of the search made with the term accounting education under the title title in the Web of Science database were analyzed by bibliometric analysis method.

Discussion

When the findings obtained from this study, which aims to examine the publications related to accounting

education in the Web of Science database, with the bibliometric analysis method, when compared with the findings of other studies in the literature in which the publications on accounting education are discussed, it is seen that most of the publications on accounting education are in the USA. It is noteworthy that it was created. As a matter of fact, Merigó and Yang (2017) determined that the USA is the country with the most publications in their study, which they aimed to examine the publications in the field of accounting in the Web of Science database with the bibliometric analysis method. In addition, another finding determined within the scope of this study is that Australia and China are among the top five countries that have published the most studies on accounting education. This finding is supported by the findings in the publications of Merigó and Yang (2017). Merigó and Yang (2017) found that among the top five most influential countries in accounting publications, Australia was the fourth most influential and China the fifth. In addition, Koç and Karabınar (2020), which aims to examine international publications in the field of accounting education with the bibliometric analysis method, determined that the most influential country is the USA. In addition, the finding of the author with the most publications on accounting education, determined by the authors in their studies, is consistent with the finding of the most influential author determined within the scope of this study. However, the authors determined that the most influential institution in their study was Deakin University. Within the scope of this study, the institution with the most publications on accounting education was determined as the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Rmit and it was determined that Deakin University was the second institution.

Conclusion

In this study, which aims to examine the publications related to accounting education in the Web of Science database with the bibliometric analysis method, a total of 1,277 publications published until 09.07.2023, which were accessed as a result of the search made with the term accounting education under the title title, were examined without any date limitation. According to the findings obtained from the study, it was concluded that 875 of the 1,277 studies accessed in the Web of Science database on accounting education were published in the last ten years. In addition, it was concluded in the study that publications related to accounting education mostly focused on business finance, education educational research and business disciplines. It was determined that the journals with the most publications related to accounting education were Taylor & Francis with a journal impact factor of 4.231, Emerald Group Publishing with a journal impact factor of 1.891, and Elsevier with a journal impact factor of 7.0. The universities that have published the most studies on accounting education are Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Rmit and Deakin University, respectively. According to another finding obtained from the study, it is possible to classify 10.18 percent of the studies on accounting education under the heading of accounting education, 3.99 percent of them in accounting education and 2.271 percent under the heading of routine companion to accounting education. The authors with the most publications on accounting education were Dellaportas, S. with 9 publications, Watty, K. with 9 publications, and Jackling, B. with 8 publications, respectively. It has been determined that the most cited publication in the Web of Science database on accounting education is the study titled "Insights into Accounting Education in a Covid-19 World" created by Sangster, Stoner and Flood in 2020. In addition, it was concluded that the number of Without self-citations

for publications related to accounting education was 7,570, the number of citations per publication was 6.78, and the number of citations with H-Index was 39. In addition, the findings obtained from the study revealed that 64.99 percent of the publications on accounting education were created as articles, 17.30 percent as proceeding paper and 8.07 percent as book chapters. In addition, 10.18 percent of the publications in the Web of Science database on accounting education were created in the USA, and 10.18 percent of the publications were in English, 3.994 percent in Spanish and 2.27 percent in Portuguese.

Recommendations

When the publications related to accounting education scanned in the web of science database were examined within the scope of the study, it was noted that there were a limited number of studies in which different dimensions of accounting education were associated with information technologies in empirical studies. In this context, in future studies, it is planned to collect and analyze the data of students in the learning process with different biosignals in order to increase the learning process and the quality of importance in accounting education, and to present some suggestions for improving the learning process.

Notes

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests between authors.

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Determination of Secondary School Students' Cognitive Structures towards Concepts Emerging After the French Revolution with Word Association Test

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Abstract: These learning outcomes in the social studies curriculum aim to raise students as individuals who have democratic values, respect human rights, justice and equality. Teaching these outcomes is of great importance for students to take an active role in society and to become democratic citizens in the future. The aim of this study is to reveal the cognitive structures of students about the idea movements that emerged after the French Revolution. The research was conducted using the survey technique from qualitative research methods. The study group of the research was carried out with 110 middle school students studying in the 7th and 8th grades in the Nizip district of Gaziantep province in the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. A word association test (WIT) was used to determine the cognitive structures of middle school students regarding the concepts of human rights, democracy, nationalism, equality, justice and labor rights. The data were analyzed by creating a frequency table showing the number of times which words or concepts were repeated for which key concept. A concept network was created based on this frequency table. In the light of the findings obtained, it is seen that the concepts with the highest frequency are fundamental rights and freedoms and law. The concepts of equality and patriotism also have a high frequency.

Keywords: French Revolution, Equality, Justice, Democracy.

Introduction

The social studies curriculum aims to teach students important concepts such as democracy, human rights, equality and justice. These concepts cover the basic principles of the functioning of society and the relationships between individuals. Students' understanding and internalization of these gains contribute to their active and conscious participation in society (Dinç & Doğan, 2010). Democracy is one of the cornerstones of the social

studies education program. Students are taught what democracy is, what democratic values are, and how democratic processes work. Democracy is a form of government that encourages equal and free participation of individuals. This learning outcome aims to help students respect democratic values, participate effectively in community life, and take part in democratic processes (Turan & Avcı, 2018). Human rights are also an important component of the social studies curriculum. Students are taught that human rights are universal and that each individual has fundamental rights and freedoms. The acquisition of human rights aims for students to respect human rights, stand against discrimination, and learn to respect the rights of others (Şen, 2019; Balcı, & Yelken, 2013). Equality and justice are other important achievements in the social studies education program. Students are told about the importance of equality and justice in society. Equality means that all individuals are treated based on the principle of equal opportunity and equal treatment. Justice, on the other hand, is necessary to eliminate injustice, protect the rights of all individuals and create a just society. These learning outcomes teach students to act fairly, respect differences and put the principle of equality into practice (Yiğittir & Kaymakcı, 2012; Şahin & Ersoy, 2012). These outcomes in the social studies education program aim to raise students as individuals who have democratic values, respect human rights, justice and equality. Teaching these outcomes is of great importance for students to take an active role in society and become future democratic citizens (Turan, 2018; Kan, 2010).

Human rights

The French Revolution took place between 1789 and 1799 and represented a political and social revolution in France. The concept of human rights is an important aspect of the French Revolution. Before the French Revolution, France was a society living under absolute monarchy. The Revolution emerged out of popular demands for political and social change. One of the main goals of the Revolution was the abolition of the existing feudal order and the establishment of a social order based on the principles of equality, freedom and justice (Akçura, 2005; Karaman, 2018). During the Revolution, the French National Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in 1789. It was a document that recognized basic human rights and required the government to protect these rights. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen guaranteed rights such as liberty, equality, property rights and fair trial. This declaration made a significant contribution to modern human rights thinking (Armaoğlu, 1964; Engin, 2014). Following the French Revolution, the idea of human rights gradually gained worldwide influence. Human rights became part of international law through international documents and constitutions. The ideas of human rights brought by the French Revolution were later influential in the American Declaration of Independence and other revolutions (Durgun, 2014). However, the violence and terror that occurred during the French Revolution led to the violation of some human rights. During the revolution, especially during the government of the Jacobins, thousands of people were executed and many people were unjustly arrested. Therefore, efforts to strike a balance between human rights and democracy gained importance after the French Revolution (Georgeon, 2002). The French Revolution made a significant contribution to the development of the concept of human rights. Documents such as the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen are recognized as fundamental documents that define and protect the universal principles of human rights. However, the violence and terrorist incidents

during the revolution brought along debates on human rights (İnalcık, 2010; Köylü, 2019).

Democracy

The French Revolution is a period that took place between 1789-1799 and led to the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the republic in France. The Revolution was caused by a combination of social, political and economic problems. France's old regime was characterized by absolutism and the domination of the privileged classes. However, this situation caused great discontent among the people (Karpat, 2014). The main goal of the revolution was to establish a democratic and egalitarian social order. Human rights, freedom and equality were emphasized. During the Revolution, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, one of the most important documents of the French Revolution, was adopted. This declaration is a text that defines the inherent rights of all individuals and protects the freedoms of individuals (Kohn, 1994; Barın, 2017). Democracy, on the other hand, is a form of government in which the people participate in state administration directly or through representatives. With the establishment of a republican regime in the French Revolution, an understanding of government based on democratic principles was adopted. The French Republic, which replaced the old monarchical regime, was governed by an elected National Assembly (Smith, 2009). However, the consequences of the French Revolution were complex. The Revolution was characterized by violent internal conflicts and at times radical tendencies prevailed. The Jacobins, led by Robes pierre, came to power for a short time and led to the execution of thousands of people in a period known as the Period of Fear. In this process, an authoritarian form of government emerged instead of democracy (Ülken, 1979). Following the French Revolution, various forms of government were tried in France in different periods. However, democracy and republican values regained strength in the following years. Today, France is a parliamentary democracy. The French Revolution has a historical significance in terms of emphasizing democratic principles and developing the concept of human rights. However, it has also been criticized for its radical tendencies and violence (Lemarcahand, 1991).

Nationalism

There is an important relationship between the French Revolution and nationalism. The French Revolution, which began in 1789, was a turning point that overthrew the monarchy and led to the establishment of the republic in France. The Revolution put forward the basic principles of modern democracy and adopted concepts such as popular sovereignty, equality, freedom and justice (Akçura, 2005; Çoban, 2012). The concept of nationalism also emerged during the French Revolution. The Revolution supported the idea of people coming together to form a nation and strengthened French nationalism. Before the Revolution, there was no great sense of belonging among people living in different regions and classes in France. However, the Revolution revealed the French national identity and fueled feelings of nationalism (Armaoğlu, 1964). Nationalism was a factor that united the French people around a common national identity and strengthened their sense of loyalty to the state. The French began to define themselves as a nation and emphasize that they had a common history, culture and languages. Nationalism increased people's loyalty to the state and national values and ensured social unity

(Durgun, 2014; Turan, 2011). Following the French Revolution, the concept of nationalism spread to other European countries and influenced the formation of nation-states. Nationalism has enabled a nation to come together, strengthen its feelings of unity and solidarity and unite around common goals. At the same time, however, nationalism can sometimes go to extremes and breed hostility and discrimination against other nations or ethnic groups. For this reason, the concept of nationalism has been a controversial issue and has been subjected to different interpretations (Georgeon, 2002).

Justice

The French Revolution is considered as the pioneer of modern democracy and human rights and had a great impact on the development of the concept of justice (İnalcık, 2010). One of the main goals of the French Revolution was to end the injustice of the existing social and political order. At the time, France had a social order divided into three classes: the nobility, members of the church, and a large peasant and working class. The nobility and the clergy often enjoyed privileged status and often received preferential treatment in the justice system because of their special privileges. This led to injustice and unfairness (Karpat, 2014). The French Revolution aimed to overthrow this privileged order and build an egalitarian society. The concepts of inherent rights, freedoms and justice were the fundamental principles that came to the fore during the revolution. Revolution leaders believed that justice should be achieved through equality, impartiality and universal principles (Kohn, 1994). During the French Revolution, many reforms were carried out on the practical application of the concept of justice. For example, the courts and judicial system of the old regime were abolished and replaced by a new justice system. The main aim of this new system was to ensure that everyone was tried equally. In addition, the basic principles of justice were adopted, such as the abolition of excessive punishments such as the death penalty and the non-use of inhumane methods such as torture (Özkırımlı, 2009). The French Revolution also laid the foundation for the modern legal system and judicial principles. The principle of the independence of justice was emphasized and it was emphasized that judges should fulfill their duties impartially. The principle of equality before the law was adopted and it was accepted that everyone should go through a fair trial process if they committed a crime (Smith, 2009).

Equality

The French Revolution started in France as a movement that rebelled against the monarchy and led to social, political and economic changes. The concept of equality also played an important role in this period (Çetinsaya, 2001). One of the primary goals of the French Revolution was to achieve social and political equality. Before the Revolution, French society was divided by class privileges. Nobles and churchmen, who were at the top of society, enjoyed special privileges, were exempted from paying taxes and owned land. This situation caused great discontent in the society (İnalcık, 2010; Erkan, 2008). At the beginning of the French Revolution, in 1789, the French National Assembly adopted the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen". This declaration was an important document emphasizing the principles of equality, freedom and justice. The inherent rights of human beings and the principle of the rule of law were among the basic principles included in the declaration

(Karal, 1988; Külekçi, 2014). In the later stages of the French Revolution, the idea of equality spread to wider segments of society. The 1793 Constitution of the French Revolution stated that citizens had equal rights and that justice would be applied equally to all (Kuran, 2000; Uçar, 2018). However, in the later stages of the French Revolution, different interpretations of the concept of equality emerged and the advocated a more radical understanding of equality, others adopted a more moderate understanding of equality (Mccarthy, 1994). Following the French Revolution, the concept of equality had a worldwide impact and inspired social movements in other countries. Especially in the 19th and 20th centuries, democratic movements and human rights struggles in many countries were shaped around the principle of equality (Sezgin, 1984; Güloğlu, 2010). In conclusion, the French Revolution was an important turning point in the development of the concept of equality. The Revolution spread the idea of social and political equality and formed the basis of human rights struggles. However, interpretations and applications of the concept of equality have varied over time and have led to debates (Kuran, 2000).

Workers' rights

There is a link between the French Revolution and workers' rights, but it is not a direct causal relationship. The French Revolution is an event that took place between 1789-1799 and was a revolt against the monarchy and a movement of political transformation in France. This revolution emphasized democratic values and the concepts of equality and freedom and made significant contributions to the development of modern democratic principles (Armaoğlu, 1997). Following the French Revolution, the French government led by Napoleon Bonaparte implemented many reforms. One of these reforms was advances in labor rights. Passed in 1804, the Napoleonic Code provided some protections for workers and regulated labor rights. These included limiting working hours, controlling child labor, taking occupational health and safety measures, and granting workers the right to organize unions (Ahmed Cevdet Pasha, 1858; Engün, 2022). However, complete equality in workers' rights was not achieved immediately after the French Revolution. Workers' living and working conditions could still be harsh and unjust. More comprehensive developments in workers' rights took place in later periods, especially during the industrial revolution and with the strengthening of the labor movement (Gölen, 2000). Therefore, although the French Revolution did not have a direct impact on workers' rights, the values and reformist movements brought by the revolution contributed to the advancement of workers' rights. Workers' rights were shaped by struggles in the following years and formed the basis of contemporary workers' rights movements (Gaxotte, 1962).

Investigation of the Idea Movements Emerged After the French Revolution in the Direction of Social Studies Curriculum

The French Revolution was a revolution that took place between 1789 and 1799 and led to the emergence of many different intellectual movements. These movements of ideas are among the important topics that can be examined in social studies curricula. Here are some currents of ideas that emerged after the French Revolution and their examination in line with social studies curricula: (Özkaya, 1994).

1. Age of Enlightenment (Illuminism): The Age of Enlightenment, which began before the French Revolution, was a revolution in ideas and political thoughts. In this period, concepts such as human rights, freedom, equality and justice came to the fore. In the social studies curriculum, the Age of Enlightenment can be examined by focusing on the development of ideas and thoughts, the effects of enlightenment, and the intellectual figures of this period (Zariç, 2017; Kemal, 2017).

2. Liberalism: Another intellectual movement that emerged after the French Revolution was liberalism. Liberalism emphasizes individual freedom, property rights, free market, and limitation of government. In the social studies curriculum, liberalism can be examined in a way that helps to understand the foundations of democratic systems by emphasizing the rights and freedoms of the individual (Conway & Yayla, 2011).

3. Socialism: Socialism is another important intellectual movement that emerged after the French Revolution. Socialism emphasizes social equality and collective ownership. Socialism can be addressed in the social studies curriculum to understand the diversity of economic systems, to grasp the importance of social equality, and to examine how socialist thought has evolved throughout history (Von Mises, 2007).

4. Nationalism: The French Revolution also contributed to the development of the idea of nationalism. Nationalism is characterized by a sense of belonging and loyalty to a nation. In the social studies curriculum, nationalism can be examined to understand topics such as the formation of the nation-state, cultural identity and the importance of national consciousness (Çalen, 2019).

5. Democracy: Following the French Revolution, the idea of democracy has developed significantly. Democracy emphasizes the foundations of popular sovereignty and participatory politics. Democracy in the social studies curriculum can be examined in a way to cover topics such as the importance of democratic values, basic democratic processes, and how democracy has evolved throughout history (Bulut, 2004).

These movements of ideas, which emerged after the French Revolution, are among the important topics that can be examined in courses such as history, politics, sociology and philosophy in social studies curricula. These examinations will help students understand how ideas and thoughts have been shaped throughout history and how societies and states have evolved (Akşin, 1994). This study aims to reveal the network in the cognitive structures of middle school students of the idea movements that emerged after the French Revolution. The concept networks that emerged in line with this purpose were determined.

Method

Research design:

This research, which aims to reveal the cognitive structures and misconceptions of secondary school students about the concepts of human rights, democracy, nationalism, justice, equality and workers' rights that emerged after the French Revolution, was conducted using the survey technique, one of the qualitative research methods. As it is known, survey models are research approaches that aim to describe a past or present situation as it exists, and the event, individual or object that is the subject of the research is tried to be defined within its own conditions and as it is (Karasar, 1999). For this reason, a word association test was used to determine the cognitive structures of middle school students regarding these concepts.

Working group

This research was conducted with middle school students studying in the 7th and 8th grades in the Nizip district of Gaziantep province in the spring semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. The reason for the selection of these students from the 7th and 8th grades in the research is that the students have achieved the gains with the idea movements that emerged after the French Revolution and to see how the students cognitively construct these concepts. In this context, 110 volunteer students participated in the study. However, 6 of the students who participated in the study were excluded because they did not complete the entire data collection tool, and the data obtained from 104 students were analyzed. Of the students participating in the study, 52 (50%) were female students and 52 (50%) were male students.

Data collection tools of the study:

A word association test (WIT) was used to determine the cognitive structures of secondary school students regarding the concepts of human rights, democracy, nationalism, equality, justice and labor rights. Alternative measurement and evaluation approach emphasizes the evaluation of the process as well as the product (Özdemir, 2010). There are many techniques that serve this purpose (Concept Maps, Mind Maps, Structured Grid, Diagnostic Branched Tree, etc.). One of these techniques is the Word Association Test (WIT). CSE is one of the alternative measurement and evaluation techniques that can reveal the student's cognitive structure and the links between the concepts in this structure, that is, the knowledge network, and help us determine whether the relationships between concepts in long-term memory are sufficient or meaningful (Bahar, Alex, Johnstone & Sutcliffe, 1999). As a result of the research, the words related to the concepts were examined in detail, and concept networks were created in line with the cut-off points determined by taking into account the repeated words. In the data collection tool, spaces were left for students to write the answer words they thought related to the concepts.

In the study, before the implementation, explanations were given about the KIT and examples from different applications were given. Students were given one minute for each concept. Within this time, students wrote the answer words they thought were related to the key concept. Each key concept was written one page at a time on a single page. At the end of the answer words given for each key concept, there is a 'related sentence' section.

In this section, students were asked to write sentences that came to their minds about the key concept. This is because the answer word associated with the key concept may only be at the recall level and may be a product of association without a meaningful relationship with the key concept. In addition, since the related sentence will be more complex and high-level than a single answer word, situations such as whether the sentence is scientific or not and whether it contains misconceptions of different qualities affect the evaluation process (Deveci, Köse & Bayır, 2014; Işıklı, Taşdere & Göz, 2011).

Cut-off intervals set for the generated words

-The 120-100 frequency range was determined as the first cut-off point.

- The 99-80 frequency range was determined as the second cut-off point.

- 79-60 frequency range was determined as the third cut-off point.

- The fourth cut-off point was determined as the 59-40 frequency range.

- The 39-20 frequency range was determined as the fifth cut-off point.

- The frequency range of 19-3 was determined as the sixth cut-off point.

Colors determined for the breakpoints

1. The color set for the breakpoint is red.

2. The color set for the breakpoint is blue.

3. The color designated for the breakpoint is green.

4. The color designated for the breakpoint is purple.

5. The color designated for the breakpoint is orange.

6. The color designated for the breakpoint is black.

Data analysis:

In the research, a frequency table showing the number of times which words or concepts were repeated for which key concept was created. A concept network was created based on this frequency table. In order to reveal the cognitive structure, the breakpoint technique proposed by (Bahar, Alex, Johnstone & Sutcliffe, 1999) was used to create the concept network. For any key concept in the word association test, the highest number of answers below a certain number of words is used as a cut-off point. The answers above a certain frequency are written in the first part of the concept network. Then the cut-off point is lowered at certain intervals and the process continues until all the keywords appear in the concept network (Bahar & Özatlı, 2003).

Results

The findings of the study are presented in tables and figures. Table 1 shows the frequencies of the words produced for the concepts that emerged after the French Revolution.

Table 1. Frequencies of Words Produced Related to Concepts

Words	Human Rights	Democracy	Nationalism	Justice	Equality	Worker Rights
Fairness	40	29	5	66	83	27
Ataturk		15	24	2	1	

Non-discrimination	43	19	9	62	65	35
Independence	6	28	68	5	4	
Republic		28	4			
Solidarity	8	9	8	6	9	1
State	2	6	7			2
Religion			13		5	
Right to education	31				6	
Economy		3	1	1		14
Labor				1	1	28
Sacrifice	1		15		1	1
Idea current			32			
Freedom of opinion and expression	28	6	4	6	3	1
Security	19	5	13	4	2	33
Rights/rights	18	23	6	43	37	24
People	2	12	10	1	1	
Law	8	6	1	120	11	1
Racism	5		21		23	
Revolution		1	7			
Human	15	12	5	14	18	4
Unemployment			2	4		37
Decision	1	2	2	5	1	
Kingdom		4			3	
grizzly wolf			4			
Salary	2	1		1	1	52
Nation	5	10	26	3	4	
National sovereignty	4	13	1			
Ottoman state			8	1	1	
Right to vote	10	30	5		1	1
Freedom	68	20	7	17	14	10
Industrial Revolution			1			43
Love respect	17	2	15	11	15	15
Right to elect and be elected	21	66	16	6	14	6
Politics	10	34	12	5	4	2
Social Studies	2	5	3	2	1	2

Fundamental rights and freedoms	116	6	9	9	17	73
Libra				14	25	1
Turkish history			10	3		
Patriot	2	13	89	10	8	
Law	12	24	8	58	16	3
Judgment		2		14		
Governance		56	10	2	1	1

When Table 1 is examined, students produced a total of 497 concepts for the keyword human rights, 490 for the keyword democracy, 480 for the keyword nationalism, 496 for the keyword justice, 396 for the keyword equality, and 417 for the keyword workers' rights.

1. Word table generated for the breakpoint

The words produced for the first interval are: fundamental rights and freedoms and law. Both words were associated with all other keywords in the 5 cut-off intervals. The common association of law derived for the keyword justice has the highest frequency value in the table. The association of fundamental rights and freedoms derived for the keyword human rights (f=116) had the second highest frequency in the frequency table.
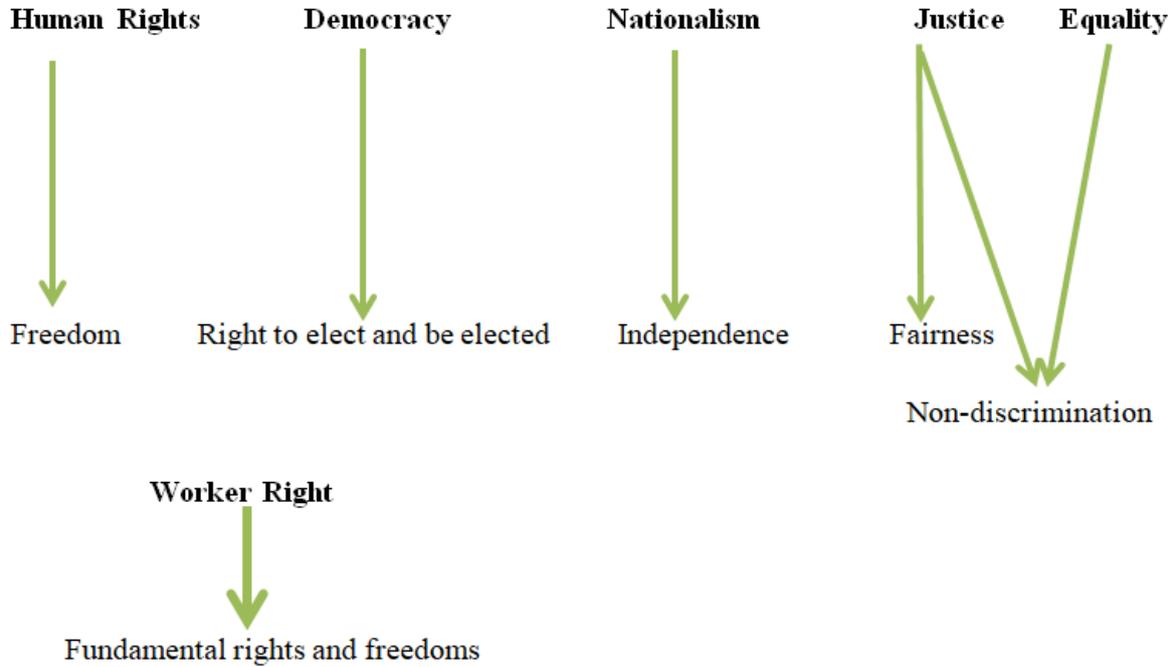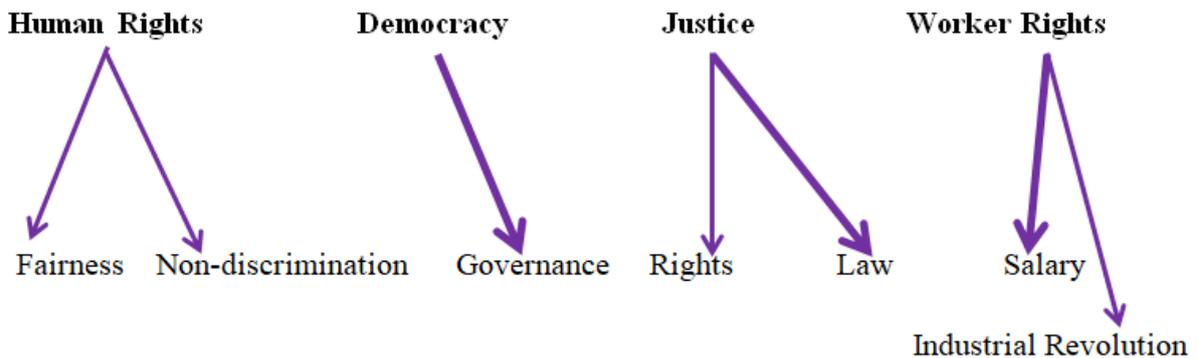

3.   Word table generated for the breakpoint

The words generated for the second cut-off interval are: equality for the keyword justice (f=83) and patriot for the keyword nationalism (f=89). Among the generated words, the patriotic connotation was associated with

other keywords except for workers' rights, while the equality connotation was associated with all keywords at other cut-off intervals.
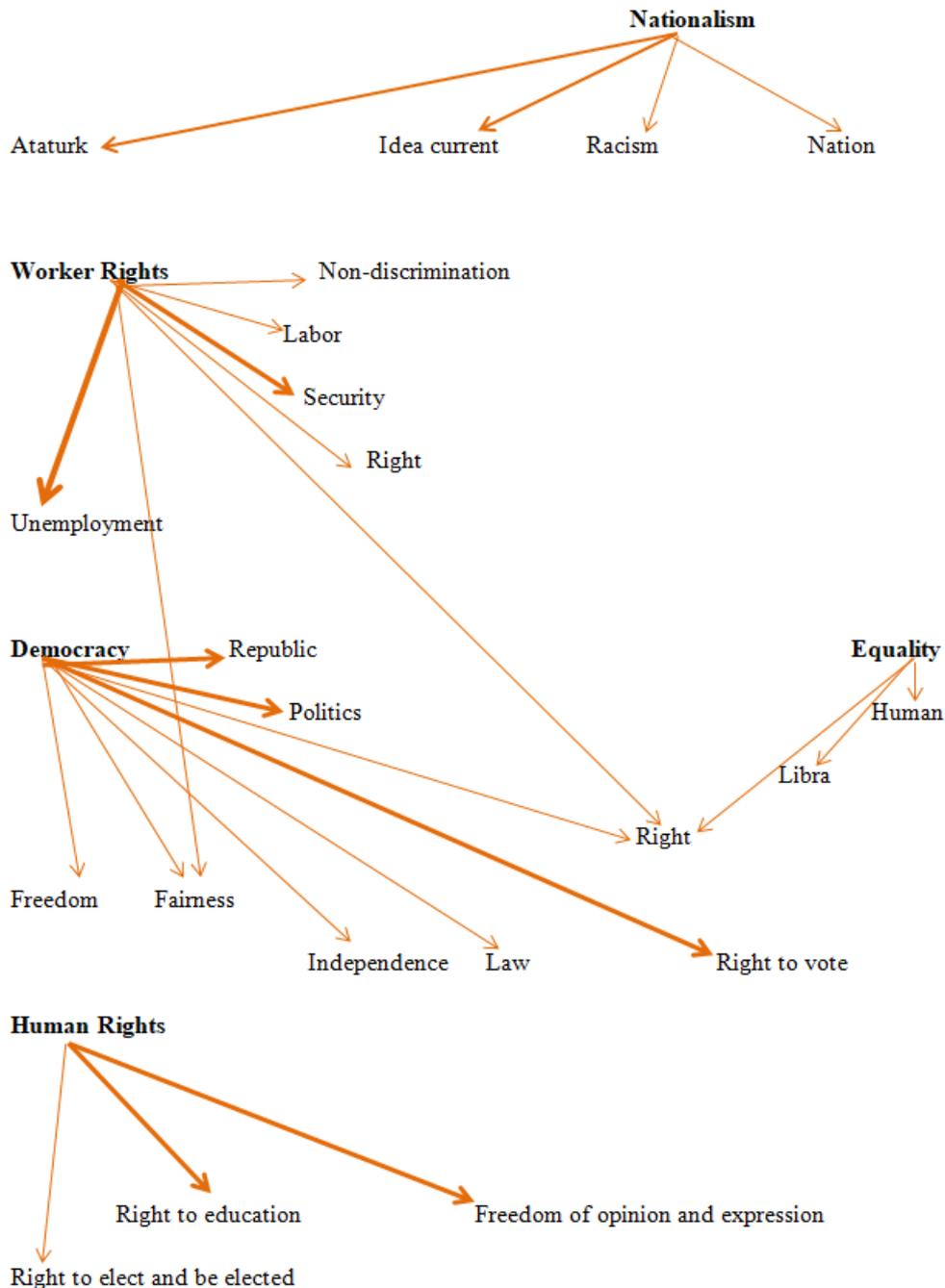

3. Word table generated for the breakpoint

The words generated at the third breakpoint were freedom (f=68) in the context of the keyword human rights, election and being elected (f=66) in the context of the keyword democracy, independence (f=68) in the context of the keyword nationalism, fairness (f=66) and nondiscrimination (f=62) in the context of the keyword justice, nondiscrimination (f=65) in the context of equality, and fundamental rights and freedoms (f=73) in the context of the keyword labor rights. The connotation of nondiscrimination was the common derived word for the keywords justice and equality at the third cut-off point. The keyword nationalism was associated with the connotation of independence, revealing misconceptions and mislearning.
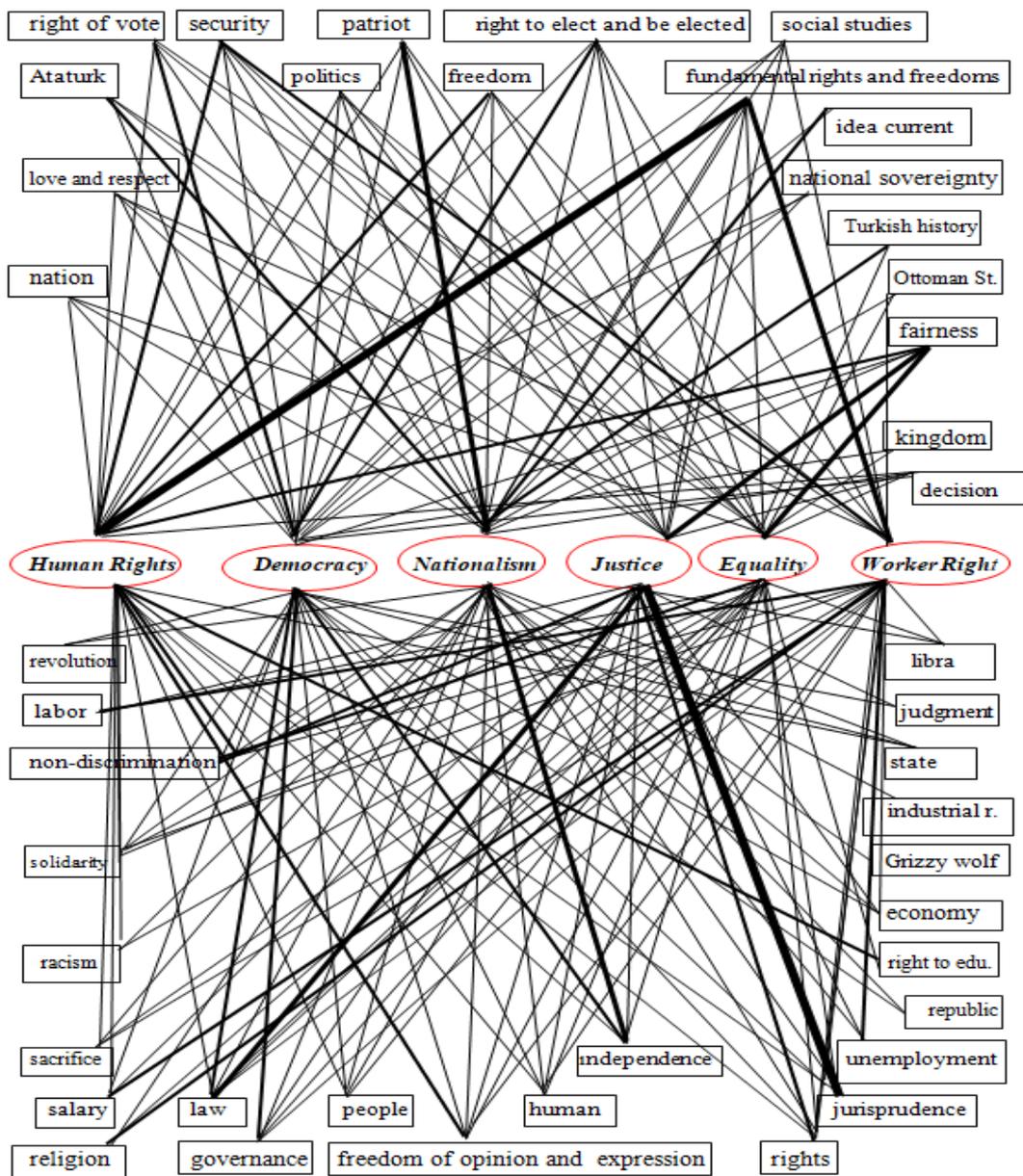

4. Word table generated for the breakpoint

The words generated for the fourth cut-off point are: fairness (f=40) and non-discrimination (f=43) for the keyword human rights, governance (f=56) for the keyword democracy, right (f=43) and law (f=58) for the keyword justice, salary (f=52) and industrial revolution (f=43) for the keyword workers' rights.

5. Word table generated for the breakpoint

There was an increase in the number and frequency of words produced in the fifth cut-off interval, but the relationship between words could not be established at the expected level in the relationships between concepts; disconnections were determined in the relationship between associations. The words produced for the keyword human rights were the right to education (f=31), freedom of opinion and expression (f=28), and the right to vote and be elected (f=21). The words produced for the keyword democracy are; fairness (f=29), independence (f=28), republic (f=28), right (f=23), right to vote (f=30), freedom (f=20), politics (f=34), law (f=24). The words produced for the keyword nationalism are Atatürk (f=24), intellectual movement (f=32), racism (f=21), nation (f=26). The words produced for the keyword "equality" are; right (f=37), racism (f=23), human (f=18), scales (f=25). The words produced for the key concept of workers' rights are fairness (f=27), non-discrimination (f=35), labor (f=28), security (f=33), right (f=24), unemployment (f=37).

6. Word table generated for the breakpoint

The concept of right produced at the fifth breakpoint was a common word for the keywords democracy, equality and workers' rights, and a relationship was determined in the connotation between the concepts. In this interval, the connotation of fairness was the common derived word for the keywords labor rights and democracy. No word generation was identified for the keyword justice in the fifth interval. In the fifth cut-off interval for the keyword equality, the answer of scales was determined by 25 students as an example in terms of creating metaphors and associations. The fact that some of the students gave the answer racism (f=23) for the keyword nationalism in this interval shows that there are misconceptions and learning deficiencies about the word nationalism. There was no connection between the keywords human rights and nationalism with the other keywords given in the fifth interval. In addition, the fact that the students associate the keyword labor rights with unemployment provides information about their perspectives on social and economic life.

At the sixth cut-off point, both the associations related to the keywords increased and an increase was observed in the relationships between associations.

The words produced for the keyword human rights at the sixth cut-off point are: independence (f=6), solidarity (f=8), security (f=19), right (f=18), law (f=8), racism (f=5), human (f=15), nation (f=5), national sovereignty (f=4), right to vote (f=10), love and respect (f=17), politics (f=10), law (f=12). In this range, security was the most common response, as indicated by the bold black arrow in the table. It was observed that the word solidarity was associated with other keywords other than workers' rights in this interval. All of the answer associations given by the students were associated with at least two other keywords.

Words produced for the keyword democracy in the sixth interval; Atatürk (f=15), indiscrimination (f=19), solidarity (f=9), state (f=6), freedom of opinion and expression (f=6), security (f=5), right (f=12), law (f=6), human (f=12), kingdom (f=4), nation (f=10), national sovereignty (f=13), fundamental rights and freedoms (f=6), patriot (f=13). The most common connotation of the keyword democracy in this range was indiscrimination. Among the words produced in the sixth cut-off interval for the keyword democracy, except for Atatürk and non-discrimination, the answer associations were associated with at least two other keywords. Regarding the keyword nationalism in the sixth interval; fairness (f=5), solidarity (f=8), state (f=7), religion (f=13), sacrifice (f=15), freedom of opinion and expression (f=4), security (f=13), right (f=6), people (f=10), human (f=5), grizzly wolf (f=4), Ottoman state (f=8), right to vote (f=5), freedom (f=7), love and respect (f=15), right to vote and be elected (f=16), politics (f=12), fundamental rights and freedoms (f=9), Turkish history (f=10), law (f=8), administration (f=10). In this interval, answers other than the words fairness, religion, sacrifice, bozkurt, and government were answered within at least two key concepts. The connotation of solidarity was associated with all keywords except for workers' rights in the sixth interval.

Regarding the key concept of justice in the sixth cut-off interval; independence (f=5), solidarity (f=6), freedom of opinion and expression (f=6), security (f=4), human (f=14), unemployment (f=4), decision (f=5), freedom (f=17), love and respect (f=11), fairness (f=6), politics (f=5), fundamental rights and freedoms (f=9), scales (f=14), patriot (f=10), judgment (f=14). In this interval, except for unemployment and decision, the other

response associations were associated with at least two keywords. In the sixth interval, associations were produced for the concept of equality: independence (f=4), solidarity (f=9), religion (f=5), right to education (f=6), nation (f=4), freedom (f=14), love and respect (f=15), right to vote and be elected (f=14), politics (f=4), fundamental rights and freedoms (f=17), patriotism (f=8), law (f=16). In this interval, all associations except the right to education were associated with other keywords at least twice.In the sixth interval, the keyword workers' rights was associated with economy f=14), human (f=4), freedom (f=10), love and respect (f=15), and the right to vote and be elected (f=14). It is seen that the diversity of associations and the context between concepts have decreased.

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Social studies teaching is a field of education that attaches great importance to the value of democracy. Democracy is a political system governed by the sovereignty and participation of the people. Social studies teaching aims to provide students with the knowledge, skills and values necessary to understand and appreciate democracy and respect democratic values. Social studies courses provide a platform for introducing democracy and equipping students with democratic citizenship skills. In these lessons, students are taught the concept of democracy, democratic processes, fundamental rights and freedoms. They also help students understand and internalize the basic principles of democracy such as pluralism, equality, justice, tolerance and participation. Social studies teaching contributes to building and sustaining a democratic society. It aims to raise active, conscious and responsible citizens by providing students with competencies such as critical thinking, analytical skills, empathy and respect for human rights. These skills enable students to participate in democratic processes, understand social problems and find solutions. The value of democracy is at the center of social studies teaching because democracy is based on the right of every member of society to be equal and free. Social studies teaching provides students with the opportunity to embrace these values and instills in them the responsibility to defend, protect and promote democracy.

Social studies is a discipline that examines the relationships, history, geography, economy and other social elements of people in society. Workers' rights is a concept that advocates for fair working conditions, human rights, equality and security for workers. Social studies and labor rights bring together important values of society such as justice, equality and human rights. Workers' rights developed in response to the problems of abusive working conditions and exploitation of workers that emerged during the industrial revolution. The struggle for workers' rights has been supported by various social movements and legislation to ensure that people have fair wages, working hours, safe working conditions, freedom of association and other labor rights. Social studies helps to research, raise awareness and understand the history, economics, politics and social dynamics of workers' rights. Workers' rights are based on the democratic values of societies, the principle of social justice and human rights. Therefore, emphasizing workers' rights in social studies lessons helps students to grow up as individuals who are sensitive to human rights and the principles of equality and justice. Discussions of workers' rights often include issues such as improving working conditions, trade union rights,

equality, gender discrimination, racial discrimination, income inequality and precarious work. These discussions include goals such as protecting workers, guaranteeing their right to live and work with dignity, increasing social welfare and ensuring social justice. Discussions of workers' rights in social studies courses help students understand the injustices and problems that exist in society. These discussions raise students' awareness and encourage them to take an active role in these issues in the future. Furthermore, increased awareness of workers' rights enables governments, employers and other stakeholders to develop better policies on this issue. In conclusion, social studies and workers' rights are important concepts that support the development of society in a fair, equitable and people-centered way. Understanding and protecting workers' rights is a topic that should be addressed in social studies courses and helps students grow as individuals who are sensitive to social issues.

Social studies is a discipline that deals with the history, geography, economy, politics and culture of society. Social studies education aims to help students understand social life and human relations, develop critical thinking skills, and fulfill their responsibilities as democratic citizens. Nationalism, on the other hand, can be defined as an individual's love, loyalty and pride in his/her national identity and the nation to which he/she belongs. Nationalism refers to a community developing a sense of identity based on elements such as common language, culture, history or geographical region. Nationalism aims to bring individuals together with a sense of belonging to form a nation. Social studies lessons can also include the concept of nationalism and teach students about national identity, citizenship, cultural diversity, and international relations. In this context, the value of nationalism can be a topic discussed in social studies lessons. Nationalism is seen as a positive value in some cases and criticized in others. Positive aspects include bringing people together and creating a sense of common purpose and solidarity, preserving and sharing national culture, emphasizing democratic values and citizenship awareness. However, nationalism can also lead to extremism and exclusionism. It can lead to negative consequences such as hostility, discrimination and racism against other nations and cultures. Therefore, the value of nationalism is a controversial issue. When discussing the value of nationalism in social studies lessons, students should be presented with different perspectives, encouraged to think critically and values such as human rights, tolerance and cultural diversity should be emphasized. At the same time, the historical, social and political contexts of the concept of nationalism should be addressed to enable students to develop in-depth understanding.

The debate on social studies and the value of justice is complex and multifaceted. Social studies is a discipline used to understand the structure, history, geography, economy, politics and culture of society. Justice is a concept based on the principles of fairness, equality and honesty. While social studies helps people understand past and present social events, the value of justice is an ideal for society to fight injustice and achieve equality. Therefore, social studies and the value of justice are closely linked and can influence each other. Social studies can examine the application of the value of justice in society and the achievement of justice. For example, the history section of social studies can raise awareness of the value of justice when examining past injustices and social inequalities. Likewise, the politics or economics sections of social studies can contribute to debates about how policies and economic systems can be shaped to achieve social justice. However, the relationship of social studies to the value of justice is not always clear and different views can be found. Some may argue that social

studies is an objective discipline and excludes subjective concepts such as the value of justice. Others may argue that social studies has a profound impact on the value of justice and should contribute to society's efforts to achieve justice. In conclusion, the social studies and justice value debate is complex and can be approached from a variety of perspectives. Social studies can play an important role in understanding and achieving social justice, but there may be different opinions and approaches.

Social studies plays an important role in the understanding and implementation of human rights. Human rights include the right of all individuals to live equally and freely and to have the right to thought, expression, belief and other fundamental rights. Social studies can teach students about the importance of human rights, their origins, universal declarations and international conventions. In this way, students can become informed and active agents for the protection and defense of human rights. However, debates about the value of human rights can sometimes arise in the social studies course. There are different values, beliefs and cultural approaches to human rights. For example, in some cultures, individual rights are emphasized as a priority, while in others social or group rights are more important. What is important in such debates is to preserve the universal character of human rights and respect for human dignity.

Human rights are a universal value and recognize that every individual, regardless of race, gender, religion or belief, has rights that must be respected. It is the responsibility of societies and states to protect and defend these rights. When discussing the value of human rights in the social studies course, students should be presented with different perspectives and supported with various examples. In this way, students can understand that there are different views on human rights, develop critical thinking skills, and form their own values and stances. In conclusion, social studies and the value of human rights are complementary fields. Social studies provides an important tool for understanding and practicing human rights. Human rights value discussions, on the other hand, provide different perspectives in the social studies course and help students develop critical thinking skills.

The value of equality refers to the idea that people should have equal rights, opportunities and the principle of justice in society. The value of equality is based on the belief that people deserve the same value and respect regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, social class or other differences. The debate on the value of equality focuses on the social and economic inequalities that exist in societies. Some people argue that equality is not fully realized in society and that different groups are in privileged or disadvantaged positions. These groups may include differences in gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, etc. The equality value debate addresses issues such as how social justice can be achieved, the sources of inequalities and how they can be addressed. Some argue that active interventions and policies are necessary to achieve social justice, while others emphasize the freedom of individuals and the role of the market economy. This debate involves many ethical, political and social issues and often triggers a diversity of views among people with different ideological perspectives. Some may argue that the value of equality is a fundamental principle of society, while others may support a model of society based on diversity and individual effort.

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Relations between Students' Perceptions of Transactional Distance and Self-Efficacy in Online Peer Learning

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Abstract: This study aimed to explore the relationship between students' perceptions of transactional distance and self-efficacy within an online peer learning environment. The research involved 240 higher education students who completed three tasks over three weeks. The first task required students to write an argumentative essay. In the second week, students provided feedback on their peers' essays. In the third week, students revised their essays based on the received feedback from peers and completed two questionnaires on transactional distance and self-efficacy. The study showed that there is a significant relationship between students' perceptions of transactional distance and their self-efficacy in online peer learning. The findings indicated that students' perceptions of transactional distance had an impact on their self-efficacy in online peer learning. The findings of this research highlight the necessity of considering how students' perceptions of transactional distance contribute to their self-efficacy in online peer learning, emphasizing its influential role in the learning process.

Keywords: Online Peer Learning, Self-Efficacy, Transactional Distance

Introduction

In recent times, online learning has become an essential component of the education system, especially following the Covid-19 pandemic (Banihashem et al., 2023a; van Puffelen et al., 2022). Online learning has demonstrated significant potential in delivering adaptable and accessible education (Badali et al., 2022;

Banihashem et al., 2023b; Hasanzadeh et al., 2016; Khalifeh et al., 2020; Taghizade et al., 2020). One of the learning strategies in online learning is online peer learning (Kerman et al., 2023; Latifi et al., 2021; Noroozi et al., 2023).

Online peer learning is an increasingly popular educational approach that allows students to engage in collaborative learning activities in an online environment (Akhteh et al., 2022; Noroozi, et al., 2016, 2022). While this approach offers many benefits, such as improving argumentative essay writing (Latifi et al., 2023; Taghizadeh Kerman et al., 2022), learning (Vale Haro et al., 2023), decision-making skills (Bayat et al., 2023), it also poses unique challenges. One of the most significant challenges is the concept of transactional distance, which refers to the psychological and communication space that separates learners and instructors in online learning environments (Moore, 1997). This distance can have a significant impact on learners' self-efficacy, or their belief in their ability to succeed in a given task or situation (Bandura, 1997). Understanding the relationship between transactional distance and self-efficacy is critical to developing effective online peer learning environments that support student success.

Transactional distance theory, first introduced by Michael Moore in 1989, has been extensively studied in the field of online education (Moore, 1989). According to this theory, the transactional distance between learners and instructors is influenced by three main dimensions: cognitive, social, and teaching presence (Anderson, 2003). The cognitive dimension refers to the distance between students and content, while the social dimension refers to the distance between students. The teaching presence dimension refers to the distance between students and technology, including the tools and resources used in the online learning environment (Garrison et al., 2000). Each of these dimensions can either increase or decrease the transactional distance, and the resulting impact on learners' self-efficacy can vary. For example, a lack of interaction between students may increase social distance and decrease self-efficacy, while a lack of access to relevant resources may increase cognitive distance and decrease self-efficacy (Vrasidas & McIsaac, 1999).

Although there is a growing body of literature on transactional distance and self-efficacy in online learning, there is still much to be understood about this relationship, particularly in the context of online peer learning (Yang & Chang, 2013). Through this paper, we aim to investigate the relationship between transactional distance and self-efficacy in online peer learning environments. Specifically, we will examine the impact of students' perceptions of transactional distance (between students, between students and content, and between students and technology) on self-efficacy. By shedding light on this relationship, we hope to provide insights for educators and instructional designers to create effective online peer learning environments that support students' self-efficacy and enhance their learning outcomes. The research questions are as follows:

RQ1. What is the relationship between transactional distance and self-efficacy in online peer learning?
RQ2. To what extent do students' perceptions of transactional distance impact their self-efficacy in online peer learning?

Method

Context and Participant

This study was carried out at a Dutch university, involving 240 higher education students enrolled in five courses related to life sciences during the academic year 2021-2022. The study's final sample included 141 since 99 students (40%) did not complete the survey.

Study Design

This is an exploratory study where students followed an online module called "Argumentative Essay Writing" for three consecutive weeks within the Brigthspace platform. The "Argumentative Essay Writing" was designed to last for three consecutive weeks, during which students completed one task each week. In the first week, students were required to write an argumentative essay. *In the second week, students were invited to give written/asynchronous feedback individually and provide comments on two argumentative essays of their peers based on the given criteria.* And, in the third week, students revised their first essays based on the received feedback and then they submitted a second version of their essays in Brightspace. In the end, students were asked to complete the survey about students' perceptions of transactional distance and self-efficacy.

Measurements

Measurement of Students' Perceptions of Ttransactional Distance

The Weidlich and Bastiaens (2018) questionnaire utilized a 19-item scale to measure students' perceptions of transactional distance. Each item on the scale was designed on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from *"strongly disagree = 1" to "strongly agree = 5".* The questionnaire was divided into three sections, which included transactional distance between students and content, transactional distance between students, and transactional distance between students and technology. The reliability coefficient for all three scales of the questionnaire was high (Cronbach's α = 0.80, 0.83, and 0.88).

Measurement of Students' Self-Efficacy

The Toering (2012) questionnaire utilized a 10-item scale to measure students' self-efficacy. Each item on the scale was designed on a five-point Likert scale ranging *from "strongly disagree = 1" to "strongly agree = 5".* The reliability coefficient was high (Cronbach's α = 0.87).

Analysis

In this study, Pearson's correlation was used to determine the relationship between students' self-efficacy and

their perceptions of transactional distance, as well as its components. Moreover, multiple regression was used to predict students' self-efficacy based on their perceptions of transactional distance. Additionally, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was utilized to verify data normality, and it was found that the data were normally distributed ($p > 0.05$).

Results

RQ1. What is the relationship between transactional distance and self-efficacy in online peer learning?

The results showed that there was a significant relationship between students' perceptions of transactional distance and their self-efficacy in online peer learning.

Table 1. The correlation coefficient between students' perceptions of transactional distance and their self-efficacy

Variables	Students' perceptions of transactional distance		
	Between students	Between students and content	Between students and technology
Students' self-efficacy	0.44**	0.40**	0.45**

RQ2. To what extent do students' perceptions of transactional distance impact their self-efficacy in online peer learning?

The results showed that students' perceptions of transactional distance impact their self-efficacy in online peer learning ($F(3, 137) = 20.75$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.30$). The adjusted R square value indicated that 30% of self-efficacy difference could be explained by students' perceptions of transactional distance, including between students, between students and content, and between students and technology.

Table 2. The effects students' perceptions of transactional distance on their self-efficacy

Students' perceptions of transactional distance	Mean	SD	Results	Collinearity Statistics		Durbin-Watson
				Tolerance	VIF	
Between students	4.11	0.65	β=0.23, t = 2.82, p < 0.01	0.73	1.36	1.91
Between students and content	3.68	0.78	β=0.19, t = 2.37, p < 0.05	0.76	1.30	
Between students and technology	3.95	0.63	β=0.30, t = 3.72 , p < 0.01	0.80	1.24	

Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that there is a significant relationship between students' perceptions of transactional distance and their self-efficacy in online peer learning. This result means that students who

perceive a lower transactional distance between their peers, content and technology used in the online peer learning are more to have higher levels of self-efficacy. This finding is consistent with previous research that has linked transactional distance to learner outcomes in online education (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005).

This study also revealed that the three dimensions of transactional distance (social, cognitive, and teaching presence) (Kuo & Belland, 2016) have a significant impact on students' self-efficacy in online peer learning. Specifically, students who perceived a lower social distance, indicating a greater sense of connectedness to their peers, reported higher levels of self-efficacy. Similarly, students who perceived a lower cognitive distance, indicating a greater sense of relevance and accessibility of the content, and a lower teaching presence distance, indicating a greater sense of support and guidance from the technology used in online peer learning, also reported higher levels of self-efficacy.

The adjusted R square value of 0.30 suggests that 30% of the variance in students' self-efficacy can be explained by their perceptions of transactional distance. While this is moderate effect size, it highlights the importance of addressing transactional distance in online peer learning to support students' self-efficacy and improve their learning outcomes. Educators and instructional designers can use the findings from this study to inform the design and implementation of online peer learning activities that minimize transactional distance and maximize opportunities for students to connect with their peers, the content, and the technology used in the online learning environment. Further research is needed to explore effective strategies for minimizing transactional distance in online peer learning environments and to investigate the influence of other factors on self-efficacy in these contexts. Moreover, as new artificial intelligence technologies such as ChatGPT and learning analytics has emerged (Banihashem et al., 2022; Farrokhnia et al., 2023; Noroozi et al., 2019) future studies should focus on the impacts of these innovations on online peer learning.

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Content Analysis of Postgraduate Thesis Titled "Effective Communication" in Turkey (1999-2023)

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Abstract: This research explores postgraduate theses on "effective communication" in Turkey from multiple angles. Employing a qualitative research approach, the study utilizes document analysis by querying the Council of Higher Education's National Thesis Center with the keyword "effective communication." The results encompass 45 accessible postgraduate theses, where variables such as thesis type, author demographics, university characteristics, and research methods are examined through content analysis. Among the findings, 40 out of 45 theses are master's, primarily from state universities, with the highest production in 2019. "Professor Doctor" is the most common thesis advisor title, with 27 theses by women and 18 by men. Quantitative research stands as the prevailing methodology. Istanbul Kultur University produced the most theses in this realm. This study indicates a growing trend in "effective communication" theses since 2019, mostly conducted in social sciences institutes and educational sciences departments. Furthermore, most theses are in Turkish and typically span 100-150 pages. Overall, this research provides a valuable resource for the information age, fostering practical and theoretical advancements in the field of communication and guiding future studies by shedding light on trends, methods, and university-based analyses.

Keywords: Turkey, Effective communication, Graduate thesis, Review

Introduction

The concept of communication, which originates from the Latin word "communis", means "common" etymologically. In its most basic sense, communication is a process that is necessary for a person living in a

society to express his knowledge, feelings, thoughts, wishes, and dreams accurately, beautifully, and effectively (Temizyürek et al., 2012: 1-2). Communication is also defined as the process of transmitting information, feelings, thoughts, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors coded to be exchanged by the source person or persons, to other people through various communication channels, using everyday symbols, in order to establish a link between the source and the receiver (Certel, 2008). : 128). That is when the source or sender transmits a certain message to the receiver or target through a channel or communication tool, this action is called communication (Okur, 2013: 40). Four components are necessary for communication to take place: the source of communication (eg speaker), message (subject conveyed), channel (tools) and listener (receiver of the message) (Sağlam, 2009: 83). Communication is the transmitting, dissemination or transfer of information from one person to another or from one place to another. In other words, communication; is the process of creating, communicating, and interpreting ideas, facts, opinions, and feelings. An exchange between two or more people is basically a sharing process (Radovic Markovic & Salamzadeh, 2018: 12). In this context, communication is also defined as a process in which information is shared through the exchange of verbal and non-verbal messages (Brooks & Heath, 1985). Communication is a phenomenon specific to both institutions with legal personalities and individuals with unique characters. In other words, communication is a skill that both individuals and organizations need to lead a happy and peaceful life (Eroğlu, 2013: 3). Communication is the act of sending a message through different mediums; an idea, gesture, action, etc. It can be verbal or nonverbal, formal or informal, as long as it conveys an arousing thought. Good communication is considered a learned skill. Most people are physically born with the ability to speak, but to communicate effectively we need to learn to speak and speak well (Radovic Markovic & Salamzadeh, 2018: 12). Communication is a necessary element of both individual and social existence for people who depend on it for survival, development and success from the moment they are born. This crucial element is the basis for all disclosure, understanding, learning, sharing, influencing, and changing, or in other words, socializing. An individual's identity, relationships, environment, and culture are shaped by the process of creating, disseminating, and consuming knowledge (Zoral Yücebaş, 2010: 1). The ability to communicate in this context is a vital part of everyday life. People need to communicate in order to understand both each other and the world around them (Elkin, 2016: 118). With these features, communication is an indispensable activity that encompasses every aspect of human life and is most frequently needed. One of the features that make human different and superior to other living things is that as a result of learning and maturation, he is equipped with the ability to communicate with language, which is a tremendous communication tool, and enrich it with body language (Certel, 2008: 127). At this point, language is the typical communication tool that people use to express their feelings, thoughts, and wishes. Various actions are involved in communication. For example, there are many other ways to communicate, including verbal, written, signs, and body language. Individuals must be able to speak, write, read, and listen in order for these activities to help them achieve their intended goals. They also need to strengthen their communication skills (Basaran & Erdem, 2009: 744).

In order to exist and survive in human life, communication is as natural and inevitable as food. Our ability to understand ourselves, our environment, and the society we belong to depends on our ability to communicate effectively. It is said that the main reason for interpersonal relationship problems and many psychological

disorders arising from them is the lack of communication skills (Kılıç, 2013). Effective communication is the intended and expected type of communication in which the barriers to communication are minimized or completely eliminated (Şahin & Aral, 2012: 61). In the process of daily life, communication activity is very important. Effective communicators not only succeed in work, relationships, and family life, but they also raise the bar for themselves and those around them. That is why the importance of communication, which is very important for social interaction, is so important that it cannot be ignored in the context of education (Dağ, 2014: 213). Therefore, knowledge, abilities, and experience are used to communicate with others by using various methods in the field of human social and individual life. Developing this skill as part of one's socialization and education is very beneficial for future success. For this reason, importance is given to the development of communication skills at all educational levels (Durukan & Maden, 2010: 60).

In the 21st century, which is accepted as the age of communication and technology, rapid changes are experienced, and the needs for the services offered and these developments are realized at the same time. The education system, therefore, has a primary responsibility to ensure that every individual stays up to date with society and developments. Teachers are the heart and soul of the system. Teachers should have the education and experience appropriate to the age of the students in this regard. Communication problems between teachers and students are affected by generational differences, communication age, and contemporary society. This situation reduces the quality of teaching activities. In order to solve communication problems and to provide the education and training needed in our age, teachers have basic obligations to be fulfilled (Deniz, 2015: 65). Because no matter how equipped a teacher is in educational activities, the quality of the education he gives depends on how well he can communicate. Otherwise, teaching will take place in a classroom environment where the professional knowledge of the teacher is sufficient but communication skills are insufficient, and a qualified education will not be provided. Therefore, the ability to communicate effectively is very important for teachers. Before someone enters the workforce, it is necessary to focus on the elements of communication skills and the importance of these skills in education and training and teach future educators. The person must have developed good listening and speaking skills in order to express himself effectively and understand others better. One of the most important professional requirements to be successful in teaching, which is a communication profession, is to have strong communication skills (Gün, 2018: 618-619). The rapid development of communication technology, the discovery of new mass communication channels and their dissemination to the public, the detection of a considerable user or consumer mass, and the influence of this mass by the various messages given by these tools have brought social and sociological research into the agenda. This situation led to the emergence of rules about communication and its acceptance as a scientific field (Aziz, 2006: 10). In this context, the groundwork has been prepared for many academic studies. As a matter of fact, apart from the postgraduate theses, which are the subject of study in the literature, it is seen that various scientific studies have been carried out in many fields, especially in education, related to "effective communication". Some of the studies in the literature; "The importance of active listening in developing effective communication"(Ceylan, 1997); "effective classroom management and effective communication skills" (Gürşimşek, 1999); "Patient rights and effective communication" (Altıntaş, 2014); "The opinions of pre-service English teachers about effective communication" (Yılmaztekin, 2015); "Expectations of Turkish teacher

candidates for effective communication course" (Deniz, 2015); "effective communication with the elderly (persons)" (Temel Eğinli, 2016); "Marriage satisfaction: Family resilience and the role of effective communication skills" (Buluş & Bağcı, 2016); "effective communication in the social work profession" (Artan & Kumbasar, 2017); "development of effective in-class communication skills perception scale" (Gülbahar & Aksungur, 2018); "The relationship between teachers' personality traits and effective communication skills" (Ünsal & İhtiyaroğlu, 2022); "Effective communication language of social media: Emojis" (Onar & Karadağ, 2022); "effective communication skills that affect the management process in educational organizations" (Yıldırım & Atmaca, 2023); "Elements of body language in the Qur'an in terms of effective communication" (Karaoğlan, 2023) etc. seems to have been done on such matters.

Such academic studies in the literature are important sources of information about the status and trends of academic studies in the field of "communication, effective communication, and effective communication skills". This study, which focuses on the content analysis of postgraduate theses titled "Effective Communication", is important in terms of creating a more comprehensive knowledge base and providing direction for future studies by filling the gap about "effective communication" in the literature. The data obtained can make significant contributions to areas such as improving communication skills, designing educational processes, creating effective communication strategies, and conducting academic studies on this subject. By emphasizing the importance of effective communication in the context of postgraduate theses prepared in different fields, the study can contribute to the development of effective communication skills of individuals and institutions, helping to create a more efficient and effective communication culture. Having effective communication in social interactions, both in the field of education and in other fields, forms the basis of success and positive relationships. Such studies contribute to the direction of future studies in the field of communication and scientific development and provide significant benefits to the development of communication skills in society. Within the scope of this research, it is aimed to contribute to the literature and studies on this subject by examining the postgraduate theses titled "effective communication" in terms of content. Therefore, the research was designed to seek answers to the following questions:

- What is the distribution of theses on "effective communication" according to graduate levels?
- In which language or languages are postgraduate theses written on "effective communication"?
- What is the distribution of graduate theses on "effective communication" over the years?
- What is the distribution of postgraduate theses on "effective communication" according to the research method?
- How is the distribution of postgraduate theses on "effective communication" according to institutes?
- How is the distribution of postgraduate theses on "effective communication" according to the majors in which they are conducted?
- What is the distribution of postgraduate thesis writers on "effective communication" by gender?
- What is the distribution of postgraduate thesis advisors on "effective communication" according to their titles and gender?

- How is the distribution of postgraduate theses on "effective communication" according to the universities where they were made?
- How is the distribution of postgraduate theses on "effective communication" according to public and foundation universities?
- What is the distribution of postgraduate theses on "effective communication" according to the average number of pages?

This research aims to contribute to the literature by analyzing certain demographic and discipline-based distributions of graduate academic studies titled "effective communication" in Turkey. It is an undeniable fact that effective communication is an important skill in today's technology and information age, in an environment of rapid change and transformation. In this context, raising individuals who can search and find the necessary information in order to solve the problems they encounter, who are conscious about research and development, and who can evaluate and use information, reveals that effective communication has an undeniable importance in the 21st century. In this respect, the lack of a study on the content analysis of postgraduate theses on "effective communication" increases the potential to contribute to research in this field. Such a study will provide an opportunity to shed light and guide researchers by presenting a general view and panorama of research and studies on "effective communication" at the academic level. For this reason, this research, which was conducted for the content analysis of postgraduate theses titled "effective communication"; is thought that will help us better understand the importance of effective communication skills both in the field of education and in other fields. At the same time, such studies can also contribute to the development of future studies in the field of communication and the determination of strategies for developing communication skills more effectively.

Method

Research Model

This research has been prepared based on qualitative research. Qualitative research is a type of research that uses data collection techniques such as observation, interview, and document analysis, and is based on the holistic presentation of thoughts, perceptions, and events in real environments (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013: 45). In this study, document analysis, one of the qualitative research techniques, was used. The data obtained by document analysis were analyzed by percentage (%) and frequency (f) analysis methods.

Document analysis is the analysis of written materials containing information about the facts and events that are aimed to be investigated (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013:217). Document review includes analysis of written materials such as official publications, reports, records, and open-ended responses to surveys and surveys (Patton, 2002). In the study, the documents that are the subject of examination and the postgraduate theses in the database of the YÖK National Thesis Center related to "effective communication" were examined.

Data Collection Tools

Data were collected by using the "Effective Communication Graduate Thesis Review Form", which was created by the researchers by taking the opinions of two field experts. In this form, the descriptive features of the theses (type of theses/type by gender, year, language, university, affiliated institute, department, research method, titles of thesis advisors, number of pages of the thesis) were subjected to content analysis. In order to collect the data, the theses that were transferred to the "Effective Communication Graduate Thesis Review Form" as a result of the search made in the database of YÖK National Thesis Center were used.

Each thesis was read once by the researchers and then read a second time to fill out the form. During the second reading, the required fields were filled in and recorded in the computer environment. After the second reading, the assessments were compared and analyzed, and consistency between raters was calculated.

The percentage of agreement formula recommended by Miles & Huberman (2015) was used for the consistency calculation. The rate of agreement of the researchers was determined as 90%. This value shows that reliability is provided in data analysis when it is accepted that the percentage of agreement should be above 70% (Miles & Huberman, 2015). Thanks to the high percentage of compliance, reliability was ensured in data analysis, and at the same time, ethical issues that had to be followed in the research were meticulously complied with.

Study Materials

The sample of the research consists of postgraduate theses that are open to access and that contain the title of "effective communication" as a keyword in the database of YÖK National Thesis Center as of July 2023 in Turkey. In this context, a total of 45 postgraduate theses, 40 of which are master's and 5 are doctoral dissertations, were reached. There are some limitations of the research. The most basic limitation of these is that only the keyword "effective communication" is used in the titles of the theses in the sample. In addition, only the accessible theses were included in the research. This has the potential to exclude other potential theses. In this context, the results and limitations of the research were examined and interpreted taking into account.

Data Analysis

The data obtained through the "Effective Communication Graduate Thesis Review Form", which was created by the researchers by taking the opinions of two field experts, was transferred by coding in the computer environment by the researchers. Quantitative data were presented in the form of a table by making frequency (f) and percentage (%) statistics in a computer environment. The obtained data were analyzed using the content analysis technique. The main purpose of content analysis is to reach the concepts and connections that will make sense of the data. The data obtained in the content analysis are examined in more detail (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013: 259).

Results

This research, it is aimed to examine the postgraduate theses on "effective communication" in Turkey. Data on 45 postgraduate theses, including 40 master's theses and 5 doctoral theses, included in the sample, are presented in the following tables, respectively.

Table 1. Distribution of Theses According to Their Types

Thesis Type	f	%
Master's Degree	40	88,88
PhD	5	11,11
Total	**45**	**100**

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that 88.88% (f=40) of the existing postgraduate theses on the subject of "effective communication" are composed of master's theses. The percentage of theses (f=5) in the doctoral program is 11.11%.

Table 2. Distribution of Authors by Gender

Gender	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Female	24	60,0	3	60,0	27	60
Male	16	40,0	2	40,0	18	40

In Table 2, 24 theses, which correspond to 60.0% of the number of master's theses, belong to female researchers, and 16 theses, which correspond to 40.0% of the total number of master's theses, belong to male researchers. In the doctoral program, this ratio is 30.0% of the number of theses, corresponding to 3 female researchers, and 40.0% of theses, to male researchers. In both postgraduate thesis studies, the number of female researchers is higher than male researchers.

Table 3. Distribution of Theses by Years

Publication Year	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
1999	-	-	2	4,44	2	4,44
2004	-	-	1	2,22	1	2,22
2005	2	4,44	-	-	2	4,44
2006	1	2,22	-	-	1	2,22
2009	6	13,32	-	-	6	13,32
2011	2	4,44	-	-	2	4,44
2012	1	2,22	1	2,22	2	4,44

2014	1	2,22	-	-	1	2,22
2016	1	2,22	-	-	1	2,22
2017	2	4,44	-	-	2	4,44
2018	1	2,22	1	2,22	2	4,44
2019	8	17,76	-	-	8	17,76
2020	5	11,11	-	-	5	11,11
2021	4	8,88	-	-	4	8,88
2022	4	8,88	-	-	4	8,88
2023	2	4,44	-	-	2	4,44

When Table 3 is examined, it is seen that most postgraduate studies show different distributions according to the year of publication; It is seen that 2019 came to the fore as the year in which the most postgraduate theses were published (17.76%). In other years, the dissemination rate of these was 11% or less. Looking at the distribution by type of theses, it is seen that 88.88% of the theses shown in the data table are at the master's level, while 11.1% are at the doctoral level. This distribution reveals that research done at the postgraduate level is mostly done at the postgraduate level. There are differences between the distribution of master's and doctoral theses. As shown in the table, master's theses have been published more intensively and doctoral theses have a lower percentage.

Table 4. Distribution of Theses by University Types

University	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Public (Government)	27	67,50	4	80,0	31	68,8
Foundation	13	32,50	1	20,0	14	31,8

When Table 4 is examined, the types of universities in which postgraduate theses titled effective communication are written; It is seen that public universities (f=27/67.50%) publish master's theses. It is seen that (f=13/32.50) master's theses are produced in foundation universities. It is seen that at the doctorate level, 4 theses and 80% are prepared in public universities, 1 thesis and 20% doctoral thesis are prepared in foundation universities. It is seen that 68.8% of graduate theses were prepared in state universities. It is understood that this rate is 31.08% in foundation universities.

Table 5. Distribution of Theses by Language

Language	Master's Degree		PhD		*Total*	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Turkish	38	95	4	80	42	93,33
English	2	5	1	20	3	6,66

When Table 5 is examined, when the language distribution of the postgraduate theses on "effective communication" is examined; 38 master's theses and 4 doctoral theses in Turkish (f=93,33%); It is seen that 2 master's theses and 1 doctoral thesis were prepared in English (6.66%). It is seen that the language of postgraduate theses is mostly Turkish.

Table 6. Distribution of Theses by Type of Institute

Type Of Institute	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Graduate School of Social Sciences	24	60,0	3	60,0	27	60,0
Graduate School of Educational Sciences	5	12,5	2	40,0	7	15,55
Graduate School of Health Sciences	7	17,5	-	-	7	15,55
Institute of Graduate Studies	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44
Izmir Tepecik Training and Research Hospital	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Graduate School of Natural and Applied Sciences	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22

When Table 6 is examined, it is seen that the postgraduate theses on "effective communication" were mostly (f=27/60.0%) made in "Graduate School of Social Sciences". "Graduate School of Educational Sciences" and "Graduate School of Health Sciences" (f=7/15.55%) take second place.

Table 7. Distribution of Theses by Majors Science

Majors Science	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Educational Sciences	5	12,5	-	-	5	11,11
Business	3	7,5	1	20,0	4	8,88
Physical Education and Sports	3	7,5	-	-	3	6,66
Public Relations and Promotion	1	2,5	2	40,0	3	
English Language Education	2	5,0	1	20,0	3	6,66
Business Administration	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44
Nursing	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44
History of Religions	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44
Communication Arts	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44
Turkish And Social Sciences Education	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44
Psychology	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44
Communication Sciences	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Art Direction	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Farming Economy	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Special Education			1	20,0	1	2,22

Majors Science	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Turkish And Social Sciences Education	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Labor Economics and Industrial Relations	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Total Quality Management	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Family Medicine	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Fine Arts Education	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Graphic Major Art	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Sports Management	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Education Management and Supervision	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Speech and Language Therapy	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Recreation Management	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Public Relations	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22

When Table 7 is examined, there is diversity in the departments. Out of 5 postgraduate theses (f=2/40.0%), 5 doctoral theses (f=2/40.0%) were written in the Department of public relations and Promotion, and the remaining 3 doctoral theses were in the English language education department (1), in the special education department (1), It is seen that the distribution is in the form of the business department (1). Master's theses from graduate theses, Educational Sciences Department (5) 12.5%; Business Administration(3) 7.5%; Physical Education and Sports Department(3) 7.5%; Department of English Language Teaching (2) 5.0%; Department of Business Administration (2) 5.0%; Nursing (2) 5.0%; History of Religions (2) 5.0%; Communication Arts Department(2)5.0%; Department of Turkish and Social Sciences Education(2)5.0%;Department of Psychology(2)5.0%;Department of Communication Sciences(1)2.5%;Department of Art Management (1)% 2.5; Department of Agricultural Economics (1) 2.5%; Department of Social Sciences and Turkish Education(1), 2.5%; Department of Labor Economics and Industrial Relations(1)2.5%; Department of Total Quality Management(1)2.5%; Department of Family Medicine(1)2.5%; Fine Arts Education Department (1)2.5%; Graphic Art (1) 2.5%; Sports Management Department (1) 2.5%; Education Management and Supervision (1) 2.5%; Department of Speech and Language Therapy(1)2.5%; Recreation Management (1) 2.5%; Public Relations (1) 2.5%; Public Relations and Publicity Department (1) It is seen that the distribution is 2.5%.

In general, it is seen that most postgraduate thesis is done in the Department of educational sciences (8), with a rate of 15.55%. It is seen that three postgraduate theses on effective communication have been prepared in the Department of Business Administration, Department of Physical Education and Sports, Department of Public Relations and Publicity, and Department of English Language Education. In the Department of Business Administration, Department of Nursing, Department of History of Religions, Department of Communication Arts, Department of Turkish and Social Sciences Education, two graduate theses were prepared in each of the Departments of Psychology, and one in each of the other departments. It is seen that the thesis on effective communication has been prepared.

Table 8. Distribution of Theses by Universities

University	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
İstanbul Kültür University	5	12,5	-	-	5	11,11
Dokuz Eylül University	4	10,0	-	-	4	8,88
İstanbul University	-	-	2	40,0	2	4,44
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44
Gazi University	1	2,5	1	20,0	1	2,22
Anadolu University	-	-	1	20,0	1	2,22
Cumhuriyet University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Dumlupınar University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Muğla University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Middle East Technical University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Mersin University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Beykent University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Fırat University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Namık Kemal University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
İzmir University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Kilis 7 Aralık University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Marmara University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Ahi Evran University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Haliç University	-	-	1	20,0	1	2,22
Bursa Uludağ University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Çağ University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Düzce University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Hasan Kalyoncu University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
İnönü University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
İstanbul Okan University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
İstanbul Sabahattin Zaim University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
İstinye University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Karabük University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Kırıkkale University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Sağlık Bilimleri University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Selçuk University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Sivas Cumhuriyet University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
Toros University	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22

When Table 8 is examined, (f=5/12.50%) of the master's theses on "effective communication" were made at Istanbul Kultur University, a foundation university. It is seen that the thesis about effective communication is done here. A master's thesis was made at Dokuz Eylül University (f=4/10.0%). In Recep Tayyip Erdogan University, it is seen that (f=2/5%) master's thesis was made. Gazi University, Cumhuriyet University, Dumlupınar University, Muğla University, Middle East Technical University, Mersin University, Beykent University, Fırat University, Namık Kemal University, İzmir University, Kilis 7 Aralik University, Marmara University, Ahi Evran University, Bursa Uludağ University, Çağ University, Düzce University, Hasan Kalyoncu University, İnönü University, Istanbul Okan University, Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Istinye University, Karabuk University, Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University, Kırıkkale University, Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University, Health Sciences University, Selçuk University, Sivas Cumhuriyet University and It is seen that one master's thesis has been made at Toros University. Among postgraduate theses, it is seen that Istanbul University (f=2/40.0%) is the university with the highest number of theses titled "effective communication" in doctoral theses. It is seen that one doctorate thesis on "effective communication" has been made at Anadolu University, Gazi University, and Haliç University.

Table 9. Distribution of Thesis Advisors by Titles

Title	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Professor Doctor	12	30,0	4	80,0	16	35,55
Associate Professor Doctor	14	35,0	1	20,0	15	33,33
Assistant Professor Doctor / Doctoral Faculty Member	12	30.0	-	-	12	26,66
Doctor	2	5,0	-	-	2	4,44

When Table 9 is examined, it is seen that among the advisors of 45 theses, the one with the most titles is Professor Doctor (f=16/35.55%). This is followed by the title of Associate Professor (f=14/35.0%) with a very close number. While there are 12 advisors with the title of Assistant Professor, it is seen that there are only 2 consultants with the title of Doctor.

Table 10. Distribution of Research Methods Used in Theses

Method	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Quantitative Research Method	28	70,0	2	40,0	30	66,66
Method Not Specified in Thesis	5	12,5	2	40,0	7	15,54
Qualitative Research Method	3	7,5	-	-	3	6,66
Mixed Method	3	7,5	-	-	3	6,66
Experimental Method	1	2,5	1	20,0	2	4,44

When Table 10 is examined, the methods preferred in graduate theses; (f=28/70.0%) of the "master's" theses

were made with the "quantitative research method", (f=5/12.5%) the method was not specified, (f=3/7.5%) On the other hand, it is understood that the "qualitative research method" was used, and the "mixed method" was used in the same way (f=3/7.5%). It is seen that the most used research method at the "PhD" level is the "quantitative research method" (f=2/40.0%). (f=2/40.0%), it is seen that "method is not specified". (f=1/20%) "experimental method" was used. In general terms; quantitative research method (f=30/66.66%); the method was not specified in the thesis (f= 7/15.54%); qualitative research method (f=3/6.66%); mixed method (f=3%6.66%); It is understood that theses titled "effective communication" were prepared with this method at a rate of experimental method (f=2%4.44).

Table 11. Distribution of Theses by Average Page Number

Page Number	Master's Degree		PhD		Total	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
50-100	12	30,0	-	-	12	26,66
101-150	21	52,5	-	-	21	46,66
151-200	5	12,5	3	60	8	17,77
201-250	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
251-300	1	2,5	-	-	1	2,22
301-400	-	-	2	40	2	4,44

When Table 11. is examined, it is seen that the number of pages of the postgraduate theses titled "effective communication" is the highest (f=21/46.66%) and in the range of "101-150" pages. It is seen that it is in the range of "50-100 pages" (f=12/26.66%). In the "151-200" page range (f=8/17.77%); In the "201-250" page range (f=1/2.22%); In the "251-300" page range (f=1/2.22%); It is understood that it is in the "301-400" page range (f=2/4.44%).

Discussion

The findings of this study shed light on significant aspects within the landscape of postgraduate theses focused on "effective communication" in Turkey. Employing a comprehensive approach, we sought to unravel the intricate threads that weave together this realm of research. Our exploration started by identifying 45 theses within the Council of Higher Education (YÖK) National Thesis Center database, where the keyword "effective communication" led the way.

One of the salient insights that emerged pertains to the dominance of master's theses, constituting 40 out of the 45 postgraduate theses investigated. This prevalence might be attributed to the relevance of effective communication across diverse fields and its foundational role in fostering successful interactions.

A noteworthy facet of our findings revolves around gender distribution among researchers. Notably, female

researchers demonstrated a more substantial presence, contributing to 24 master's and 3 doctoral theses. This prominence of female researchers might indicate an increasing interest and engagement of women in academic pursuits, specifically within the realm of effective communication studies.

Considering the temporal dimension, the year 2019 emerges as a significant juncture in postgraduate thesis publications. The ascent of postgraduate theses since then might mirror the growing acknowledgment of the centrality of effective communication in today's interconnected world.

An intriguing aspect revealed through our analysis pertains to the language distribution of these theses. Turkish emerged as the predominant language for communicating research findings, affirming the localized focus and audience for these studies.

Institutional analysis uncovered that state universities led the charge in generating these theses, aligning with their role as educators and catalysts for societal progress. The strong representation of "social sciences institutes" underscores the pivotal place of effective communication within the broader spectrum of social sciences.

The distribution of research topics across various departments offers a nuanced glimpse into the academic focus. The prominence of the "educational sciences department" in housing a significant share of these theses suggests a mutual recognition of the symbiotic relationship between effective communication and pedagogical practices.

In a broader context, our study not only contributes to the existing body of research but also provides a blueprint for future investigations. By analyzing postgraduate theses, this study lays a solid foundation for researchers, academics, and policymakers to better comprehend the evolving landscape of effective communication studies.

In conclusion, our findings elucidate the dynamics that underscore the research on effective communication. Through a multi-dimensional analysis, we've unveiled critical insights into the prevalence, representation, and academic interest in this domain. This study bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, offering a compass for future researchers venturing into the realm of effective communication.

Conclusion

In essence, this comprehensive study delved into the intricate fabric of postgraduate theses centered on "effective communication" in Turkey, revealing key dimensions and trends within this academic discourse. The insights garnered from our analysis contribute to a more profound understanding of the subject's dynamics, with implications that extend beyond the immediate realm of academia.

Through the exploration of 45 theses, a clear pattern emerged—master's theses led the landscape, emphasizing

the ubiquity of effective communication's significance across various contexts. The prominence of female researchers and their substantial contribution to these theses underline the changing landscape of academic participation, possibly indicating a shifting gender dynamic within the field.

By pinpointing the year 2019 as a pivotal moment for postgraduate thesis publications, this study reveals a growing acknowledgment of the role of effective communication in modern society. Furthermore, our examination of the language distribution highlights the importance of localized communication within the Turkish academic sphere.

The dominance of state universities in producing these theses underscores their commitment to fostering a deep understanding of effective communication's nuances. The prevalence of "social sciences institutes" in generating these studies aligns with the broader recognition of effective communication's significance in shaping social interactions and societal dynamics.

The analysis of various departments' contributions underscores the interdisciplinary nature of effective communication research, with the "educational sciences department" serving as a hub of exploration and inquiry. The synthesis of these findings indicates that effective communication is both a fundamental concept and an evolving academic field.

In conclusion, our study bridges the gap between theory and practice by offering tangible insights into the realm of effective communication. Our analysis extends an invitation to future researchers to further unravel the subject's intricacies, and to policymakers to consider the implications of enhanced communication strategies in diverse fields. As the digital age continues to reshape communication paradigms, this study serves as a cornerstone for ongoing research endeavors aimed at enriching the discourse on effective communication in academia and beyond.

Recommendations

Based on the comprehensive analysis of postgraduate theses focused on "effective communication," several recommendations emerge to guide future research and enhance practical applications in the field:

- Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Given the interdisciplinary nature of effective communication, collaboration among diverse academic disciplines should be encouraged. Researchers, educators, and practitioners from various fields, including social sciences, business, and education, should work together to enrich the discourse and application of effective communication strategies.
- Technology Integration: As the digital age continues to revolutionize communication practices, future research should focus on the integration of technology in effective communication. Investigating the impact of digital tools, social media, and virtual platforms on communication effectiveness can lead to

innovative strategies for contemporary contexts.

- Professional Development: Educators and practitioners should benefit from the insights gathered from this study to enhance professional development programs. Integrating effective communication practices into educational curricula, corporate training, and public awareness campaigns can yield far-reaching benefits.

- Ethnographic Research: In-depth ethnographic studies could provide a richer understanding of how effective communication operates within various contexts. Observational research within specific environments, such as workplaces, educational institutions, or community spaces, can uncover hidden dynamics.

Incorporating these recommendations into future research endeavors will foster a deeper comprehension of effective communication's intricate dynamics and empower practical applications that align with the evolving needs of contemporary society.

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