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A Note from the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Language Instructors,

We are happy to let you know that Volume 4, Issue 2 (2025) of the International Journal of Language Instruction (IJLI) is now out. This issue features a large number of high-quality, peer-reviewed research articles that make a significant contribution to the subject of language education, especially in applied linguistics, language pedagogy, and new ways of teaching in different parts of the world.

In this issue, Oneil N Madden, Sheldon Gordon, Rovel Chambers, Jason-Lee Daley, Dave Foster, Malik Ewan looked at what Jamaican foreign language instructors do with technology in the classroom and how they feel about it, especially ChatGPT. This study used a mix of approaches and had 28 teachers from primary, secondary, and higher schools filling out questionnaires. The results show that teachers like using technology to design lessons and get students involved, but they are worried about the accuracy of the content and the possibility of relying too much on AI. The study shows both the pros and cons of ChatGPT, stressing how important it is to carefully incorporate it into language teaching.

Md. Didarul Islam, Saleh Ahmad did a needs analysis study to find out what English language skills clothing sellers in Bangladesh needed. The mixed-methods research, which involved surveys and interviews with 30 junior to mid-level merchandisers, found that while merchandisers often use English for emailing and video conferencing, they have a lot of trouble speaking and writing. The authors stress how important it is to provide customized, flexible, and context-based English classes that meet the needs of merchandisers in their jobs.

Nguyen Thi Thu Hang, Truong Nhat Truong looked into how EFL sophomores at Van Lang University in Vietnam felt about using computer-assisted games (CAGs) in grammar lessons. The study used questionnaires and interviews with 70 people and concluded that students had a positive perspective of CAGs, noting that they helped with motivation, understanding, and language skills. The study stresses how adding interactive, technology-based activities to grammar lessons may make learning more interesting.

Thach Ngoc Mai Ly looked at how being extroverted or introverted affects how well EFL students at Tra Vinh University in Vietnam learn a second language. The study used surveys from 70 first-year English majors and interviews with three teachers. It concluded that extroverted learners did better, especially in speaking abilities, because they were more engaged and confident. On the other hand, introverted learners made slower progress. The article says that personality traits are important internal aspects that affect language learning and suggests that introverts should have support that is specific to their needs.

Tran Huynh Thinh, Huynh Duy Bao looked at how high school pupils felt about the Friends Global textbook in the context of Ho Chi Minh City's educational changes. Using a mix of methodologies, including interviews with eight participants and research with 226 students, the study found that students had positive feelings about the reading, vocabulary, and grammar aspects of the textbook, but mixed feelings about the listening, speaking, writing, and phonology sections. The study focuses on what students think, which will help teachers choose textbooks and plan lessons in the future.

A Note from the Editor-in-Chief

Last but not least, we want to thank the dedicated authors whose academic work is the main focus of this journal. We really appreciate your dedication to improving studies on language training.

We are just as grateful to our peer reviewers for their helpful comments, valuable insights, and thorough evaluations, which have guaranteed the quality and academic integrity of every paper that has been published.

We also want to thank our editorial board members from the bottom of our hearts for their ongoing guidance, editorial skills, and relentless support throughout the publication process.

We invite researchers, educators, and practitioners to explore this issue and engage with the research shared within.

Thanks God for everything!

With warm regards,



Associate Professor Dr. Pham Vu Phi Ho
Editor-in-chief
International Journal of Language Instruction

Teachers' Practices and Perceptions of Technology and *ChatGPT* in Foreign Language Teaching in Jamaica

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

ChatGPT, Technology,
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Both the Covid-19 pandemic and the emergence of *ChatGPT* have influenced technology integration in teaching and learning. In Jamaica, few studies have examined the impact of *ChatGPT* on students' learning and academic performance; however, no known research has specifically addressed its effects on foreign language (FL) teachers. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore evaluate teachers' practices and perceptions of technology and *ChatGPT* in FL teaching in Jamaica. The current study collected data from 28 English, French and Spanish teachers who teach across the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of the education system. A Google Forms questionnaire, which was circulated via FL teachers' *WhatsApp* groups, was used to collect data over a two-month period through purposive and convenient sampling strategies. The study found that teachers utilize a variety of technological tools to enhance the teaching and learning experience. Findings also indicate that technology and *ChatGPT* present both benefits and challenges to the FL classroom. Furthermore, the study reveals that *ChatGPT* helps teachers to save time and energy; however, teachers must carefully scrutinize the information generated by the chatbot before passing it on to students. The study has implications for teacher training and professional development.

Introduction

Nowadays, technology and education have become two indivisible and important concepts. The rapid and perpetual advancements in technology have resulted in significant changes in many sectors, including education (Hanımoğlu, 2018). The traditional methods that once defined pedagogical practices are progressively being replaced by creative and innovative teaching and

learning strategies (Yue, 2024). Across educational levels, educators frequently incorporate technology to enhance students' learning experiences and outcomes, enabling them to actively engage in their learning process and construct knowledge (Thelma et al., 2024). Technology provides enhanced accessibility to personalized learning, including granting access to learners with diverse learning needs with equal opportunities to access learning materials and adapt them to their specific needs (Guerra, 2023). Additionally, technology provides interactive and dynamic learning content and motivation for courses (Elvan & Mutlubaş, 2020).

The novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic in 2020 has created a shift in the use of technology globally. Ferreira and Ferreira (2024) posit that “the fact that educational institutions were forced to find creative ways to deliver classes invariably pushed educators into utilizing the online space for the delivery of courses at the tertiary level” (p. 141). This has led to several previously underutilized and unknown technologies gaining popularity and acceptance in the education sector, including foreign language (FL) education (Çobanoğulları, 2024; Khan & Tufail, 2020; Nuraeni, 2021). Madden et al. (2023) and Madden (2022) found that Jamaican FL teachers incorporated tools such as live interactive worksheets and Kahoot! to create a stimulating and interactive online classroom environment, to motivate and engage students.

Although all public primary and secondary schools, as well as some tertiary programs in Jamaica, have returned to full face-to-face instruction, many FL teachers continue to incorporate technology in the teaching and learning process to enhance learning outcomes. This is further impacted by *ChatGPT* and other artificial intelligence (AI) tools, which are described as “disruptive enhancers in the education sector” (Madden et al., 2024, p. 52). In the Jamaican context, stakeholders in higher education perceive *ChatGPT* as a chatbot that makes academic tasks easier for students and renders educators' work less time consuming, as it assists with lesson planning, assessment designs, and providing feedback (Madden et al., 2024).

Both the Covid-19 pandemic and the emergence of *ChatGPT* have brought significant changes to teachers' practices and pedagogies in education, particularly concerning technology integration (Naidu & Sevnarayan, 2023). However, studies in Jamaica and the wider Anglophone Caribbean remain limited in this regard. Virgo (2024) highlights that the Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the need for digital solutions and emphasized that technology is critical in “changing the educational landscape, enabling access to interactive and self-directed learning across geographic and economic boundaries” (p. 93). Haye et al. (2024) conducted a recent study on *ChatGPT*'s current use by Jamaican students and its impact on their academic performance. However, no known local studies have specifically addressed the views of FL teachers in this regard. Against this backdrop, this research aims to explore Jamaican FL teachers' practices and perceptions of technology and *ChatGPT* to understand the digital tools they use in their teaching, and the benefits, challenges, and concerns associated with *ChatGPT*. Hopefully this study will serve the language science community and be a pioneering resource to guide future practices and research, especially in the local and regional contexts.

Literature review

Evolution of Technology in Foreign Language Education

The integration of technology into foreign language education has transformed the way languages are taught and learned, evolving from rudimentary tools to advanced, AI-driven systems that cater to diverse learning needs. In earlier years, FL pedagogy relied on audiotapes and language labs, which were critical in helping students improve their pronunciation and listening skills. However, Blake and Gullen (2020) noted limitations in these systems, describing them as mechanical and repetitive, as they mainly emphasized rote learning, thereby leaving little room for interactivity or authentic communication.

As the 1980s approached, FL pedagogy experienced a shift towards communicative Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), even though CALL in itself emerged in the 1960s. Communicative CALL introduced interactive and multimedia-based approaches to language learning. During this period, several tools, including *Hot Potatoes*, emerged. These tools allowed educators to design customizable quizzes, facilitating interactive and collaborative lessons for both language and non-language students (Arneil et al., 2001). Chapelle and Sauro (2017) noted that communicative CALL enhanced language practice, providing learners with access to grammar, vocabulary, and conversation practice at their own pace. These innovations fostered language immersion, thus enhancing dynamic and personalized experiences. Later, Technology-Assisted Language Learning (TALL) further diversified the scope of language education by integrating advanced technologies like AI, augmented reality (AR), and machine learning. These advances allowed educators to incorporate tools that customized instruction to individual learner needs and created immersive and contextualized learning environments.

The advent of the World Wide Web in the 1990s further empowered FL education teaching and learning with improved versions of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC), which is any communicative transaction that transpires by using two or more networked computers. Various forms of CMC exist, such as audio, email, text chat, and video (Yu, 2011). CMC promotes real-time interaction via email, chatrooms, and videoconferencing, and connects learners with native speakers internationally, thus breaking down geographical hurdles. CMC tools resulted in a change from the routine decontextualized language drills to real-life communication, thus leading to linguistic and cultural competence. Livemocha is an example of this approach, combining structured lessons with conversational practice to improve linguistic and cultural understanding.

As we transitioned toward the smartphone era, this gave rise to Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) – a term coined by Chinnery (2006). MALL has made FL more accessible and flexible with *Duolingo*, *Babbel*, and *Memrise* applications. MALL also supports gamification in mobile-friendly formats. As Villalba (2017) observed, technology through task-based language teaching and learning effectively sustains learner interest both formally and informally, which allows students to achieve high-quality language learning through authentic tasks in a fun way. For instance, *Duolingo* motivates learners through rewards like streaks and badges, while *Babbel* employs speech recognition technology to improve pronunciation. Mobile instant messaging tools like *WhatsApp* have also proved beneficial to MALL (Madden

& Robinson, 2024; Madden & Foucher, 2020). Additionally, tools like Google Translate leverage AI capabilities to translate real-world text, such as menus and signs, fostering practical and contextual language use in the FL classroom.

Although AI dates back to the 1950s, it has recently emerged as a game-changer in FL education. AI-powered tools such as *ChatGPT* have transformed how learners practice language skills, by simulating real-world conversations. AI tools provide instant, adaptive feedback, which helps learners progress in accuracy and fluency in pragmatic situations such as job interviews or travel scenarios. Wang et al. (2024) report on *ChatGPT*'s ability to support students' self-directed learning for writing purposes, while Xu et al. (2023) highlight the chatbot's potential to leverage personalized learning, thus enhancing learners' critical thinking, self-regulated learning, and creativity. Correspondingly, tools like *Grammarly* and *Write & Improve* assist learners to fine-tune their syntax, style, and tone, which develops learner autonomy.

Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies have further enriched FL learning by creating immersive environments that imitate real-world circumstances. Platforms such as *MondlyVR* allow learners to engage in situational dialogues, employing functional chunks to request directions or order a meal, in fully interactive virtual spaces. Immersive technologies mimic real-world experiences and boost cultural competence by copying authentic environments (Lafford, 2009). AR tools like *Mondly AR Lessons* go even further, by integrating 3D visualizations with language practice to provide meaningful, contextualized experiences that close the gap between theory and real-life application.

Furthermore, collaborative technologies have also played a central role in FL pedagogy by fostering peer interaction and community learning. Tools like *Padlet*, *Flipgrid*, and *Edmodo* promote group discussions, share multimedia projects, and provide peer feedback. For instance, *Flipgrid* enables learners to record video responses to prompts, encouraging speaking practice and allowing for constructive critique. These technologies support socio-constructivist approaches to learning, which underscore the importance of collaboration and reflection in the learning process.

Moreover, Khazhgaliyeva et al. (2023) highlight the role and effectiveness of internet-based resources in FL learning. These web-based resources encompass multimodal activities and tools such as audios, videos, links, images, exercises to develop all language competences, and applications to enhance the learning experience. Liu et al. (2020) note that these web-based resources are also useful in remote learning situations, while Kuure (2011) draws attention to the social, interactive, and multimodal nature of students' literacy environments, highlighting that multiple resources compete for students' attention once they go online.

In summary, the evolution of technology in FL teaching has demonstrated gradual progression from rote-based methods to dynamic, personalized, and interactive approaches. Modern tools like *ChatGPT*, *Duolingo*, *MondlyVR*, and collaborative platforms have expanded access to language education and enhanced learner autonomy and engagement, cultural competence, and practical application. Given the perpetual nature of technology, their constant innovations are expected to continue to revolutionize FL education and create boundless opportunities for both

teachers and students.

Advantages of Technology in Foreign Language Education

A review of literature highlights numerous advantages of technology integration in FL education, notably concerning students' level of engagement and motivation, as technology makes learning more active and interactive (Thomas & Schneider, 2020). In addition, technological tools allow learners to be exposed to various cultural artefacts and how the language is used in a meaningful sense. Additionally, the incorporation of technology in FL pedagogy supports Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Project-Based Learning and Teaching (PBLT), and Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). All of these approaches foster "learning by doing" with real-world scenarios. Consequently, video technologies allow students to engage in tasks that relate to authentic quotidian experiences, such as collaborative work and problem-solving exercises. These are important experiences for specialized language learning contexts, including language for specific purposes (Thomas & Schneider, 2020). Moreover, these technologies provide learners with multimodal input, which can enhance their comprehension and retention of new language forms.

Technology integration in FL pedagogy also provides learners with access. Instructors can use videos and various forms of animations to adapt their lessons to students' learning styles and multiple intelligences at different levels. For example, *Machinima* has comprehensive and adjustable templates that can fit different educational goals. Furthermore, technology incorporation promotes the teaching of Less-commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) and endangered languages (EL) and caters to learners with disabilities to enhance their learning outcomes (Madden et al., 2024; Ward et al., 2024; Thomas & Schneider, 2020). Technology therefore supports inclusion.

Aside from advantages to the students, technology is also advantageous to educators as it gives them new tools for practice. It makes the creative design of the curriculum possible and enhances teachers' growth, especially in CALL. Warschauer and Kern (2000) add that one of the most frequent benefits of technology in the FL classroom is quick access to authentic materials relevant to lesson planning. Lutfi (2015) underscores that teachers can go on the internet and access culturally relevant, contextualized, and up-to-date information in the form of written text, video, or image. This helps instructors to demonstrate to their students, in a practical way, that the target language is being used in an authentic way around the world, which can influence students' motivation to learn the language. Lutfi (2015) also states that technology can provide teachers with a record-keeping tool on the improvement of students' language output. Evidently, technology brings numerous benefits to FL acquisition. Notwithstanding, the success of these tools depends on adequate teacher training and the resolution of challenges such as technological limitations and resource constraints (Thomas & Schneider, 2020). In this way, the decisive movement of these technologies would help solve the cutover problem between old instruction methods and new educational requirements.

Challenges Associated with Technology in Foreign Language Education

A critical issue in the use of technology in FL education is the lack of sufficient institutional backing, as well as resources, especially in some low-income countries. Teachers are generally

unable to acquire newer technologies as they do not have sufficient budgets, or the institutions have other infrastructural needs that take priority. In addition, other technical problems like slow internet connections, old computers, and lack of compatible software do not allow the smooth usage of CALL tools (Lozano & Izquierdo, 2019). These restrictions primarily affect institutions in undeveloped areas, leading to erratic application of technologies across regions (Thomas & Schneider, 2020).

Another important issue is the availability of teacher education, experience in working with CALL, and the criteria they use to select CALL tools in their classes (McMurry et al., 2016). Some FL teachers have insufficient knowledge of how to integrate many types of technologies into their lessons, which leads to the inefficient application of some technology, which, otherwise, could be easily implemented. For example, some teachers wanting to use *Machinima* in their class to produce 3D videos require connection and experience that many do not have. This high requirement and the struggles to meet them may frighten teachers from using emerging technologies in their classes and limit their likely benefits to students (Kessler, 2006; Thomas & Schneider, 2020). Similarly, the absence of adequate digital literacy and technological maneuvering knowledge can be challenging for some students. Some learners, especially the disadvantaged, may not be able to perform some tasks using the CALL tools due to a lack of basic skills or devices. Moreover, students who do not speak the target language fluently may become confused and frustrated by advanced tools and quit trying to engage with them.

Furthermore, the use of technology in FL classrooms also raises the issue of cultural and pedagogical suitability. For example, teaching with video-based technologies or virtual environments may not be appropriate in some places where traditional practices are expected. In addition, contextual, useful and attractive materials that appeal to various students are still a problem. It is important that teachers consider carefully the extent to which they use up-to-date software to avoid overlooking culture-based approaches to teaching (Ziegler, 2016).

Overview of ChatGPT

As technology advances, so does artificial intelligence (AI); however, the history of AI and chatbots dates to the 1950s when they were designed to mimic human conversation (King, 2023). Over time, there have been developments in AI where tools such as the Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (*ChatGPT*) chatbot have been created. *ChatGPT* was released in November 2022 by OpenAI as part of a free research preview, according to Nyst (2024). Since its launch, Shankland (2023) found that its popularity has increased exponentially, with over a million users just days after it was released. This growth continues as more people become familiar with the tool and realize how helpful it is in navigating the difficulties of academia, work, and personal life. At its core, *ChatGPT* is programmed to use deep learning methods to analyze and produce text whilst using vast amounts of data from the internet (Haleem et al., 2022). Iqbal et al. (2022) describe *ChatGPT* as “an AI-driven bot” that “operates using Artificial Intelligence to communicate naturally with the user” (p. 97).

ChatGPT has since been publicly used as a cutting-edge AI chatbot that is able to understand and respond to complex requests in natural and human-like fashion (King, 2023). In fact,

Madden et al. (2024) describe the chatbot as the “more competent non-biological other” that ‘thinks’ more quickly than the average human (pp. 52-53). Further to this, Zaiarna et al. (2024) highlight its advanced natural language processing capabilities and ability to generate coherent responses and handle various language tasks. In alignment with these capabilities, *ChatGPT* is currently transforming education by enhancing personalized learning experiences, improving accessibility to resources, and enhancing students’ understanding of complex concepts and academic performance through AI-driven feedback (Haye et al., 2024).

Benefits of ChatGPT to Foreign Language Teachers

The literature establishes numerous benefits of *ChatGPT* to educators. Peters (cited in the Jamaica Gleaner, 2023) notes that tools such as *ChatGPT* can extend beyond efficiency and engagement. The integration of the tool will allow educators to create personalized learning experiences, promote the development of technical skills, and support an evolution in assessment methods. As for Karataş et al. (2024), *ChatGPT* provides support to teachers in expediting research processes and allowing them to access information more quickly, creating lesson plans, teaching materials, worksheets, and assessments more efficiently (Kohler, 2024). Alsaweed and Aljebreen (2024) solidifies this point, highlighting that the chatbot supports teachers in reducing workload, as it can automatically evaluate students’ essays within seconds, allowing teachers more time for other tasks, further underscoring these benefits. Additionally, teachers are able to focus more on teaching and less on administrative tasks, where the tool can automate routine tasks and provide quick feedback (Al-Smadi, 2023). Govindaraja et al. (2024) express that teachers can also benefit from the use of the tool, as it will enhance their teaching practices, thereby creating a more engaging and dynamic learning experience.

ChatGPT proves to be highly effective in the context of FL teaching and assessment. Teachers can use the tool to design various tasks and activities for students, particularly in areas like vocabulary, grammar and writing (Zaiarna et al., 2024). The authors’ study involving 36 experienced English language instructors found that they were moderately to highly satisfied with the use of *ChatGPT* for its effectiveness and utility in the classroom (Zaiarna et al., 2024).

Challenges of ChatGPT to Foreign Language Education

One of the repeated challenges of *ChatGPT* in the literature is over-reliance. Pham and Le (2024) state that overdependence on *ChatGPT* could limit students’ critical-thinking and creativity skills, while Strobl et al. (2024) and Kasneci et al. (2023) highlight that this excessive reliance can hinder cognitive development, particularly in speaking, listening, and self-monitoring skills, leading to a reduction in learners’ ability to engage with language independently. Kasneci et al. (2023) underscore that delegating tasks such as proofreading to AI can impair the development of essential skills like self-editing, and Stockwell (2024) cautions that there is a risk that students may mistake AI-assisted writing for genuine language proficiency, thus undermining their independent writing abilities.

Another downfall of *ChatGPT* concerns quality and accurate feedback. Generative AI like *ChatGPT* provides instant feedback, but its accuracy can be inconsistent, sometimes reinforcing errors or offering incomplete explanations (Bang et al., 2023). The risk of “hallucination,” where AI produces fictitious information, further complicates its use in educational settings

(Babl & Babl, 2023; Ali & Djalilian, 2023). Notwithstanding, its ability to assist in simplifying complex topics remains a strength, provided its responses are critically evaluated by both learners and educators (Chaudry & Kazim, 2021). Furthermore, the chatbot poses language biases. *ChatGPT*'s primary focus on English limits its effectiveness for learners of some other languages, including endangered and less commonly taught languages, thus raising concerns about linguistic and conceptual prejudices (Żammit, 2024; Wang & Stockwell, 2023). Moreover, despite its linguistic prowess, *ChatGPT* struggles with cultural nuances and regional dialects (Kohnke et al., 2023). Its inability to fully grasp idiomatic expressions or culturally specific contexts requires careful human oversight (Zheng et al., 2024). As such, AI should be used as a supplement, with teachers guiding learners through cultural and contextual distinctions.

In addition, AI integration in education raises important ethical concerns, specifically regarding data privacy, plagiarism, and academic dishonesty (Chaudry & Kazim, 2021). Misuse of AI tools, such as AI-generated plagiarism, has raised the need for improved detection tools like Turnitin (Kohnke et al., 2023). Besides, as AI tools like *ChatGPT* become more integrated into education, legal questions about ownership and the use of AI-generated content are emerging (Smits & Borghuis, 2022; Elliott & Maccarthaigh, 2024).

In summary, the literature review provides insights into the evolution of technology integration in FL education, highlighting specific tools that have been utilized over the past decades to enhance teaching and learning. CALL, MALL, CMC, and gamification have revolutionized FL instruction, providing both teachers and students benefits. Technology generally shifts from the traditional classroom routine, providing dynamism, increasing students' motivation and creativity, and catering to personalized learning and diverse learning styles. However, some schools lack adequate technological infrastructure, and some teachers and students do not possess the requisite training and digital literacy to exploit technology in the FL classroom, which serves as limitations. Although the literature highlights CALL tools as a broad category, research is limited with respect to specific platforms that FL teachers use, especially in the post-Covid-19 context. Consequently, research is needed to highlight new trends and best practices. Similarly, the evolving nature of technology impacts teachers' perceptions of its incorporation in FL education; therefore, it is important to understand their views as more tools become available. This is particularly important in the Jamaican context, as no recently known study has considered the aforementioned.

Concerning *ChatGPT*, the chatbot presents numerous affordances to FL education, with benefits to both teachers and students. *ChatGPT* acts as a tutor that performs personalized instruction, breaking down complex concepts into understandable units. It also provides ideas for lesson planning and various exercises and lessens teachers' workload. However, numerous teachers and researchers have raised concerns that students may become over reliant on the platform, which can affect critical-thinking skills. Additionally, they underscore their apprehensions regarding the potential for academic dishonesty and plagiarism, as well as inaccuracies that the chatbot may produce. Across the world, numerous studies have assessed *ChatGPT* in various aspects of FL education; however, none has yet been conducted in the Jamaican context, which is a part of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Consequently, as

both students and teachers are using the chatbot to varying degrees, it is necessary to understand the extent of its usage and its benefits and implications to FL instruction. The study will serve local stakeholders in education, as well as other members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), given that the region shares a similar educational landscape and curricula, especially at both the secondary and tertiary levels.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What technological tools do Jamaican FL teachers use in their teaching?
2. What are Jamaican FL teachers' perceptions of technology integration and social media inclusion in their teaching?
3. What are Jamaican FL teachers' views and practices of *ChatGPT* in their teaching?

Methodology

Settings and Participants

The study was conducted in Jamaica among FL teachers who teach at different levels of the education system. Jamaica is an Anglophone society with English as its official language of instruction. FLs are mainly taught at the secondary level with Spanish being the dominate one, followed by French. In most secondary schools, an FL is mandatory up to third form, while students may choose to pursue it at a higher level and then prepare to sit the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) followed by the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE), both of which are regional exams offered by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used to recruit participants for this study who responded to a *Google Forms* questionnaire (see more under Instrument). Participants had to fulfill some basic criteria, such as being employed as an FL teacher in a government-approved school, having at least one year of teaching experience, and being a user of technology in their FL teaching. Twenty-nine (29) teachers responded to the questionnaire with one not consenting to have their data used as part of the study. Therefore, the study's analysis is based solely on the data from the 28 respondents. Majority of the respondents (N=18, 64.3%) were female, while the others (N=10, 35.7%) were male. Both their ages and years of teaching experience span different ranges (see Table 1). Most of the participants (N=21, 75 %) teach at the secondary level, while small numbers teach at the primary (N=4, 14.3%) and tertiary (N=3, 10.7%) levels. In terms of languages taught, the majority (N=25, 89.3%) teach Spanish, while fewer teach French (N=11, 39.3%) and English (N=10, 35.7%).

Table 1.*Summary of Teachers' Demographic Information*

Number of participants	29 overall 28 consented
Gender	18 female 10 male
Age range	20-25 (N=3) 26-30 (N=1) 31-35 (N=9) 36-40 (N=4) 41-45 (N=4) 46-50 (N=1) 50 & over (N=6)
Employment	Ministry of Education, Jamaica Different schools and universities
Levels taught	Primary (N=4) Secondary (N=21) Tertiary (N=3)
Languages taught	English (N=10) French (N=11) Spanish (N=23)
Years of teaching experience	1-5 (N=7) 6-10 (N=8) 11-15 (N=5) 16-20 (N=4) 21-25 (N=1) 30 & over (N=3)

Research Design

This study adopted the mixed-methods approach, which, according to Levy (2015) is useful when studying CALL, as it allows researchers to gain a more fulsome picture of participants' experiences and perspectives. Therefore, a mixed-method research design was used to understand FL teachers' practices and perceptions of technology and ChatGPT in their classroom and pedagogical practices. Dawadi et al. (2021) mention that it is beneficial to mix two methods to provide valuable insights into the research phenomena that cannot be comprehensively understood by using only qualitative or quantitative methods. Shorten and Smith (2017) emphasize that mixed-method research supports purposeful data consolidation, which allows researchers to view a phenomenon from different perspectives and research lenses. A *Google Forms* questionnaire was used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data (see section Instrument for more details). Quantitative data were mainly comprised of descriptive-type questions, which were used to identify trends and frequencies within the target population related to availability and usage of technology, as well as practices, benefits, and limitations of ChatGPT. Qualitative data consisted of open-ended questions that expounded on the quantitative ones, in addition to their views of social media inclusion in FL education.

Instrument

A questionnaire was developed to ascertain Jamaican in-service FL teachers' usage of

technology in their teaching and their perceptions of *ChatGPT* for academic purposes. In addition to demographic information, such as age, gender, academic background, and years of experience, it included multiple-choice and open-ended questions to ensure that all the respondents' views were fully captured. The questionnaire sought to determine the different technologies available to teachers, their institutions' attitudes and policies toward technology integration, the technological tools they use in their teaching, their perceptions of the benefits and challenges of integrating technology in the FL classroom, and their views and practices of *ChatGPT*. The questions concerning technologies in school were adopted from Gong and Lai's (2018) study on technology integration in the language classroom, while those related to *ChatGPT* were modeled based on a study conducted by Widianingtyas et al. (2023), who assessed teachers' perceptions of the chatbot in language education, whether it was beneficial or if it posed a threat. Both authors' works were selected as they explored objectives similar to this study. They also had sound methodology, which was enhanced by robust validity and reliability. Given that their instruments effectively captured the intended variables, they were deemed appropriate to guide this study. Subsequently, the questionnaire underwent face validity by some of the researchers (N=4) to assess the relevance, formatting, readability, clarity, and appropriateness of the questions for the target audience. Afterwards, the researchers conducted content validity to determine the extent to which the questionnaire captured all the aspects of the construct that it aimed to investigate (Ranganathan et al., 2024). During this process, the reliability of the questionnaire was checked to reduce redundancy and improve the reliability of individual items. This was done by performing Cronbach Alpha in MAXQDA, which produced a score of 0.78, which means that it was good.

Data Collection and Data analysis

The researchers administered the *Google Forms* questionnaire to FL colleagues between October and December 2024, with the request that they assist in disseminating the link to other local FL teachers in their network. Through this collaborative effort, the authors aimed to increase participation and obtain diverse responses. The questionnaire was primarily circulated through the Jamaica Association of French Teachers (JAFT) and the National Spanish Teachers' Association (ANPE¹) WhatsApp groups. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, which help to summarize data in the form of simple quantitative measures such as percentages or in the form of visual representations (Kaliyadan & Kulkarni, 2019), while qualitative data from the open-ended questions were analyzed using conventional content analysis (Hsieh & Shanon, 2018). The study relied on a coding approach outlined by Campbell et al. (2013) to enhance inter-coder reliability. Essentially, the first and second authors initially coded the data using content analysis. The third and fourth authors were then given the data for coding without any prior codes. Both teams meticulously searched through the data to identify recurring patterns and themes to arrive at the most appropriate representations of the responses provided. Subsequently, both teams shared their respective analyses and arrived at consensus in their coding, which was later adopted.

¹ In Spanish: Asociación nacional de profesores de español

Results/Findings

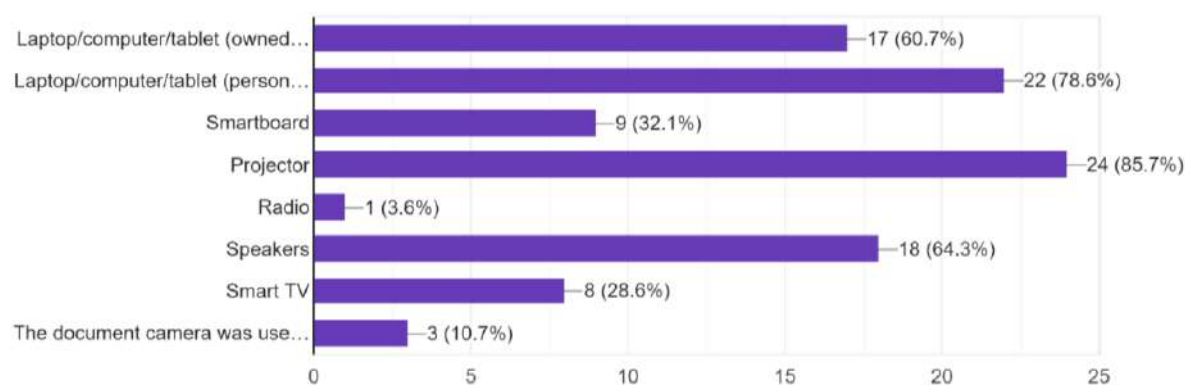
RQ1: RQ1: What technological tools do Jamaican FL teachers use in their teaching?

Technological tools available to foreign language teachers at school

Figure 2 shows that there is a variety of technological tools available to Jamaican FL teachers to assist in their pedagogical practice. According to the responses, 85.7% of teachers have access to a projector, 78.6% have a personal laptop/computer/tablet, 60.7% have access to an institutionalized laptop/computer/tablet, 64.3% can use speakers provided by their schools, while significantly fewer schools have smartboards, smart TVs, and document cameras that teachers can access. Radio is not a prioritized technology in most schools. This is likely because laptops are more commonly used and are multi-faceted.

Figure 2.

Technology available to Jamaican FL teachers at their schools



Technological tools used for pedagogical purposes in foreign language education

Figure 3 summarizes of the technological tools predominantly used by Jamaican FL teachers in their professional practice. The findings reveal that a significant portion of teachers (41%) opt for interactive and assessment-oriented tools. Additionally, creative and multimedia tools are utilized by 19% of teachers, 16% of them incorporate presentation tools, while 10% employ reference and translation tools. Furthermore, a small group of teachers (7%) opts for both general and AI-based tools.

To explain Figure 3, presentation tools include Canva, PowerPoint, and Prezi. Interactive and assessment tools encompass Classtime.com, Ed Puzzle, Jamboard, Jeopardy, Kahoot, Live worksheets, Quizizz, and Wordwall. With regard to reference and translation tools, these speak to language learning applications, different translation sites (Google Translate, DeepL, etc) and Word Reference. Creative and multimedia tools incorporate Adobe Express, Brainscape, and YouTube videos. With respect to AI-based tools, ChatGPT and text-to-speech applications emerged, while other general tools mentioned include Google Maps and other online materials and links.

Figure 3.

Categories of technological tools used by Jamaican foreign language teachers

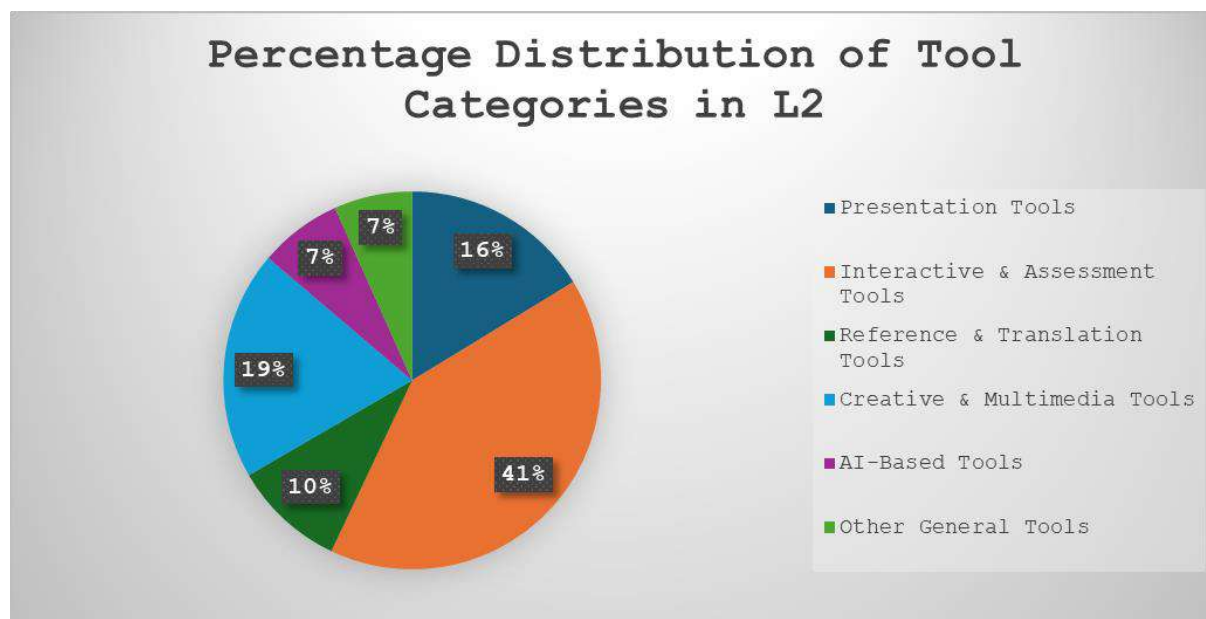


Table 2 below provides granular insights into the technological tools used for pedagogical purposes by Jamaican FL teachers, showcasing preferences and engagement levels across multiple platforms. *YouTube* videos and PowerPoint are the most widely utilized tools, each with 26 mentions and a usage rate of 92.86%, reflecting their broad applicability and popularity. Live worksheets follow closely with 24 mentions and an 85.71% usage rate, highlighting their utility for interactive tasks. Platforms like Kahoot (21 mentions, 75%), Jamboard, Ed Puzzle, and videos (each with 20 mentions, 71.43%) further emphasize the strong preference for tools that promote engagement. AI-based tools are gaining traction, with *ChatGPT* being mentioned 17 times (60.71%), indicating growing adoption. Similarly, interactive tools like Quizizz and Jeopardy games each have 16 mentions (57.14%), while translation sites also achieved 16 mentions (57.14%), suggesting a consistent reliance on tools for language support. Quizlet sees moderate use with 15 mentions (53.57%), and other online materials/links and language-learning apps both receive 13 mentions (46.43%). With regard to creative and design platforms, Canva has a 42.86% usage rate (12 mentions), while reference tools like Word Reference are mentioned 10 times (35.71%). However, lower utilization is observed in tools such as Wordwall (5 mentions, 17.86%) and text-to-speech apps, which are noted only 2 times (7.14%). General-purpose tools like Google Maps are also infrequently used, with two mentions (7.14%), and presentation tools like Prezi have limited adoption at just one mention (3.57%).

Table 2*Technological tools used by Jamaican foreign language teachers*

Tool/Approach	N	%
<i>YouTube</i> Videos	26	92.86%
PowerPoint	26	92.86%
Live Worksheets	24	85.71%
Kahoot	21	75.00%
Jamboard	20	71.43%
Ed Puzzle	20	71.43%
Videos	20	71.43%
ChatGPT	17	60.71%
Quizziz	16	57.14%
Jeopardy Games	16	57.14%
Translation sites (Google Translate, DeepL, Linguée, etc)	16	57.14%
Quizlet	15	53.57%
Other online materials/links	13	46.43%
Language Learning Apps	13	46.43%
Canva	12	42.86%
Word Reference	10	35.71%
Jeopardy	7	25.00%
Wordwall	5	17.86%
Text-to-Speech Apps to assist in recordings	2	7.14%
Google Maps	2	7.14%
Prezi	1	3.57%
Nearpod.com	1	3.57%
Learningapps.org	1	3.57%
Classtime.com	1	3.57%
Adobe Express	1	3.57%
Google Maps	1	3.57%

RQ2: What are Jamaican FL teachers' perceptions of technology integration and social media inclusion in their teaching?

Benefits of technology integration in foreign language education

When asked about the potential benefits of incorporating technology in FL education, educators provided a range of responses, such as its potential to engage and motivate students, enhance learning and interaction, provide access and flexibility, support authentic application and modernization, improve pedagogy, and develop students' creative skills.

Firstly, technology increases engagement and motivation by making lessons more engaging, fun, and interesting, grabbing students' attention and boosting motivation. As summarized by

one respondent, *“The motivation of the students is always high when using AI as well as knowledge acquisition.”* Additionally, the visual and interactive nature of digital resources caters to diverse learning styles, leading to higher levels of engagement and knowledge acquisition. As noted by two other respondents, *“the resources vary to suit the different learning styles,”* which *“increase students’ interest”*. Secondly, technology enhances learning and interaction. One-to-one interaction is highlighted as a key benefit. Technology facilitates *“better teaching and learning, better class interaction, [and] more student-centered[ness]”*. The use of technology also *“exposes students to authentic materials,”* leading to increased student interest and a more active learning process. Thirdly, technology offers flexibility by providing access to various learning resources and catering to diverse learning styles and paces. It provides immediate feedback, enabling students to work independently and at their own pace. As expressed by one respondent, technology increases student engagement, *“making each student active in class, doing exercises and activities, not just listening to the teacher talk. They also get immediate feedback - less delay with marking. Also, students can work at their own pace to some degree.”* In addition, technology promotes real-world application and modernization. The integration of technology exposes students to authentic materials, keeps learning relevant, and helps students stay abreast with the current technological landscape, better preparing them for the demands of a digital world. Indeed, some *“students are more technologically advanced”* and need to be met *“half-way based on their interest in technology usage,”* as technology *“brings a level of real-life experience, which helps with engagement and entertainment while learning.”* Furthermore, technology improves teaching practices. Technology helps teachers vary their approaches, presentation styles, and *“tap into the students’ interests”*, making the lesson more fun and interactive. It also facilitates sharing information *“outside of class time in preparation of upcoming lessons”*. This allows for more efficient and effective teaching methods. Finally, technology integration fosters creativity by enabling students to create their own materials and projects. The autonomy allowed in the process enhances students’ curiosity, which leads to discoveries. As noted by one respondent, *“Content becomes alive and is colorful and engaging. Students are more enthusiastic about learning and more responsible for learning new material. It is also interesting that they discover new things and come and share without being pushed.”*

Challenges with technology integration in foreign language education

However, despite the many benefits mentioned by the teachers, they raised varying concerns regarding the challenges associated with integrating technology in FL education; these include technological access and infrastructure, students’ usage and level of responsibility, resource management and preparation, and students’ retention of information.

A major concern noted by the respondents relates to technological access and infrastructure. This includes issues such as unreliable internet connection, insufficient technological resources (projectors, computers, etc.), lack of classroom electrical outlets, and the need for technological training for both teachers and students. As summarized by one respondent, *“Depending on the class, the room may not have appropriate electrical outlet or too much lighting for projector; [making it] time-consuming to set up since [the] teacher doesn’t have [their] own class.”* An additional challenge refers to students’ usage and responsibility of technology. Teachers are

concerned that some students may misuse technology; for instance, “*Students translate texts without trying on their own.*” According to the responses, some students also lack self-discipline and utilize technology for non-academic purposes (browsing, texting). Not all students may have equal access to technology at home, which limits their “*responsible use of technology*”. Furthermore, teachers lament resource management and preparation as a potential downfall of technology. Teachers require time and effort to create suitable materials for technology integration. For instance, “*It takes time sometimes to build material for gamification. Sometimes the internet isn’t reliable - connectivity or sound issues.*” Finding appropriate digital resources may also be time-consuming. As stated by a respondent, “*The greatest challenge is finding the right material to use. For example, finding the right video based on the topic to be taught.*” These difficulties could be linked to a lack of “*teacher knowledge*” with manipulating technology. Additionally, there is a concern that students might focus too much on the technology itself, leading to reduced retention of the learning material. As noted by one respondent, “*The major issue I have with incorporating technology is that the students do not retain the information that they are learning as they are focused on the technology being utilized.*”

The findings strongly emphasize the potential benefits of technology integration in FL classes. However, they also acknowledge the significant logistical, pedagogical, and practical challenges that need to be addressed to ensure successful and equitable integration.

Jamaican teachers’ perceptions of social media inclusion in foreign language education

With regard to the place of social media in FL education, educators shared mixed and nuanced views. Those supportive of social media inclusion note its potential for increased engagement and motivation, authentic language exposure, the possibilities of collaboration and communication, greater reach and accessibility, and the opportunity for creative content creation. However, others raised concerns about language accuracy, appropriateness, potential misuse, and distraction.

Among the positive aspects of social media inclusion in FL teaching and learning, teachers cite its potential to increase engagement and motivation. Many of the respondents highlighted the correlation between social media and younger generations, stating that social networks could be used to increase student engagement and motivation in learning a FL. Social media platforms’ interactive and dynamic nature is seen as a way to make language learning more fun and relevant. As expressed by one respondent, “*...as students are all over social media, it is important to stay current and meaningfully integrate social media to enhance learning.*” In addition, social media offers “*exposure to authentic, contemporary use of the FL,*” going beyond the limitations of traditional textbooks and classroom materials. This exposure is seen as invaluable for developing cultural agency, fluency, and improving communication skills. One respondent noted, “*Yes, social media can be used to share grammatical rules, vocabulary, fun facts and cultural information on the FL culture.*” Additionally, social media platforms facilitate communication and collaboration among students and “*connect language learners across the world with native speakers,*” creating opportunities for peer learning, language exchange, and cultural immersion. In a similar way, social media can extend the reach of language learning beyond the confines of the classroom, providing opportunities for students to “*be introduced to*

accounts on the various platforms that they can follow in order to improve their competence.” Furthermore, social media facilitates creative content creation. The ability to create and share multimedia content (videos, audio clips, etc.) through social media is seen as a way to enhance creativity and encourage active participation in language learning. As an example, students “*can create a TikTok video to explain a concept in a creative and fun way*” as they are “*usually interested in creating trendy videos that reinforce concepts.*” Additionally, “*different platforms may be used to get feedback. Polls or surveys can be done via social media.*” However, a key concern is the potential for inaccuracies and inappropriate language use on social media, as “*AI doesn’t use proper language structure.*” The informal nature of many social media platforms poses challenges in maintaining linguistic accuracy and appropriateness standards. One respondent was adamant that social media has no space in FL teaching and learning as “*it is not correct*”. Besides, teachers are also concerned about the risk of students misusing social media, engaging in off-topic conversations, or using it for non-academic purposes. As one respondent said, “*Students will misuse social media for personal gain.*”

In summary, although most respondents are in favor of social media integration in FL education, the responses reveal a lack of definitive consensus among educators. The potential benefits in terms of engagement, authentic language exposure, and collaborative learning are significant, but these advantages must be carefully weighed against the potential drawbacks concerning linguistic accuracy and misuse. The most prudent approach appears to involve cautious, well-planned integration with sufficient guidance and oversight to maximize the educational value and mitigate the risks.

RQ3: RQ3: What are Jamaican FL teachers’ views and practices of ChatGPT in their teaching?

Teachers’ perceptions of ChatGPT in foreign language education

When asked to provide three words that come to mind when they hear *ChatGPT*, teachers listed a range of perceptions, reflecting both the positive potential and possible downsides associated with this AI technology. The following themes emerged through content analysis:

Positive associations of ChatGPT

The first theme that emerged was future-oriented and innovative. Words like “future,” “development,” “innovation,” and “transformative” suggest a perception of *ChatGPT* as a forward-looking and groundbreaking technology with the potential to reshape various aspects of life. The second theme, efficiency and ease of use, encompasses terms such as “convenient,” “easy,” “quick,” “rapid,” “effortless,” and “accessible,” which highlight the perceived efficiency and user-friendliness of the tool. It is perceived as a time-saving resource that simplifies tasks. The next theme, helpful and informative, surrounds descriptions like “helpful,” “informative,” “creative,” “articulate,” and “detailed,” which suggest a view of *ChatGPT* being a useful resource for locating information, generating creative content, and improving communication. It is viewed as a tool that can help with various tasks. Finally, there was technological prowess. Notions like “technology,” “AI,” “information processing,” and “generative AI” reflect a recognition of *ChatGPT*’s underlying technological competences and its position at the forefront of AI development, especially in our current dispensation.

Negative associations of ChatGPT

Notwithstanding the many positive themes, concerns were raised about academic dishonesty. The word “laziness” and the explicit mention of “academic dishonesty” reveal anxieties surrounding the potential misuse of *ChatGPT* for cheating and plagiarism, which can lead to metacognitive drowsiness. Similarly, another prominent issue concerns authenticity and accuracy. While “accuracy” is mentioned in a positive light, the mention of words like “fear” and “cheating” infers concerns about the accuracy and reliability of the information produced by *ChatGPT*. There is implicit suspicion about the legitimacy and originality of the output.

Neutral associations of ChatGPT

At the same time, *ChatGPT* has neutral associations. Adjectives like “convenient,” “available,” “easy,” “fast,” “reliable,” “useful,” and “innovative” provide neutral descriptors of *ChatGPT*’s features without expressing strong positive or negative connotations. These terms primarily focus on describing *ChatGPT*’s functionality and characteristics. The other neutral theme encompasses communication-related terms. Vocabularies like “communication,” “messaging,” and “interaction” highlight *ChatGPT*’s potential as a communication tool, without openly endorsing it as positive or negative.

To summarize, the word association reveals a compound and multidimensional perception of *ChatGPT*. While many respondents associate it with positive qualities such as innovation, efficiency, helpfulness, and ease of use, there are important concerns surrounding potential misuse, accuracy, and the broader ethical implications of this potent technology. The overall impression is that *ChatGPT* is viewed as a tool with considerable potential, but also noteworthy risks and challenges that need to be addressed. The neutral descriptive terms reflect the ongoing process of understanding and adapting to this rapidly evolving technology.

Foreign Language teachers’ usage of ChatGPT

Table 3 shows the ways in which Jamaican FL teachers use *ChatGPT*. The main uses are to generate ideas for lessons (78.6%), create tasks for students (60.7%), and complete personal tasks (42.9%). However, 10.7 % indicated that they do not use the chatbot.

Table 3

Jamaican FL teachers’ usage of ChatGPT

Usage of <i>ChatGPT</i>	N	%
Plan entire lessons	2	7.1
Generate ideas for my lessons	22	78.6
Correct students’ tasks/assignments	1	3.6
Create tasks for my students	17	60.7
Explain complex content	8	28.6
Personal tasks	12	42.9
I do not use <i>ChatGPT</i>	3	10.7

Benefits of ChatGPT to Jamaica foreign language teachers

As can be seen in Table 4, *ChatGPT* presents notable benefits to Jamaican FL teachers, such as saving time and energy (85.7%), instant generation of information (71.4%), creativity in ideas generated (67.9%) and dissecting content into comprehensible output (42.9%).

Table 4*Benefits of ChatGPT to Jamaican FL teachers*

Benefits of ChatGPT	N	%
Saves time and energy	24	85.7
Instant creation/production of information	20	71.4
Creativity and diversity in ideas generated	19	67.9
Breaks down content into comprehensible chunks	12	42.9
None	1	3.6

Limitations of ChatGPT to Jamaican FL teachers

Table 5 breaks down the perceived limitations of *ChatGPT* to Jamaican FL teachers, which include faulty content (32.1%), non-customized content (32.1%), and un inventive ideas (14.3%). However, some teachers (28.5%) do not find any drawbacks with the chatbot.

Table 5*Drawbacks of ChatGPT to Jamaican FL teachers*

Drawbacks of ChatGPT	N	%
Faulty content	9	32.1
Content is not tailored to teachers' expectations	9	32.1
Lack of creative ideas suggested	4	14.3
None	8	28.5

Effects of ChatGPT on Jamaican foreign language teachers

Table 6 shows the perceived effects that *ChatGPT* has on Jamaican FL teachers. The chatbot makes teachers cautious in accepting some content (21.4%), causing very few to depend on AI (10.7%) and lose their creativity (7.1%).

Table 6*Effects of ChatGPT to Jamaican FL teachers*

Effects of ChatGPT	N	%
Cautious in accepting content	6	21.4
Dependent on AI	3	10.7
Lose creativity	2	7.1
Not applicable	4	14.3

Discussion

The questionnaire item analysis on Jamaican FL teachers' usage and perceptions of technology and *ChatGPT* provides important new information on the teachers' views and practices from a diverse standpoint, which gives an inventory of the state of affairs in the discipline, as there is no known modern study that has been conducted in this regard in the local context.

Based on teachers' usage of technology, it is evident that they are exposed to and utilize diverse

technological tools to enhance FL pedagogy, whether for interaction and assessment, translation, or lesson creation and presentation. Among the top tools used are *YouTube* videos, PowerPoint, Live worksheets, and Kahoot! *ChatGPT* is ranked as the top generative AI tool used, which shows its growing propagation in the Jamaican FL classroom. Still, some tools are underutilized or unknown, but this could be because of teachers' limited knowledge of them or due to the socio-cultural and institutional contexts in which they operate. Nevertheless, it is also true that given the plethora of tools that exist, teachers have to choose what to include in their classes and what will yield the best results based on their lesson objectives.

The findings highlight that teachers have accessible technological tools such as laptops/computers, tablets, projectors, and speakers to help them enhance their pedagogical practices. This is enhanced by the positive attitude that their school administrations hold with regard to their position on technology integration in teaching in learning. The majority of the schools support technology (96.4%), with some even mandating its incorporation in lesson planning, while others are establishing official technological plans to enhance academic purposes. This suggests that administrators are cognizant of the era in which we live, which is defined by technological advancements. Their openness to technology integration aligns with the country's ICT in education policy, which promotes a teaching environment that fosters the students' adaptability to new technologies. In fact, the policy underscores that "*we must not only continue to refresh our curriculum to ensure that the knowledge, skills, and values taught to them remain current and relevant, but also that modern methodologies are employed in imparting and sharing knowledge*" (Ministry of Education and Youth, 2022, p. i).

The study reveals that technology brings numerous benefits to the FL classroom, including its potential to increase students' engagement and motivation, enhance learning and interaction, provide access and flexibility to different categories of learners, support authentic application and modernization of learning, enhance teachers' didactics, and develop students' creative skills. The findings support the position of Al-Mahrooqi and Troudi (2014), who note that the application of CALL provides a student-centered learning environment. Additionally, it assists teachers to vary lesson presentation styles to encourage and motivate students of diverse interests, provide opportunities for learning outside of the classroom, even with native speakers, and is perceived to cater more to individual differences. Moreover, ICT brings dynamism to the classroom, increases learner autonomy (Mexhuni, 2014), and promotes cooperation, which leads to cultural awareness (Dedja, 2015). All of these advantages make learning more active and interactive for students (Thomas & Schneider, 2020).

The above-mentioned benefits align with teachers' perceptions of the positive outcomes of social media inclusion in FL teaching and learning. They believe social media can equally promote student engagement and motivation, expose them to authentic language and culture, promote collaboration and communication, foster wider reach and accessibility, and support creative content creation. These findings are in line with Nasution (2022), who reports that language learning with social media provides opportunities for the development of various language skills in reading and writing. Cabrera (2018) notes that social media can allow for the imbedding of language acquisition in real-life social contexts and play an important role in communicative and creative activities in which young people engage. Social media is a

common feature of many Jamaican students with *Facebook*, *Instagram*, and *TikTok* being among the most popular networks. Given the frequency with which many of these students interact with social media, increasing its usage in the FL classroom could bring about new exploits for both learners and instructors, thereby promoting technology-enhanced instruction through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Project-Based Learning and Teaching (PBLT) and Content Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). All of these approaches encourage the socio-constructivist approach to learning, where students “learn by doing” in real-life situations.

Despite the advantages of technology integration in FL teaching and learning, educators raised a few challenges, such as technological access and infrastructure, students’ potential misuse and irresponsibility, teachers’ lack of resource management and preparation, and students’ inability to retain information. The findings coincide with Lozano and Izquierdo (2019), who highlight that technical problems such as slow internet connection, outdated computers, and lack of compatible software can affect CALL. Pazilah et al. (2019) caution that students may get easily distracted and might misuse technology, which is a concern that teachers also raise as one of the disadvantages of social media inclusion in the FL classroom. Mai (2021) indicates that some students may waste time on social networks checking news and updating information or status. In addition, teachers are concerned about language accuracy and appropriateness with regard to social media integration. Mai (2021) states that concerning language proficiency, young people often utilize abbreviations or slang to communicate with each other. As most social networks use written content messages, sometimes students encounter many problems when they are asked to speak in the standard target language. Nevertheless, balance is needed as a language’s standard and sociolinguistic aspects are vital to pragmatic communication. Pazilah et al. (2019) also argue that frequent use of technology can limit students’ thinking potential. Furthermore, McMurry et al. (2016) address the issue of inadequate teacher education and experience to manipulate CALL tools as further limitations.

The findings also reveal that teachers hold both positive and negative perceptions of *ChatGPT*. On the positive side, *ChatGPT* is perceived as future-oriented, innovative, efficient, user-friendly, helpful, edifying, and technologically skillful. On the downside, teachers have raised concerns about academic dishonesty and data output authenticity and accuracy.

In terms of usage, most of the respondents utilize *ChatGPT* to generate ideas for their lessons, create tasks for their students, explain complex content, and complete personal tasks. This explains why, in terms of benefits, teachers praise the chatbot for the instant production of information, the diversity of ideas generated, and the manner in which it breaks down information into comprehensible chunks. It is not surprising, then, why the majority indicated that the chatbot “saves time and energy”. However, faulty and non-tailored content are among the main limitations raised.

Evidently, *ChatGPT* brings numerous benefits to FL education, as established by Nguyen (2023). The findings are in line with Karataş et al. (2024) and Kohler (2024) who reported that *ChatGPT* allows teachers to access data more quickly, creating lesson plans, teaching materials, quizzes, worksheets, and assignments more efficiently. Madden et al. (2024) and Alsaweed and Aljebreen (2024) also found that *ChatGPT* offers strong support to human teachers by reducing their workload and providing them with a wide range of information on any given topic and

generating that information straight away. *ChatGPT* is a versatile platform that allows teachers to design various tasks and exercises to cover the different language competencies (Zaiarna et al., 2024).

However, teachers have to be careful when using *ChatGPT* as it may lead to overreliance (Pham & Le, 2024), which can affect teachers' creative and critical-thinking skills. Bang et al. (2023) also warn of the dangers of *ChatGPT* producing inaccurate and inconsistent information. This means that teachers have to scrutinize the information generated from the chatbot. In fact, due to this, one respondent said, "*It is very important for FL teachers to be on top of their game and be knowledgeable of such things as grammar, usage, and correct cultural information.*" Kohnke et al. (2023) highlighted that *ChatGPT* struggles with cultural subtleties. Given the concerns about credibility of information, teachers should cross-reference sources to ensure the content generated is reliable before passing it on to their students. This means that teachers have to be ethical and responsible when using *ChatGPT*.

To guarantee accuracy, teachers could collaboratively design lesson plans and activities. Group-based tasks necessitate communication, collaboration, and coordination, which will add to the human element, which *ChatGPT* currently lacks. During this process, teachers will be able to peer review each other's work and identify any potential inaccuracies and misuse of AI. This same principle of teamwork is applicable to students to ensure group accountability. Additionally, teachers should consider *ChatGPT* as a brainstorming support unit to avoid overreliance on the chatbot, instead of using it to fully generate content. Overdependence on the chatbot also requires teachers to design assessments that increasingly require a high level of originality and creativity on the part of the student, as AI tools are less effective in this regard. For instance, teachers could give students tasks requiring personal reflection or specificities about local contexts, making it harder for students to rely solely on AI-generated content. Moreover, written tasks or projects could be accompanied by oral presentations with spontaneous questions at the end, which will foster independent thinking (Sherma, 2024). These approaches will likely minimize students misusing AI and foster deeper learning, critical thinking, and problem solving among them.

Conclusion

The study found that Jamaican school administrators are in favor of technology integration and that FL teachers are familiar with and utilize a range of technological tools to enhance the teaching and learning process. Majority of them are for assessment, interaction, and presentation purposes, such as *YouTube* videos, PowerPoint, live worksheets, and Kahoot! The variety of technological tools adds diversity to the classroom and helps to engage and motivate students. Furthermore, technology enhances learning and interaction, provides access and flexibility to different categories of learners, supports real-life application and modernization of learning, boosts teachers' didactics, and develops students' creative skills. Additionally, teachers believe that the incorporation of social media platforms can enhance student engagement and motivation, expose learners to authentic language and culture, promote international collaboration and communication, and support content creation. Consequently,

Jamaican FL teachers should consider integrating platforms such as *Facebook*, *Instagram*, and *TikTok* into the teaching and learning dynamic, where feasible, to promote tasked/project-based learning, while taking into account the socio-cultural and institutional implications of this decision. Despite the affordances of technology, educators have raised some challenges, including the absence of technological and infrastructural access, potential misuse by students, lack of training among some teachers, and students' inability to retain information due to distraction. These are issues that the Ministry of Education and Youth and local institutions can address to improve the situation.

Concerning *ChatGPT*, it is the top generative AI tool used by teachers. They use it to generate ideas for their lessons, create tasks for their students, explain complex content, and complete personal tasks. They appreciate it for its prompt production of information, its variety of ideas generated, and the manner in which it breaks down information into comprehensible chunks. They overwhelmingly agree that *ChatGPT* helps them to save time and energy. However, teachers must be mindful of the chatbot's over-reliance, as it can affect creative and critical-thinking skills. Additionally, teachers should be cognizant of *ChatGPT*'s limitations, as it can produce faulty and inconsistent information. It is also limited in terms of cultural nuances. Consequently, teachers must carefully peruse the information produced by the chatbot to ensure credibility and validity before imparting it to students.

Given the affordances of social media and technology integration in FL education highlighted by the teachers, it is recommended that curriculum facilitate their inclusion on a wider scale and a more structured basis to enhance learning outcomes. As a result, institutions planning FL teaching should include interactive ICT pedagogical materials appropriate to different types of content and courses at the various levels of the education system. However, as not all schools and students have the same degree of access to technological devices and infrastructure, stakeholders in the educational sector should make the requisite investment to ensure equity, particularly in rural contexts. Furthermore, as students can misuse technology, it is useful for teachers to promote social media literacy and digital literacy. Therefore, students should be provided with clear guidelines when using technology in the classroom, which should be monitored and reinforced by the teacher, so that they remain on-task to complete learning objectives. Similarly, teachers should engage in continuous training and professional development to enhance their digital competencies and keep current with the latest and most appropriate technological platforms. It is also critical for teacher preparation programs to have specific CALL courses so that new teachers are exposed to the intricacies of technology integration in FL education before they enter fully into the teaching profession.

As it relates to *ChatGPT*, it is growing in usage among both teachers and students. Undoubtedly, the advent of this disruptive enhancer has revolutionized education systems worldwide. It is expected that over time its usage in the Jamaican context will increase. Consequently, teachers and educational institutions should be encouraged to be flexible in their mentality to adapt instruction and assessments in consideration of this inevitable technology. However, as questions of ethics, accuracy, and authorship are many, institutions will need to develop AI policies to govern *ChatGPT* in the formal curriculum. Both ANPE and JAFT could also collaborate with the teacher-training and foreign language departments of local and regional

universities to organize workshops and think tanks to empower FL teachers in this era of accelerated technological and AI advancements.

Limitations of the study

Some limitations are associated with the present study. Firstly, the sample size consisted of 28 FL teachers, which is not a wide representation of the modern language teaching fraternity in Jamaica; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized. Majority of the participants were teachers of Spanish at the secondary level. Although Spanish is the primary FL taught in Jamaica, the study could have benefitted from more responses from the primary and tertiary levels, which have their unique contexts. The study also lacks experiences from teachers who teach minority FLs such as Chinese Mandarin, Japanese, and Portuguese. Their contribution could have provided a broader scope into technological practices in terms of similarities and differences. Secondly, although the questionnaire included both open- and closed-ended questionnaires, it would have been useful to incorporate interviews as a second data collection tool to gather deeper insights from some of the teachers. Similarly, it would have been ideal to gain insights from the Education Officers responsible for foreign languages within the Ministry of Education and Youth. Lastly, although many participants have had exposure to *ChatGPT*, some were still in the process of discovering the depth of its features; consequently, to some extent, they could not provide an insightful analysis of some of the questions asked.

Future research

As this study focused on FL teachers' usage and perceptions of technology and *ChatGPT* in the classroom, future studies could explore students' attitudes towards these technological tools. Additionally, future studies could examine *ChatGPT*'s potential to enhance students' language skills, particularly writing. Furthermore, research could investigate pre-service teachers' technological training and preparation in applied linguistics and their usage of technology while on teaching practice. Moreover, studies could also probe teacher trainers' knowledge, usage, and integration of technology in teacher preparation programs and the impact this has on pre-service teachers' practices.

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Biodata

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English for the Apparel Merchandisers in Bangladesh: A Needs Analysis


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ABSTRACT

Keywords: Needs analysis, Apparel merchandisers, English language skills, Bangladesh

Despite the increasing demand for English proficiency in Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) industry, there is limited research on the specific English language needs of apparel merchandisers. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring the English communication challenges and course preferences of merchandisers in Bangladesh. Utilizing an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, data were gathered from 30 junior to mid-level merchandisers through surveys and interviews. The findings show that merchandisers often use English for emailing and video conferencing with buyers but struggle with their speaking and writing skills. Despite their hectic schedules, participants were motivated to enhance their English and preferred flexible, context-based courses. The study recommends a customized English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course focusing on practical communication, particularly speaking and email writing. This research underscores the urgent need for tailored ESP programs to align English education with the professional demands of Bangladesh's RMG sector, providing a model that can guide global ESP course design in similar industries.

Introduction

The role of an apparel merchandiser involves designing, procuring, and promoting clothing and fashion items within retail environments. Merchandisers utilize market trends, consumer behavior, and sales data to inform product selection, pricing, and inventory management decisions to maximize profitability and meet client demand (Rabolt & Fisher, 2016). Apparel Merchandising is one of the most sought-after careers in Bangladesh, as the Ready-Made Garments (RMG) sector plays a crucial role in the country's economy, contributing 85% of total export earnings and 10.35% of the national GDP in the fiscal year 2019-20 (Rashid, 2023). Bangladeshi apparel merchandisers (hereafter referred to as AM) primarily communicate with foreign clients in English. It is undeniable that English is the most prominent lingua franca in international business contexts (Nickerson, 2005; Roshid et al., 2022; Sing, 2017). Furthermore, proficiency in the English language is widely regarded as an important criterion for securing a good job in the country (Ahmad & Rahman, 2021). Therefore, AMs must possess fluent English skills to succeed in the competitive job market.

Apparel merchandisers can work in buying houses or in RMG factories. An AM begins their career as an assistant or trainee merchandiser and gradually earns promotions to merchandiser, senior merchandiser, merchandiser manager, or team leader. Fresh graduates may start working as merchandisers, while candidates with training or degrees in the textile sector are preferred (The Daily Kaler Kontho, 2016). Since merchandisers' primary responsibility is handling clients and suppliers, strong proficiency in English is essential for success in merchandising (Bekar.com, 2019). Adopting an apparel merchandising competency framework, Jacobs and Karpova (2023) identified communication skills as one of the twenty-nine “must-have skills” for apparel merchandisers. While experts recommend that fresh merchandisers take English language courses (Anik, 2020), there is a lack of suitable English language courses explicitly tailored for merchandisers in Bangladesh. All these factors highlight the practical significance of this study.

In addition to its pragmatic significance, the research holds importance from an epistemological perspective because “needs analysis, carried out to establish the 'what' and the 'how' of a course, is the first stage in ESP course development” (Flowerdew, 2013, p. 325). Needs analysis plays a crucial role in designing a practical language course or curriculum (Briana & Mutia, 2019). The cyclical process that follows needs analysis progresses through these steps in order: course design, teaching and learning, assessment, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the course to inform the next needs analysis (Dudley-Evans & John, 1998).

Therefore, this research aims to address the gap in English language education tailored for apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh and to outline an appropriate ESP course based on a needs analysis. The findings will benefit apparel merchandising professionals in Bangladesh and provide a global framework for English for Professional Purposes (EPP) practices.

Literature review

Global perspectives on English in apparel and business

Research on the English language needs of apparel merchandisers has identified a variety of communication demands in the international marketplace (So-mui & Mead, 2000). Specific competencies emphasize soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and communication, along with the necessity for experiential and collaborative learning (Frazier, 2016). Understanding cross-cultural consumer values, needs, and purchasing behavior is fundamental, especially in Asian markets (Kim et al., 2002).

Speaking a foreign language is one of the most crucial communicative skills for a prospective marketer. Given the rapid pace of integration and globalization, proficiency in English is essential for modern professions. The need for higher education students to develop their academic and professional foreign language communication skills arises from the growth of international relations, the active adoption of foreign experiences in various areas of public life, and other trends in globalization. Learning English involves becoming a proficient communicator and achieving language proficiency focused on professional goals to assist individuals in pursuing their future careers (Romaniuk et al., 2022). Another study examined how English promotes fashion on social media (Andriani, 2021). It collected data from social media posts made by merchants. The study's findings revealed that the English merchants' usage of English to promote fashion is improper and does not follow correct word order or grammar.

Viet-Nga (2020) investigated the motivation levels of fashion design and garment technology

students to learn English, identified the factors influencing their motivation, and suggested potential solutions. The results revealed that the professor played a crucial role in boosting students' motivation. Furthermore, their teaching methods ranked highest on the incentive-building scale. The enthusiasm of the lecturers was also seen as the most effective remedy. Increasing students' eagerness to learn English has long been a priority for educators worldwide (Viet-Nga, 2020).

Significance of needs analysis in ESP course design

Needs analysis is standard in academia for designing and improving courses. For example, Briana and Mutia (2019) conducted a language needs analysis (LNA) of information technology students. They found that speaking skills in English are essential for students' future employment in the IT industry. They also revealed that students need to learn the contextualized use of the English language and communicate in a multicultural environment. Todea and Demarcsek (2017) used needs analysis to improve and revise a language course for engineering and business students. They measured the students' satisfaction levels and incorporated their suggestions to enhance the course's quality. In Bangladesh, Hossain (2013) conducted an ESP needs analysis for engineering students at a university. His study suggests that needs analysis can be considered the cornerstone of designing an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course.

English Language competencies in Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) sector

A range of studies has highlighted the importance of English proficiency for Bangladeshi professionals. Roshid (2018) interviewed three groups of business professionals involved in three tiers of communication within the ready-made garment (RMG) industry in Bangladesh and demonstrated that proficiency in the English language empowers businesspeople and organizations, opening doors to material gains such as better positions, pay, and status. These benefits support the nation's economic growth, combat poverty, and promote sustainable development (Roshid, 2018). Additionally, Islam and Islam (2018) found that Bangladeshi RMG employees' competencies, including presentation, leadership, decision-making abilities, and English skills, are somewhat low.

Roshid and Kankaanranta (2023) argued that skills gaps between industry expectations and university preparation are increasingly common in the global labor market. English is frequently used as a lingua franca in international business, so English communication skills (ECS) are essential soft skills in all organizations. By gathering information from forty-three employees in Bangladesh's international ready-made garment (RMG) sector to explore the relationship between academia and industry regarding ECS training and its suitability to meet the demands of the globalized business landscape, it was found that English courses in higher education fall short of achieving the communication objectives of the global RMG industry, which prioritizes clarity over fluency and requires trade-specific vocabulary, practical workplace experience, and intelligibility (Roshid & Kankaanranta, 2023).

Ebling and Kavanaugh (1980) studied the implementation of a Mini-French course specifically designed for fashion merchandising majors at Western Michigan University in the USA. This course exposes students to relevant fashion terminology, cultural insights, and written and spoken French practice. The need for this course arose from the diverse career goals of fashion merchandising students, which include roles in retail, buying, management, distribution, writing, photography, and more. The curriculum included units focused on contexts where French language skills, such as buying trips to Europe, might be necessary. The success of the course in attracting high enrollments and expanding to include interior design students highlighted the potential for language departments to collaborate with other disciplines and

reach a broader audience. In Bangladesh, Ahmmmed et al. (2020) identified the English language needs of Bangladeshi seafarers for working onboard ships and securing employment opportunities in the maritime sector. They found that maritime seafarers require a high level of English proficiency, particularly speaking, for effective communication onboard ships. The study presented sixty-eight maritime tasks ranked by priority. It also suggested that communication efficiency, specifically speaking skills, is essential for Bangladeshi seafarers. Chowdhury and Anon's (2021) study aimed to examine the skill needs of local and multinational corporations (MNCs) and provide an 'employability skill index' for entry-level marketing professionals in the Bangladeshi garment industry. The study produced a 22-item, six-dimensional skill index that revealed a significant disparity in the skill requirements between MNCs and local businesses. Major completed courses, research-based internships, written communication abilities, and English fluency are the capabilities that MNCs value most. In contrast, local businesses prioritize experience, teamwork, and networking (Chowdhury & Anon, 2021).

Similarly, Khan and Chaudhury (2012) emphasized the crucial role of English in the corporate sector, with employers reporting a significant gap between the English proficiency levels required and those possessed by employees. Amin and Greenwood (2018) further underscored the need for qualified and trained English teachers to bridge this gap, particularly within the context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. However, Hamid (2020) cautioned that the capacity of English teaching professionals in Bangladesh may not meet these demands, suggesting a potential mismatch between the necessity for English proficiency and the resources available for English education. Regarding the apparel industry, English plays a critical role. As English and American companies lead the global fashion industry, English has become the international and dominant language in this sector (Xydopoulos & Papadopoulou, 2018).

Research gap

This literature review reveals that English proficiency is vital for apparel merchandisers, particularly in international business contexts where communication with foreign clients and stakeholders is essential (Roshid, 2018; Roshid & Kankaanranta, 2023). Studies have emphasized the importance of communication skills, including business writing, speaking, and cross-cultural competence, for professional success (So-mui & Mead, 2000; Romaniuk et al., 2022). While research has explored English needs in various industries, such as IT (Briana & Mutia, 2019) and engineering (Hossain, 2013), a significant gap remains in understanding the specific English language requirements of apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh. The lack of targeted English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses designed for this professional group further exacerbates the problem (Islam & Islam, 2018). Although studies like Ebling and Kavanaugh (1980) have examined language programs tailored to niche industries, there is still a lack of research on industry-specific, structured English courses for apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh. This study aims to fill this gap by conducting a needs analysis to inform the development of a specialized ESP course, ensuring that English language education aligns with the professional demands of the apparel merchandising sector.

Theoretical framework

This study is guided by the comprehensive needs analysis framework proposed by Dudley-Evans and John (1998), which is foundational in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course design. Their model emphasizes a multi-dimensional approach to identifying the specific language needs of a target learner group. It includes not only what learners must do with language (target situation) but also what they currently can do, how they prefer to learn, and

what resources and constraints they face.

The main components of the framework and how they relate to the present study are outlined below:

Table 1

Theoretical framework of the study

Framework component	Function	Relevance to the study
Target Situation Analysis (TSA)	This analyzes what learners need to do in English in real-life professional settings.	Bangladeshi apparel merchandisers regularly use English for email communication, videoconferencing, negotiating with foreign buyers, and explaining order requirements. These communicative functions define the target situation.
Present Situation Analysis (PSA)	This examines the learners' English proficiency, language use, and educational background.	The study investigated self-reported English proficiency, prior English language training, and the frequency and type of English usage at work. The findings indicated that although English is commonly used in the workplace, many merchandisers lack confidence and formal training to use it effectively.
Learning Situation Analysis (LSA)	This emphasizes the best ways learners absorb information, including learning styles, motivation, and contextual factors.	The study revealed that merchandisers are motivated to improve their English, prefer weekend or online courses, and value friendly and supportive teachers. Their willingness to invest time and money shows a strong commitment to learning.
Deficiency Analysis	This highlights the gap between learners' current abilities (PSA) and the demands of their professional tasks (TSA).	The study indicates gaps that, while many merchandisers frequently use English, they struggle with convincing buyers, accurately communicating in writing, and understanding order details, especially among junior staff.
Strategy Analysis (Learning Needs)	This component analyzes learners' goals, strategies, and expectations for learning.	In this research, merchandisers preferred practical, context-based instruction focused on speaking, email writing, and listening comprehension. They also requested training using English apps and tools, emphasizing their desire for self-directed and applied learning.
Means Analysis	Means analysis evaluates institutional and contextual constraints, including available resources, time, and support.	Merchandisers reported long working hours, a lack of in-house English training, and a preference for flexible learning formats, such as short-term courses and online modules. These factors greatly influenced the proposed course design.
Language Audit	This entails analyzing genuine spoken or written communication samples used in the relevant professional context.	This study did not perform a complete language audit but collected significant qualitative and self-reported data regarding the nature of language used in merchandising contexts.

By addressing six of the seven core components (excluding the language audit) from Dudley-

Evans and John's (1998) framework, the study ensures a comprehensive analysis of the English language needs of apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh. This framework guided the data collection and interpretation and provided the foundation for designing a tailored English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course for this professional group.

Guided by this framework, the study aims to explore the real-world English communication challenges that Bangladeshi apparel merchandisers face and propose a customized ESP course to meet those needs. The following research questions were formulated to guide the investigation.

Research questions

The research questions below have generated the necessary data through a survey and interviews to provide guidelines for syllabus designers of an ESP course for apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh.

1. What challenges do merchandisers face with English skills?
2. To what extent do merchandisers need a specialized English course?
3. What would be the characteristics of a suitable English language course for apparel merchandisers?

Methods

Sampling and population

This study's population consisted of all current and aspiring apparel merchandising professionals in Bangladesh, including merchandising students and employees ranging from junior to high-level positions. Out of thirty research participants, eight completed the questionnaire, while the others were interviewed to gather qualitative data. This study employed a mixed sampling technique, utilizing convenience sampling as the primary method and snowball sampling as the secondary method for both data collection tools: survey questionnaire and interview schedule. Lavrakas (2008) defined convenience sampling as a nonprobability sampling technique where participants are selected because they are 'convenient' data sources for researchers. Since the researchers were familiar with some targeted participants, it was easy for them to reach out to these individuals for data collection. Additionally, snowball sampling, another nonprobability sampling technique (Lavrakas, 2008), was employed as the researchers sought help from participants to connect with more members of the targeted population and achieve an adequate sample size.

Data collection

This study adopted the Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Design (Creswell & Clark, 2018), which includes an initial quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. First, primarily quantitative information regarding the English language requirements and challenges faced by Bangladeshi clothing merchandisers was collected using a survey questionnaire. The survey included Likert-scale questions (e.g., self-rated English proficiency), multiple-choice questions (e.g., prioritized skills), and open-ended questions (e.g., workplace challenges). Second, based on these results, lead merchandisers participated in semi-structured interviews to explore their perspectives more deeply. Spontaneous discussions led by the interviewer facilitated the generation of authentic data from the interviewees.

Piloting

A small-scale pilot study involving 2 participants was conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collection tools. Based on the shortcomings identified in the piloting, the draft survey questionnaire and interview schedules were revised. For example, the language used in the questionnaire was simplified, unnecessary Likert scale items were reduced, and a clear description of the research was included.

Data analysis

The gathered data was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methodologies to ensure a thorough understanding of the English language requirements of apparel merchandisers. With the assistance of SPSS V.25, descriptive statistical techniques such as frequency distributions and percentage analysis were employed to interpret the quantitative data from survey responses, identifying common patterns in learning preferences, competency levels, and English language usage. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and anonymized. The sequential design allowed interview questions to explore themes emerging from the survey data. Thematic analysis was conducted to uncover recurring themes regarding challenges and recommendations related to English language instruction based on the qualitative data obtained from lead merchandiser interviews. By comparing the quantitative trends with qualitative insights, this mixed-methods approach facilitated triangulation and enhanced the validity and reliability of the results.

Results/Findings

Data from the survey questionnaire on merchandisers

Demographic, professional background, and language learning experience of merchandisers

Table 2

Profile of the merchandisers who participated in the survey

No.	Working Position	Educational Qualification	Age	Experience in Merchandising
a	Student	MBA in Apparel Merchandising (On course)	25	NA
b	Assistant Merchandiser	Bachelor (On course)	20	2 years
c	Assistant Merchandiser	Master's	25	2.5 years
d	Merchandiser	B.Sc. in Textile Engineering	29	3 years
e	Merchandiser	B.Sc. in Textile Engineering	29	3 years
f	Merchandiser	Master's	34	7 years
g	Senior Merchandiser	BBA	30	5 years
h	Senior Merchandiser	B.Sc. in Merchandising	30	5 years

Merchandisers' schedules, English training history, and foreign language proficiency

The merchandisers in this study operate under extremely tight schedules, working six days a week with Fridays off. They typically work nine to twelve hours a day and often stay late at the office to meet job demands. Due to such rigorous work commitments, opportunities for formal English language training are limited. Among the eight participants surveyed, only one reported attending weekend English classes. In contrast, the others had no prior experience with English courses for professional development, though they were willing to pursue them despite time constraints. Regarding multilingual competencies, only one participant attempted to learn

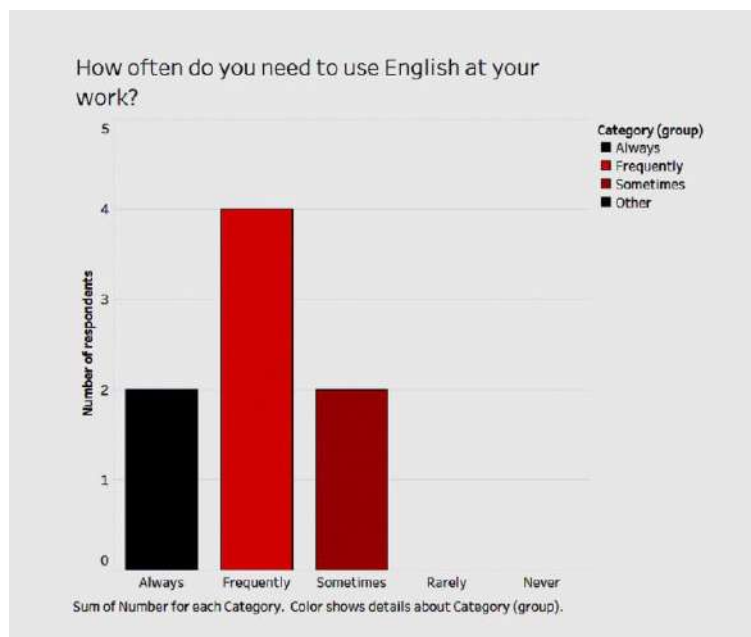
German, while the remaining seven were familiar with English only, indicating limited exposure to foreign languages beyond English.

English language use in merchandising

Question: How often do you need to use English at your work?

Figure 1

Frequency of using English at work

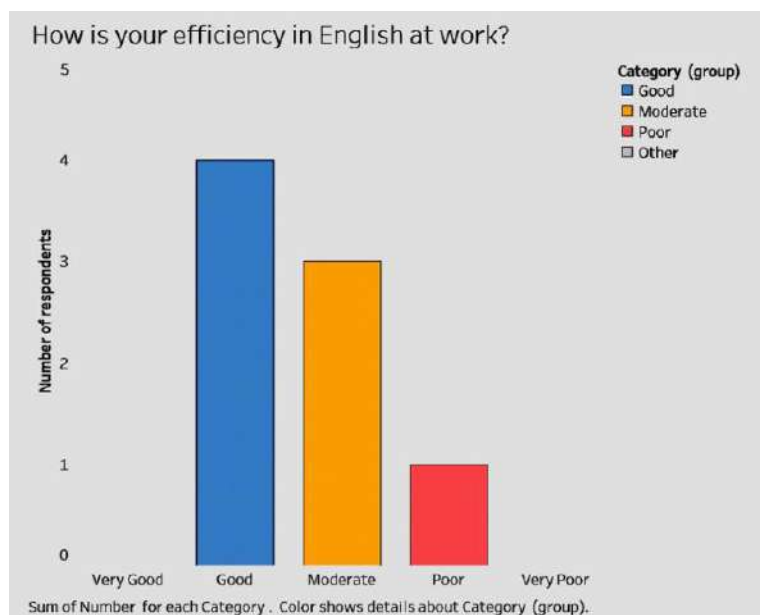


According to Figure 1, merchandisers frequently use English in the office. This indicates that English is the medium for a significant portion of their work.

Question: How is your efficiency in English at work?

Figure 2

Efficiency in using English



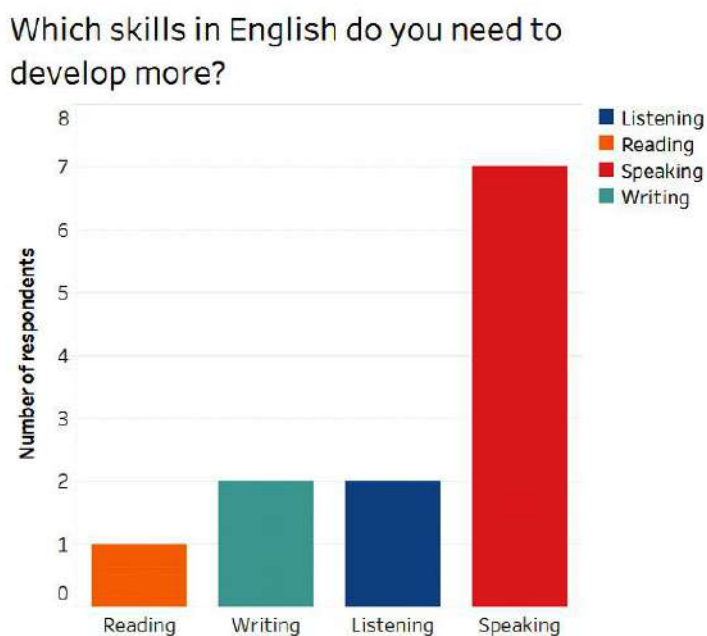
Although participants in this survey reported that they must use English very frequently at work, they need to be more confident in using it. Figure 2 shows that only four respondents considered themselves ‘good’ in English, while three participants rated their proficiency as ‘moderate’ and one as ‘poor.’

When asked about the use and nature of English communication in the workplace, the survey participants reported that they primarily use English for email communication and video conferencing with foreign buyers and suppliers. Buyers typically send product requirements in English, and merchandisers must accurately interpret these details and respond convincingly via email or live virtual meetings. In describing the nature of their English, all respondents emphasized that it does not need to be sophisticated or grammatically perfect. Instead, they utilize simple, direct, and functional English to communicate effectively. Spelling and minor grammatical errors are generally overlooked, as the focus is on clarity and mutual understanding rather than linguistic accuracy.

Question: Which skills in English do you need to develop more?

Figure 3

The most required skills in English



The participants were asked to mention their most crucial skill(s). They were able to select multiple options. We found that most (87.5%) marked ‘Speaking’ as their most needed skill.

Perceived need for English skill development

Question: Justify: I think I need to enhance my English skills for my professional growth.

Figure 4

Necessity of English skills in professional life



All the respondents (Strongly Agree-7 + Agree-1) concurred that they must enhance their English skills to advance professionally. Respondents also discussed English proficiency's perceived benefits and willingness to develop it further. They have identified several advantages they would gain from improving their English skills:

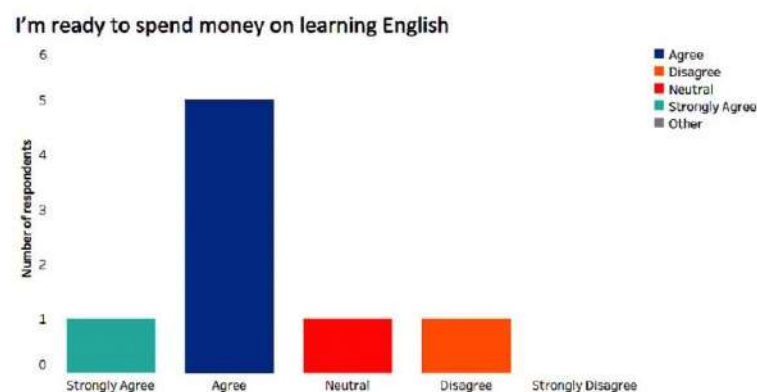
1. Communicate with buyers more fluently
2. Handle buyers more effectively and persuade them
3. Receive priority in the office
4. Write emails in a more sophisticated and organized manner
5. Achieve quicker promotions

All the participants confirmed their determination to work hard to learn English, a necessary skill for advancing their careers.

Question: Justify: I am ready to spend money on learning English.

Figure 5

Readiness for spending money on learning English



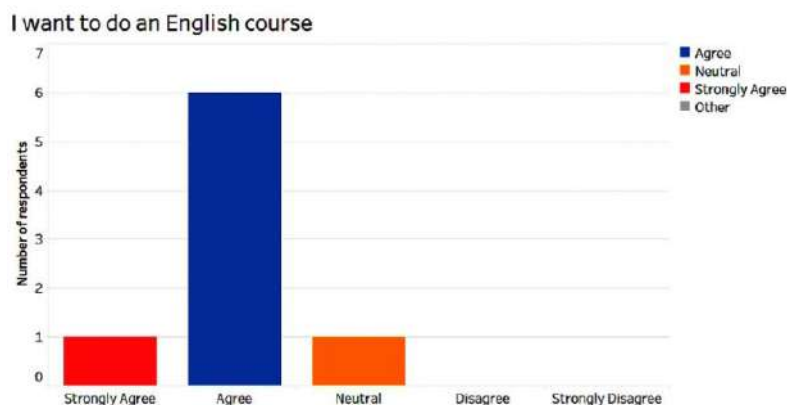
Only one participant remained neutral, while another disagreed about whether they were ready to spend money on learning English. However, most of them (Strongly Agree-1+ Agree-5)

responded positively. This indicates that the respondents are eager to develop their proficiency in English.

Question: Justify: I want to do an English course

Figure 6

Willingness to do an English course



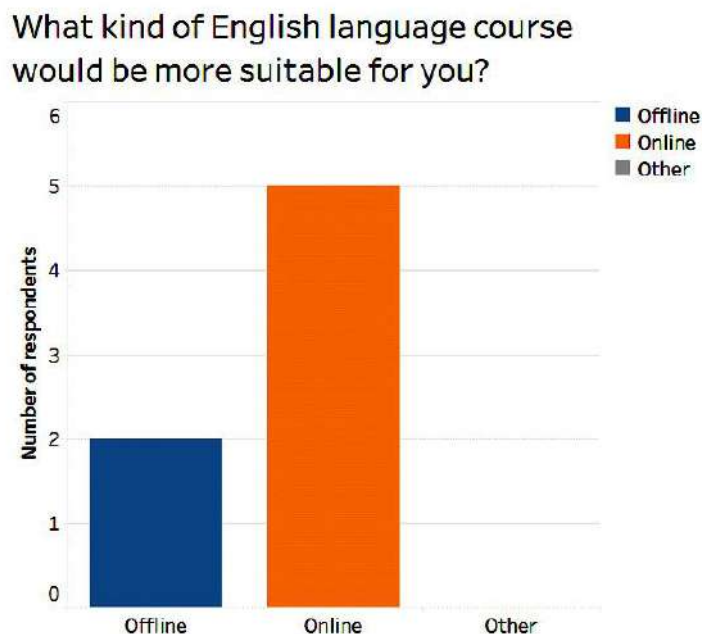
The figure clearly shows that almost all respondents are willing to take an English course to improve their English skills, again proving their motivation for learning English.

Preferred learning methods and course features

Question: What kind of English language course would be more suitable for you?

Figure 7

Mode of English course

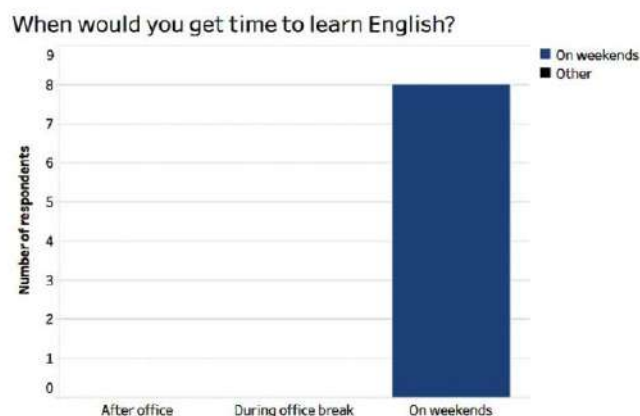


The participants were asked to indicate which mode of English course would suit them best. Out of the seven participants, five voted for an 'online' course, while two preferred offline courses.

Question: When would you get time to learn English?

Figure 8

Schedule for English learning

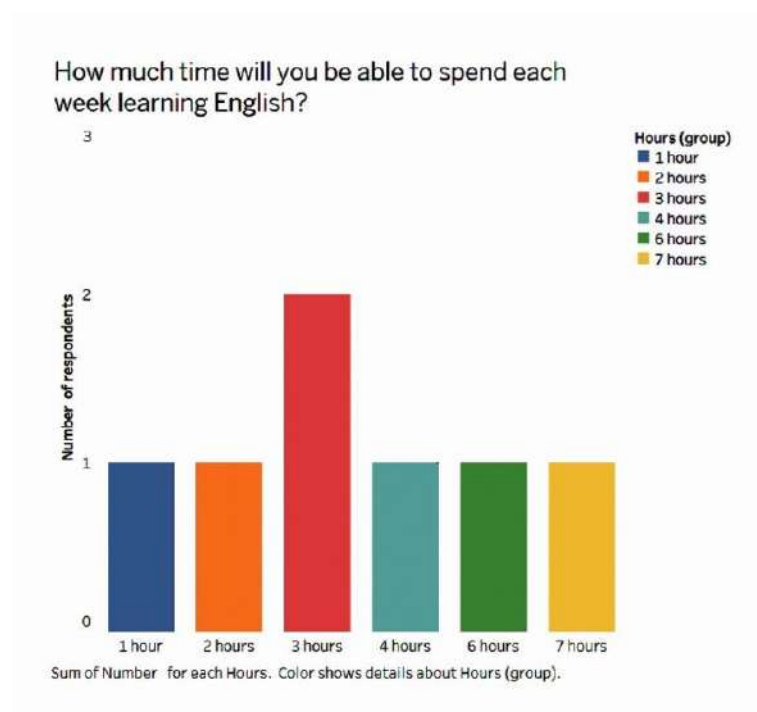


All the participants mentioned that they could only spend some time learning English on weekends. They are busy throughout the week, so they can hardly find time to learn English.

Question: How much time will you be able to spend each week learning English?

Figure 9

Amount of time for learning English per week



Respondents indicated how much time they could devote each week to learning English. Their responses show they can average 5.7 hours (29 hours divided by seven respondents) weekly.

Question: What do you expect from an English course?

All the respondents mentioned that they wanted to improve their skills first and foremost in an English course. They also added other points listed below:

1. They want to learn how to help people understand using simple language, speak flawless English, and comprehend native speakers.
2. The course should focus on business writing.
3. Speaking should be taught in a structured manner.

The participants shared their views on the ideal structure of an English language course designed to meet their needs. In terms of course duration, they proposed various timeframes, including 1, 3, 6, and 12 months, with the 3-month option being the most favored. As for class size, respondents suggested an average of 14 students per class, with a minimum of six and a maximum of twenty. These preferences indicate a desire for a focused and manageable learning environment that balances personalized attention with collaborative interaction.

Question: What facilities should there be in an ideal English class?

In response to this question, all the participants emphasized the importance of a good teacher who can motivate students and provide proper guidance for developing English skills. They also stated that the teacher should be able to create a friendly environment and make lessons enjoyable and easy for the students.

Qualitative data from interviews with the lead merchandisers*Merchandisers' current proficiency and challenges***Question: How proficient are the merchandisers in your organization? What challenges do they face regarding communication?**

According to the lead merchandisers, junior merchandisers encounter various challenges when communicating in English at the office. One significant challenge they face is clearly understanding the clients' order details and serving them accordingly, which requires effective listening and reading skills.

Merchandisers don't enjoy communicating in English. (Participant 18)

At junior levels, the proficiency of the merchandisers depends on academic results. After six months on the job, proficiency changes with the work adoption capability and understanding capacity. Regarding communication, the main challenge is making juniors understand the working procedure. (Participant 9)

Their communication is not up to the mark as most are from a general background. They mainly fail to convince the buyer with proper English. Also, correctly writing English has always been a problem. (Participant 7)

The first challenge is making the concerned suppliers understand what they must make or supply. Although every booking of the assigned accessories is to be sent over email in English, my team members need to communicate with clients or vendors by translating or interpreting each booking in Bangla to be clear on what they need to do. (Participant 15)

Employer expectations and recommendations

Question: What initiatives have you taken to develop the English skills of the merchandisers in your company?

According to the lead merchandisers, it is not always possible for the company to arrange English language courses for them because they work in a highly competitive, time-sensitive environment. Instead, they expect the merchandisers to develop their skills independently. If the junior merchandisers cannot enhance their skills, they will struggle to remain in the company for long. However, one participant confirmed that he personally helps his merchandisers build their English skills.

To help my assigned merchandisers become proficient in communicative skills, I let them write or speak in English with me and try to help them with corrections. (Participant 4)

Proposed solutions for merchandisers' English development

Question: What should Bangladeshi merchandisers do to develop their proficiency in English?

Lead merchandisers emphasized that English is essential for merchandisers to grow professionally. They have also provided various suggestions for junior merchandisers to enhance their English proficiency.

Merchandisers can take courses like IELTS. (Participant 1)

Bangladeshi merchandisers should learn basic corporate English and email communication to achieve better job results. Ridiculous spelling mistakes are common. (Participant 13)

They should emphasize the appropriate use of the proper sentence instead of using the same copy-paste sentence for each circumstance. (Participant 20)

They should focus on developing skills by attending training sessions, joining speakers' clubs, etc. (Participant 3)

The merchandisers should treat the English language as a handsome income tool. (Participant 8)

Different apps can be used on smartphones to improve our English proficiency. As we remain very busy with our jobs, we may use them on the go. (Participant 11)

Discussion

The findings from the survey questionnaire and the interviews provide valuable insights into the English language needs and challenges faced by apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh. These integrated insights from the quantitative and qualitative data can inform the development of tailored English language courses to address the specific requirements of this professional group. The research questions have been answered in the following parts.

Q1. What challenges do merchandisers face with English skills?

The study has shown that apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh often use English in their professional tasks, particularly in email communication and video conferencing with buyers. This highlights the critical importance of English proficiency in their daily job responsibilities. However, frequent usage does not always translate to confidence, as many merchandisers struggle with their English skills. In the survey, all participants reported using English

frequently at work, yet only half rated their proficiency as “good,” while the remainder classified it as “moderate” or “poor.” Due to their limited English knowledge, they face various challenges, such as failing to persuade buyers or misunderstanding product requirements. They sometimes find it difficult to understand the company’s operating procedures. Lead merchandisers indicate that junior merchandisers often have trouble grasping client order details, struggle to persuade buyers with appropriate English, and encounter difficulties in written communication. These findings echo Islam and Islam’s (2018) observation that professionals in the RMG sector in Bangladesh often lack adequate English language competencies, especially in presentation, decision-making, and communication. Additionally, Roshid (2018) emphasized that English proficiency opens up economic opportunities in the RMG sector, but the actual skill level among workers often falls short of industry expectations. Moreover, as Roshid and Kankaanranta (2023) noted, the gap between academic preparation and workplace communication requirements is significant, particularly regarding clarity and trade-specific vocabulary—issues that also emerged from the present study’s interviews with lead merchandisers.

Q2. To what extent do merchandisers need a specialized English course?

The challenges apparel merchandisers face regarding their English skills highlight the need for targeted interventions to enhance their English proficiency. Our findings indicate that merchandisers with limited proficiency in English struggle to succeed in their profession. As a result, merchandisers eagerly seek to improve their English skills for success and professional growth. They also demonstrate a willingness to invest time and money in learning English, underscoring their commitment to professional development. However, due to their demanding work schedules, buying houses or RMG factories cannot arrange specialized English courses for merchandisers. Consequently, this study emphasizes the need for an English course. These findings align with So-mui and Mead’s (2000) study, which emphasized the importance of practical, functional English for textile and clothing merchandisers. Similarly, Briana and Mutia (2019) highlighted the value of contextualized English training tailored to specific industries, as students and professionals often lack the communication skills needed for real-world tasks. Furthermore, the current study confirms Ebling and Kavanaugh’s (1980) argument for the need for field-specific language programs that align closely with workplace communication demands. Given the limited availability of specialized English courses for merchandisers in Bangladesh, the findings support Todea and Demarcsek’s (2017) view that needs analysis is central to designing practical ESP courses that bridge the gap between learners’ current abilities and professional expectations.

Q3. What would be the characteristics of a suitable English language course for apparel merchandisers?

Merchandisers were asked to mention the qualities of a suitable English course. They stressed the following points.

- The teacher should be friendly and capable of motivating students to learn. This aligns with research by Viet-Nga (2020), who highlighted teachers’ critical role in boosting students’ enthusiasm for learning English.
- The course should first focus on teaching simple communicative English, as merchandisers typically do not require sophisticated or advanced English. This supports the findings of So-mui and Mead (2000), who discovered that functional English, not highly academic skills, is what textile and apparel merchandisers need most for business communication.
- Email communication and video conferences in English should be a priority in the course.

Roshid and Kankaanranta (2023) emphasized the importance of English communication skills, particularly in email and virtual meetings in international business situations, lending credence to this.

- The course should place particular emphasis on English speaking skills. Communication competence—especially oral proficiency—is essential for marketing and commercial professionals, including merchandisers, according to Romaniuk et al. (2022).
- The course should teach how to properly use digital technology and tools in writing business correspondence. This supports the findings of Dinh (2023), who discovered that using digital tools and audiovisual aids enhances language learning outcomes in work environments.
- The course instructors should have experience or knowledge concerning apparel merchandisers' educational backgrounds and workplace challenges. According to Islam & Islam (2018), industry-aware teachers are necessary, as English training programs often fail to address the specific skill shortages faced by professionals in the RMG sector.
- The course load should be less than six weekly hours, including class and contact hours. Nguyen and Nguyen (2024) indicate that adult learners frequently encounter time constraints, necessitating flexible learning regimens.
- The course should be held on weekends, as merchandisers are usually busy throughout the week. Roshid's (2018) results demonstrate that working professionals require courses that accommodate their hectic schedules.
- The course duration can range from one month to twelve months; however, merchandisers prefer a three-month course the most. Todea and Demarcsek (2017) note that short-term, needs-based language courses are often more successful in meeting professional expectations.
- The course can ideally be offered online. It should demonstrate using various free apps to enhance English proficiency and check for personal mistakes. According to Briana and Mutia (2019), industry workers greatly benefit from online English classes incorporating technology.
- As reported by merchandisers, the number of students in an English class can range from six to twenty. Roshid and Webb (2022) state that small to medium-sized classes promote better interaction and personalized learning in business English contexts.

Overall, the findings indicate a strong demand from merchandisers for specialized English language or ESP courses that meet the unique needs and challenges of apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh. By integrating these insights into course design and delivery, stakeholders can better support the professional development and success of merchandisers in the industry.

Conclusion

This study highlighted a noticeable absence of specialized English language courses tailored to the needs of apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh. This dearth underscores the urgency for developing and implementing targeted English language programs to address the specific communication demands of apparel merchandisers. Based on the merchandisers' identified needs and preferences, a detailed outline for an English language course for apparel merchandisers has been proposed here. They need to understand the clients' orders clearly and respond accurately. Hence, they need listening, speaking, and reading skills. This course

emphasizes practical communication skills like email correspondence and video conferencing. It prioritizes speaking proficiency while accommodating the busy schedules of merchandisers through flexible timing and online delivery options.

The study highlights the significance of English proficiency in fostering professional growth and success within the apparel merchandising industry in Bangladesh. It posits that investing in specialized English language education for merchandisers can greatly improve their communication skills and client interactions. In essence, the findings advocate for the development and implementation of targeted English language courses to meet the specific needs of apparel merchandisers in Bangladesh. By closing the gap between industry demands and existing educational resources, such initiatives can significantly benefit the professional development and success of apparel merchandisers, ultimately contributing to the growth and competitiveness of the Bangladeshi apparel sector.

Limitations and future directions of research

The study has several limitations. Firstly, it has a small sample size of 30 apparel merchandising professionals, which limits the findings' generalizability to the broader industry. Secondly, the study employed non-random sampling techniques that may introduce selection bias and affect the representativeness of the results. Thirdly, due to the busy schedules of apparel merchandisers, the study had to rely on flexible data collection methods, which may have restricted deeper exploration of language-related challenges. Finally, the study primarily identifies needs rather than evaluating the effectiveness of existing English training programs or language courses. Therefore, future research initiatives should incorporate a larger sample size, utilize random sampling techniques, employ longitudinal data collection methods, and assess existing curricula for apparel merchandisers to suggest a more accurate position for English language courses.

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Biodata

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EFL Sophomores' Perspectives on the Application of Computer-Assisted Games in Grammar Classes

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Computer Assisted Games, grammar, perspectives

The integration of computer-assisted games in teaching English has become a current trend in second language teaching. However, research concerning students' perspectives on the application of computer-assisted games in grammar classes remains limited. Consequently, this study was conducted to explore how 70 EFL sophomores at Van Lang University perceive the use of computer-assisted games in grammar lessons. A mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis from an online survey and qualitative insights from a semi-structured interview, was utilized to collect data. The results revealed that EFL students have a favorable voice towards the implementation of computer-assisted games in grammar classes, emphasizing the benefits of enhancing students' understanding, learning motivation, and language competence.

Introduction

Grammar is a set of rules that structure how words and phrases are used in a language. It governs the arrangement of words, the agreement between subjects and verbs, and the use of tenses. Chomsky (1981) introduced the concept of "universal grammar," proposing that grammar was not only a general theory of language but also an essential part of every language's structure. Having the same mindset, Greenbaum (1982) asserted that grammar served as a theory describing language or as a framework for analyzing a specific language. Similarly, Chomsky (1982) also affirmed that grammar was a unique set of principles that governed distinct structural rules for each language.

The importance of grammar in language learning has been discussed in the existing literature. Jespersen (2013) claimed that grammar was a key component of any language system that provided the foundational structures for communication. Loewen et al. (2009) emphasized the significance of grammar in improving students' language skills. In particular, grammar was perceived as the backbone of language learning, which helped learners to express themselves clearly and accurately. Therefore, learning grammar was often for the goal of effective communication.

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Despite its importance, learning grammar has been reported to be significantly challenging for many learners. Haudeck's research, cited in Sani (2016), concluded that students often struggled to understand grammatical rules, which caused anxiety and discomfort. Consistently, Yunita (2013) strengthened the discussion with a statement that students viewed grammar lessons as tedious, especially when taught through deductive methods with mechanical exercises, repetitive routine, and a non-interactive learning atmosphere. As a result, learners found grammar lessons frustrating.

When comparing the aforesaid issue to the actual environment at Van Lang University, through the author's observation, more than 70% of students who had previously attended grammar classes showed their marked reluctance in grammar lectures, with the majority of the reason being that the learning that occurs is frequently highly theoretical. As a result, selecting an effective grammar teaching technique is critical. One promising solution is the integration of technology into grammar instruction. Reportedly, the existing literature review demonstrates several studies discussing the effectiveness of computer-assisted games (CAGs) in grammar classes. Nevertheless, the discussion about students' perspectives on the use of CAGs in grammar classes remains scarce, and there hasn't been any paper addressing this issue in the Vietnamese context. Therefore, this study was conducted to bridge a gap in contemporary literature. The study investigated EFL sophomores' views on the implementation of CAGs in grammar classes, focusing on the beneficial effects of CAGs in learning grammar and concerns raised over their use.

Literature review

Definitions of Grammar in language learning

The ongoing literature review defines grammar in different ways. Grammar was considered a system of meaningful structures and patterns guided by specific pragmatic constraints (Larsen-Freeman, 2001). Having the same mindset, Thornbury (1999) defined grammar as a description of the rules for generating sentences, including an analysis of the meanings that these forms communicate. Clarifying the definition of grammar, Debata (2013) emphasized that grammar was the study of word combinations in a given language, likening English grammar to the foundation of a house that supported its expansion. Chomsky (1981) added another aspect to the definition of grammar by using the term "universal grammar," which meant a set of principles shared by both languages and a mechanism that only worked with specific inputs, distinguishing it from the linguistic qualities inherent to the human mind.

Reportedly, the significance of grammar in language learning has been discussed by several educators. Kohli (2007) illustrated grammar's importance using the analogy of two drivers: one with basic driving knowledge and the other with both driving and mechanical expertise. The second driver, like a grammarian, could troubleshoot problems confidently, underscoring the role of grammar in effective language use. O'Hare (1973) strengthened the idea by claiming that grammar governed word types and sentence structures that were essential for clear expression. Sharing the same perspective, Smith and Hillocks (1991) noted that proper grammar was crucial for minimizing misunderstandings. Furthermore, Jespersen (2013) stated that the grammar of each language constitutes its system, with each of its elements standing in a specific connection and depending on all of those aspects.

Students' difficulties in learning grammar

Grammar is perceived as an essential component of learning English. Nevertheless, there are numerous difficulties that students encounter while trying to understand the implications of

grammar lessons in an ESL or EFL setting. Previous research by Alsied, S. M., Ibrahim, N. W., and Pathan, M. M. (2018) revealed that grammar can be a tough subject for most English learners. Consistently, educators affirmed that the inherent complexity of grammar structures and the influence of students' native language caused problems in learning grammar. Specifically, students claimed that some grammatical points were hard to master due to their complicated syntactic constituents, while the habit of using their first language frequently led to errors and misunderstandings in applying English grammatical rules. The study of Haudeck in Sani (2016) discussed the same notion with the confirmation that many students found it challenging to internalize grammar principles. Students were terrified of making mistakes in grammar; therefore, they tended to avoid them. Nguyen (2020) highlighted that mastering and using English grammar posed a significant challenge. She explained that individuals believed mastering grammar was useless because the speaker would eventually start to ignore it.

Several studies pointed out that the traditional teaching approach was the root of difficulties in learning grammar. Yunita (2013) asserted that English grammar was still viewed as a difficult subject since grammar lessons were still carried out using the conventional approach. Having the same notion, Mahdi (2018) noted that traditional teaching methods made grammar learning more challenging, and students' performance was unsatisfactory. Nisha (2024) strengthened the notion when explaining that outdated teaching methodologies like the grammar-translation method were less impactful in increasing students' understanding and motivation. In the same vein, Guner (2017) claimed that traditional grammar teaching methods focusing on rule-based understanding affected students' psychology negatively and made them bored or frightened during grammar lessons.

Computer-Assisted Language Learning

What is Computer-Assisted Language Learning?

The significance of computers in English language learning and teaching is best understood in Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), a method that applies technology to the study of languages (Januszewski & Molenda, 2008). Chapelle (2001, pp. 27–43) categorized CALL as one of six computer-related sub-disciplines, including educational technology, computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL), artificial intelligence, computational linguistics, corpus linguistics, and computer-assisted assessment. The application of computer-aided learning principles to the context of language learning is known as "computer-aided language learning." Huizhong (1985) defined CALL as when a computer is utilized as a teaching tool to enhance learning by assisting students in better comprehending the learning content. This means that CALL lessons can be taught using tutorials, exercises, practice tools, and simulations.

Simply expressed, CALL is described as an approach to language teaching and learning in which computer technology is employed to help with the presentation, reinforcement, and assessment of material (Hubbard & Levy, 2016). Learning takes place, and an important interactive component is frequently included. CALL, as defined in this study, refers to the use of multimedia CD-ROMs that incorporate text, image, audio, and video files to teach English as a second language.

Computer-assisted games (CAGs)

The popularity of CALL in language learning and teaching results in the trend of using computer-assisted games (CAGs) in educational contexts. Thus, CAGs emerged as a new, popular term that was defined diversely. Basically, Ural (2009) considered computer-assisted games as a type of game developed by modifying entertaining and stimulating computer games

to enhance educational quality. Squire (2003) added a notion to the definition when claiming that entertaining and motivating factors were components of CAGs, displayed on technological platforms that were designed to facilitate the learning of course content.

The application of CALL in language learning and teaching

The effect of CALL on language learning and teaching has been the subject of numerous studies across the globe. The research by Ahmadi (2018) demonstrated the features and advantages of technologies in some areas that instructors should be conscious of when helping students improve their English proficiency. Supporting this claim, Laurillard (2009) and Shafaei (2012) emphasized the effectiveness of CALL in enhancing the learning environment and students' learning outcomes. In the same vein, Almekhlafi (2007) conducted research on the efficacy of CALL in an EFL context. The findings demonstrated that CALL contributed significantly to students' achievement. The use of computers in the presentation of the subject, the caliber of the course materials, and their rapid accessibility for consultation and revision were outstanding factors contributing to the effectiveness of CALL in language learning and teaching.

The application of CALL and CAGs in teaching grammar

With the introduction of networked computers and, in particular, the internet, learners are increasingly being asked to develop and perform their computer-based activities. Many instructors are switching from standalone workstations to increasingly networked PCs as a result of the expanding availability of Internet connectivity (Debski, 2000; Warschauer & Kern, 2000). Young (2011) implemented CALL in his grammar classes. With the application of Google and the Web-as-corpus approach, his students improved their understanding and produced better writing works. Similarly, Kilickaya and Krajla (2012) applied CALL in grammar lessons, implementing a Web-based comic strip creation site. The findings demonstrated that students were more engaged in grammar classes and their reading and writing skills were improved. On a similar note, Mohamad (2009) studied the effects of the Internet-based grammar instructions in grammar classes to confirm the positive impacts of CALL in teaching grammar. She claimed that applying CALL in teaching grammar increased students' engagement and improved their testing results. Jensen and Sandlin (1992) asserted the same conclusion that students who used CALL significantly improved their exam results as well as the quality of their coursework. The research by Tu (2022) demonstrated the same findings with the conclusion that implementing educational technology in grammar classes provided students with various exercises and online tests for self-learning and self-training. Consequently, it enhanced students' learning performance.

Similarly, the ongoing literature review has discussed the implementation of CAGs in teaching grammar. A great number of teachers have employed CAGs to facilitate students' learning processes and reinforce particular grammatical aspects. Deesri (2002) posited that these games enhance learners' ability to practice grammar in a communicative way. Emphasizing the notion, Can and Cagiltay (2006) noted the efficacy of CAGs in arousing students' attention to grammatical points and providing them with opportunities to practice grammar communicatively. Mohamad and Amin (2009) added another idea to the discussion when highlighting that CAGs facilitated the learning process and created a motivating and interesting learning atmosphere in which students could understand complicated grammatical concepts. Supporting this claim, Whitton (2007) explained that CAGs created a system that motivates students to keep practicing a structure, which typically bores them after many repetitions.

Related studies

Reportedly, Razak, Connolly, Baxter, Hainey, and Wilson (2012) asserted that learners' enjoyment of using computer games for education motivated educators to employ CALL in their language teaching. Therefore, investigating students' attitude towards the application of CALL in the classroom is a prerequisite. Ayres (2002) conducted a study to investigate students' attitudes towards the use of CALL in English classes. The findings concluded that students had a positive voice on implementing CALL in English lessons and confirmed their increased motivation for English learning.

In the same vein, Almekhlafi (2006) carried out quantitative research with the participation of eighty-three elementary-prep school students, who were divided into controlled and experimental groups to discover the effects of CALL in an EFL context. With the data obtained through pretest, posttest, and survey, the study emphasized positive impacts of CALL in enhancing students' learning outcomes. Additionally, the findings displayed that students voiced agreement on the use of CALL in classes.

Conversely, another conclusion on students' perceptions towards the use of CALL concerned educators. In a study conducted in 2009, Jarvis and Szymczyk (2009) discussed how students perceive learning grammar with web-based materials compared with book-based ones. The findings highlighted that students supported paper materials since they were easier to access compared to online materials. Furthermore, students felt reluctant to use web-based resources due to their low technological literacy.

Generally, there have been a lot of studies on various grammar teaching methods as well as the application of technology in grammar classes. However, research on CAGs in the grammar study program is limited. The issue that discusses students' perspectives towards the implementation of CAGs in grammar lessons is even scarcer. Therefore, this study was conducted to discover how students perceive the use of CAGs in grammar classes. The findings provide deep insight into the impacts of CAGs on learning and equip EFL teachers with a specific reference for implementing CALL in language teaching. In addition, the research encourages teachers to utilize technology to innovate their teaching methods.

Research Questions

To fulfill the mentioned purposes, the study focuses on these research questions:

Research Question 1: What are EFL sophomores' attitudes towards grammar learning?

Research Question 2: How do second-year English majors experience the implementation of computer-assisted games in grammar classes?

Research Question 3: How do second-year English majors perceive the application of computer-assisted games in grammar classes?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The research was conducted at Van Lang University, which was established in 1995 and has attained numerous educational milestones, earning recognition as a prominent private university in Vietnam.

The convenient sampling method was chosen for this study because it was the most practical and simple way to gather data quickly (Douglas, 2022). The study was carried out during the

second semester of the school year 2023-2024 with the participation of seventy EFL sophomores at Van Lang University. The participants had to enrol in Grammar 1 and Grammar 2 courses for the first two years to ensure quality in their grammar competence. Seventy students participating in the research were asked to complete an online questionnaire. Consequently, based on the outcomes of the courses Grammar 1 and Grammar 2, and in accordance with the purposive sampling method, which allows the author to deliberately select participants who have specific characteristics or experience relevant to the research questions (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2024), ten students were chosen to participate in the structured interview. Ten interviewees, of whom three achieved excellent, four had good, two got mediocre, and one had poor scores, were asked to share their attitudes towards grammar learning, their experience with CAGs in grammar classes, and their perspectives on the benefits and concerns regarding the use of CAGs in grammar lessons.

Design of the Study

The research employed a mixed-method approach, collecting qualitative and quantitative data to answer the research questions. This paradigm proved to mitigate or eliminate some of the distinct disadvantages of each method while allowing the strengths to complement each other (Byrne, J., and Humble, Asia M., 2007). The research used an online questionnaire that was posted on the fan page of K27 on the Facebook platform to collect the quantitative data, while the qualitative data was obtained through a structured interview. The combination of these methods was proposed to gather valid and reliable data to discover EFL sophomores' perspectives towards the impacts of CAGs on their grammar learning and their suggestions for a favorable application of CAGs in grammar classes.

Data collection & analysis

Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of 30 questions, divided into two main sections. The first one gathers demographic details such as gender, age, and grammar competence. The second section with 27 questions split into three parts: Part A with 11 questions (questions 1-11) examines students' attitudes toward grammar learning; Part B having 5 questions (questions 12-16) investigates sophomores' experience with the implementation of CAGs in grammar classes, and Part C consisting of 11 questions (questions 17-27) discovers participants' perspectives on the application of CAGs in grammar lessons.

The online survey was designed on Google Forms and uploaded to the Facebook page of Group K27. It took the participants approximately 5 minutes to complete. In an attempt to maintain the confidentiality of the collected data, participants may choose to use pseudonyms or omit their identities when responding. The questionnaire items were adapted from Kayan and Aydin (2023), who had previously validated these questions.

The online questionnaire with 27 items included five multiple-choice questions and twenty-two five-point Likert Scale questions in which the participants were asked to select one of the following options, ranging from totally disagree (1) to totally agree (5). The collected data was analyzed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 26 (SPSS 26) and the results were presented as specific numbers and percentages (%).

The researcher employed Cronbach's Alpha to assess the reliability of the data collected from the online questionnaire, ensuring the consistency of responses.

Table 1.
Cronbach's Alpha (N=70)

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on Standardized items	N of items
.910	.925	22

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Participants' attitudes toward grammar learning	.882	11
Participants' perspectives on CAGs	.812	11

As shown in Table 1, the Cronbach's Alpha is .910, which exceeds the benchmark value of .7, which confirms the consistency of participant responses across the 22 questions. Specifically, the Cronbach's Alpha for the variable of participants' attitudes toward grammar learning, through 11 items, is .882. Similarly, the variable of participants' opinions on the CAGs with 11 items has a Cronbach's Alpha of .812. In conclusion, these Cronbach's Alpha results confirm that the questionnaire items were highly reliable for practical research ($0.6 < \text{Cronbach's Alpha} < 1$).

Interviews

Qualitative data were collected through structured interviews with 10 students selected based on their average scores in two courses, Grammar 1 and Grammar 2. Specifically, three students who achieved excellent scores, four with good scores, two with mediocre scores, and one with poor scores answered seven questions. They joined a 10-minute online interview via Microsoft Teams to share their attitudes toward grammar learning, their experiences with CAGs in grammar classes, and their views on the benefits and concerns of using CAGs in grammar lessons. The interviews were conducted in Vietnamese, the native language of the participants and the researcher, to ensure clear communication and avoid misunderstandings. The responses were later translated into English for analysis.

The qualitative data from the interviews were interpreted using thematic analysis, which involved open and axial coding (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2010). Particularly, open coding was employed to identify key patterns in the participants' opinions on grammar learning, their experience with the use of CAGs in grammar lessons, and their perspectives on the implementation of CAGs in grammar instruction. Consequently, axial coding was then applied to link these patterns, develop themes, and draw broader conclusions on these subjects.

Results/Findings

Results of the online questionnaire

The quantitative data from the online questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS 26, focusing on the mean, minimum, maximum, frequency, percentages, and standard deviation. The results were organized under the following headings: Demographic information, Participants' attitude on grammar learning, Participants' experiences, and Participants' Perspectives.

Demographic information

Table 2.

Demographic data on participants' genders and ages (SPSS 26)

Genders	Male	Frequency	Percentages
	Female	20	28.6%
		50	71.4%
Ages	19	60	85.7%
	20-22	8	11.4%
	Over 22	2	2.9%

The results in Table 2 demonstrate the participants' genders and ages. Reportedly, the majority of the respondents were female (N = 50), while the number of males was 20, comprising 28.6% of the sample. Additionally, the data revealed that most participants were young learners who had fresh perspectives and diverse viewpoints that could provide deep insights for the study. Specifically, more than 80% of the respondents (N=60) were 19 years old, compared to nearly 3% who were over 22. The ages of 20 and 22 were 8 students, contributing 11.4% to the sample.

Table 3.

Demographic data on participants' grammar competence (SPSS 26)

Average scores of Grammar 1 and Grammar 2		Frequency	Percentages
	9 – 10	10	14.3%
	7 – 8.9	35	50%
	5 – 6.9	20	28.6%
	Under 5	5	7.1%

The findings in Table 3 indicate that a majority of participants had a high competence in grammar. Specifically, 64.3% of students scored between 7 and 10, which showed that they had an above-average level of proficiency. Within this group, 14.3% achieved the highest scores (9–10), while 50% fell within the 7–8.9 range. Meanwhile, 28.6% of the participants were moderately proficient with scores between 5 and 6.9, and only 7.1% of the samples needed additional support when getting below 5.

Research Question 1: What are EFL sophomores' attitudes towards grammar learning?

The gathered data examined how the participants perceive grammar learning in their curriculum, represented in two aspects: the roles of grammar and the purposes of learning grammar.

Table 4.

Participants' opinions on the roles of grammar

Items	Questionnaire	N	Mean	SD
1	I believe that mastering grammar is crucial in learning English	70	3.55	1.146
2	I believe that learning grammar is useful for future work.	70	3.6	1.142
3	I believe that understanding grammar is necessary for effective communication	70	3.25	.967
4	I feel that grammar is a fascinating topic in school.	70	3.05	.999
5	I have a hard time remembering grammatical structures.	70	4.15	.813

As shown in Table 4, the participants showed their moderate agreement with the idea claiming the importance of grammar in learning English (Mean = 3.55) and their future work (M=3.6), with 20% and 30%, respectively. Similarly, the sophomores expressed their neutral notion of the role of grammar in communication with a mean score of 3.25. Notably, the respondents neutrally claimed that grammar was an interesting subject. Conversely, most of the sophomores (70%) expressed their strong agreement with the idea that it was challenging to remember grammar rules (M=4.15).

Table 5.

Participants' purposes of learning grammar

Items	Questionnaire	N	Mean	SD
6	I study grammar as it is compulsory in the curriculum	70	3.94	0.948
7	I study grammar to enhance my reading comprehension.	70	3.86	0.910
8	I study grammar to strengthen my listening abilities.	70	3.51	1.016
9	I study grammar because of future career requirements.	70	3.92	0.894
10	I study grammar out of personal curiosity.	70	3.27	1.040
11	I study grammar to employ appropriate and adaptable sentence structures when speaking and writing in English.	70	4.07	0.824

In terms of the participants' purposes for learning grammar, the results in Table 5 reveal that the mean scores mostly fall within the range of moderate to high agreement (M=3.51 – 4.07). This indicates that there are various motivations for learning grammar. Specifically, the students asserted that they tried their best to study grammar because grammar governed how sentences were constructed. Thus, knowing grammar could produce grammatically correct sentences in both speaking and writing (M=4.07). They also affirmed that they were motivated to learn grammar since mastering grammar helped them comprehend reading texts more easily (M=3.86) and understand English conversations better (M=3.51). Therefore, they perceived grammar as a compulsory component of the curriculum (M=3.94). In addition, more than 70%

of the participants agreed that they studied grammar to prepare for future career requirements ($M=3.97$). However, the respondents expressed their neutral notion of studying grammar just to satisfy their curiosity ($M=3.50$).

Research Question 2: How do second-year English majors experience the implementation of computer-assisted games in grammar classes?

The collected data explored how the participants experienced the use of CAGs in grammar classes across four main dimensions: the frequency, the kinds of games, the organization, and the purpose of teachers.

Table 6.

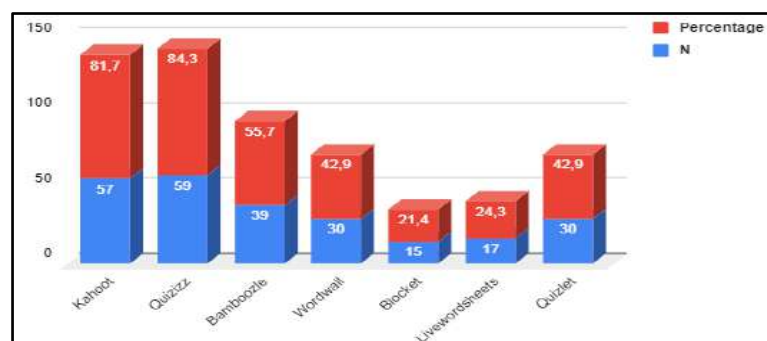
Descriptive statistics of the frequency of CAGs in grammar classes

Item	Questionnaire	Courses	Frequency	Percentages
12	How often does your teacher implement CAGs in grammar lessons?	Every lesson in the syllabus	8	11.4%
		Most of the lessons in the syllabus	18	25.7%
		Some lessons in the syllabus	31	44.3%
		One or two lessons in the syllabus	13	18.6%

The results in Table 6 highlight that all participants have experience participating in CAGs in grammar lessons. Reportedly, nearly 40% of the students asserted that they often played CAGs when learning grammar. In particular, more than 10% of the sophomores confirmed that their teachers organized CAGs in every lesson in the syllabus, and more than 25% noted they had experience playing CAGs in most of the lessons of the course. Nearly 45% of the respondents reported that their teachers conducted CAGs in some grammar lessons, compared to over 18% who only had one or two times playing CAGs in grammar classes.

Figure 1.

Kinds of CAG applied in grammar classes



The bar chart presents a diversity of CAGs implemented in grammar classes. As shown in Figure 1, Kahoot and Quizizz were the most frequently used and preferred platforms, with 81.7% and 84.3%, respectively. With 55.7% of responses, Bamboozle was the third most popular game, followed by Wordwall and Quizlet (42.9%). Conversely, slightly over 24% of the participants played Liveworksheets, and more than 20% knew about Blocket. Overall, the diversity in the game types suggests the variation in teacher preference, classroom context, student learning style, and accessibility to certain platforms.

Table 7.

Descriptive statistics of the organization of CAGs in grammar classes

Item	Question	Organization	Frequency	Percentages
14	How does your teacher conduct CAGs in grammar classes?	Group work	4	5.7%
		Pair work	16	22.9%
		Individual work	50	71.4%

The collected data in Table 7 reveal that individual work is the most common way teachers conduct CAGs in grammar classes (71.4%). This suggests a strong preference for using CAGs as tools for independent grammar practice rather than collaborative tasks. Meanwhile, nearly 23% of the students indicated that their teachers focused on peer collaboration when organizing CAGs in pair work. In contrast, only 5.7% reported experiencing CAGs in group settings. Generally, the findings noted that CAGs are predominantly used in a way that emphasizes individual practice rather than larger collaborative learning.

Table 8.

Descriptive statistics of the duration of CAGs in grammar classes

Item	Question	Duration	Frequency	Percentages
15	How long does the game last in each session?	Between 5 and 7 minutes	32	45.7%
		Between 7 and 10 minutes	24	34.3%
		Between 10 and 15 minutes	9	12.9%
		Over 15 minutes	5	7.1%

As displayed in Table 8, a majority of the sophomores (80%) claimed that the duration of CAGs in each session lasted under 10 minutes. Particularly, more than 45% of the students reported that the time for playing games in grammar class was between 5 and 7 minutes, while the longer duration of 7 and 10 minutes was organized in the class of 24 respondents, contributing to 34.3% of the sample. This indicates that the duration of each session is appropriate and in harmony with the organization of individual work. The duration between 10 and 15 minutes was rare, with just nearly 13% of the participants reporting. The other 5 students confirmed that the game lasted over 15 minutes, composing 7.1% of the total responses. As a whole, the duration of CAGs in each session was less than 10 minutes, which was well-matched with the purpose of focusing on individual practice.

Table 9.

Descriptive statistics of the objectives of conducting CAGs in grammar classes

Item	Question	Duration	Frequency	Percentages
16	What is the objective of employing CAGs in grammar classes?	Teachers use it as a lead-in activity to introduce a new lesson.	25	35.7%
		Teachers utilize it to help students practice new grammatical structures and concepts.	48	68.6%
		Teachers use it as a reviewing activity to help students remember structures that they have learned.	41	58.6%

The data in Table 9 highlights the various purposes for which teachers employ CAGs in grammar classes. The most commonly reported objective was to help students practice new grammatical structures and concepts (68.6%). The purpose of using CAGs as a reviewing activity came second with 41 responses, consisting of 58.6 % of the total sample. There were also 25 students asserting that their teachers used CAGs as a lead-in activity to attract students' interest and introduce the lesson. In general, teachers employed CAGs in grammar classes to support students' comprehension, retention, and learning motivation.

Research Question 3: How do second-year English majors perceive the application of computer-assisted games in grammar classes?

The quantitative data gathered from the questionnaire regarding participants' opinions on the implementation of CAGs in grammar classes were divided into two main aspects. The first one explores the participants' views on the benefits of CAGs for learning grammar, while the second investigates difficulties students may encounter when playing CAGs in grammar classes.

Table 10.

Descriptive statistics on the sophomores' perspectives on the benefits of CAGs in learning grammar

Items	Questionnaire	N	Mean	SD
17	CAGs make grammar lessons more interesting	70	4.03	.0851
18	I can understand grammatical structures deeply, thanks to playing CAGs	70	3.97	0.894
19	I can remember the grammatical structures longer, thanks to playing CAGs	70	3.86	0.976
20	CAGs provide opportunities in which I can apply grammatical structures in speaking or writing	70	3.93	0.801
21	CAGs enable me to be more engaged in grammar classes	70	4.03	0.803
22	CAGs increase my motivation for learning grammar	70	4.12	0.822

The results in Table 10 demonstrate that the sophomores hold a positive perspective toward the

use of CAGs in grammar lessons. With the range of mean scores from 3.86 to 4.12, the participants expressed their high agreement with the benefits of these games in grammar learning. Specifically, nearly 80% of the respondents acknowledged that CAGs made grammar lessons more interesting ($M=4.03$) and increased their engagement in grammar classes ($M=4.03$). Consequently, most participants (more than 80%) asserted that the employment of CAGs motivated them to learn grammar ($M=4.12$). Additionally, the students were in favor of the roles of CAGs in grammar learning. In particular, the sophomores noticed that CAGs were beneficial in helping them understand the structures deeply ($M=3.97$), remember the structures longer ($M=3.86$), and provide opportunities to practice new structures in speaking or writing ($M=3.93$).

Table 11.

Descriptive statistics on the sophomores' perspectives towards the concerns about the use of CAGs in grammar classes

Items	Questionnaire	N	Mean	SD
23	I get bored when teachers apply CAGs too much in grammar classes.	70	2.47	1.135
24	I am easily distracted by CAGs in grammar classes	70	2.83	1.106
25	I feel stressed when competing with my friend through CAGs	70	2.56	1.129
26	I feel that CAGs take up too much class time that could be used for other learning activities.	70	2.20	1.091
27	I feel that CAGs do not provide enough opportunities to practice grammar rules.	70	2.26	1.034

The results presented in Table 11 indicate that the participants do not perceive CAGs as a significant concern in grammar classes. With a mean score of 2.20, the sophomores disagreed with the idea that CAGs were time-consuming. They also expressed their disagreements with the statement devaluing the role of CAGs in grammar practice ($M=2.26$). Additionally, most of the students asserted that excessive use of CAGs was not widely seen as a boredom factor and the competition in CAGs was not a source of stress, with mean scores of 2.47 and 2.56, respectively. However, the respondents were neutral regarding the notion of the distraction caused by CAGs ($M=2.83$), indicating that there was slightly more concern about this issue.

Results of the structured interview

Question 1: How important do you think grammar is in learning English? Why?

The responses from the 10 interviewees revealed diverse perspectives on the role of grammar in English learning. The findings were consistent with the questionnaire results, which indicate that most participants acknowledge the importance of grammar. Specifically, seven interviewees strongly emphasized the significance of grammar in English learning. They asserted that mastering grammar contributed to effective communication, proper academic writing, and professional language use.

"We couldn't produce meaningful sentences correctly unless we learned grammar. Sentences followed grammar rules strictly." (Participant 1)

"Understanding grammar helps me improve both speaking and writing, making my communication more precise." (Participant 2)

"It's vital to learn grammar since grammar helps us construct correct sentences in both speaking and writing skills." (Participant 3)

"We can produce clear messages unless we know grammar. I think grammar governs how you build up correct sentences." (Participant 4)

"Mastering grammar helps me be confident in speaking and writing in formal contexts." (Participant 5)

"I can have effective communication with other people when I understand grammar completely." (Participant 6)

"Academic writing heavily relies on grammar. Your ideas might not be clearly communicated if you don't employ the proper sentence patterns or tenses." (Participant 7)

The other two students recognized the usefulness of grammar but felt that other language skills, such as speaking and writing, were more important.

"I prior other skills like speaking or writing to grammar. For me, these skills are more important since you cannot express your ideas clearly if these skills are bad." (Participant 8)

"I think the purpose of learning a foreign language is to communicate effectively. So, I focus on developing my listening and speaking skills." (Participant 9)

Conversely, the remaining 10% of the interviewees found grammar challenging and less essential compared to other language skills.

"It's difficult for me to study grammar since it is really complicated. I don't think grammar is as important as other skills like speaking or listening." (Participant 10)

Question 2: What challenges do you face when learning grammar?

Regarding the difficulties of learning grammar, the majority of the interviewees (70%) reported that remembering complex rules was the biggest challenge. They explained that grammar consists of numerous rules and exceptions, which makes it hard to remember and apply structures accurately.

"I feel tired of numerous rules of grammar although I know grammar is the backbone of English. I feel hard to apply grammar properly in speaking or writing, despite I can do thousands of exercises correctly." (Participants 1, 2)

"I have problems when learning tenses in English. I have to remember and distinguish typical features of different tenses, which were confusing most of the time. This affects my fluency." (Participants 3, 4)

"English grammar has thousands of rules, which made me overwhelmed. Some structures were really confusing." (Participant 5)

"Sometimes, I get lost in a forest of rules. Some of them are really difficult to understand since they do not exist in my native language." (Participants 6, 7)

Another common difficulty mentioned by half of the interviewees was the proper application of grammar rules in both speaking and writing. Although students were able to do grammatical exercises perfectly, they found it challenging to apply these rules in real-life situations. Many struggled to produce language fluently without consciously thinking about grammar rules. This was reported to hinder their natural speaking and writing flow.

"I am confident in completing grammar exercises correctly. However, I can't stop myself from thinking about grammar rules when speaking with others. This slows down my speech." (Participants 4, 5)

"Mastering grammar rules does not mean that you can apply them properly in speaking or writing. I have no difficulty in doing grammatical exercise correctly. However, I feel it hard to apply these rules in writing. I spent a lot of time deciding which structure is suitable for my writing work." (Participants 6, 7)

"Grammatical exercises are easy to complete perfectly. However, using appropriate structure when speaking is a struggle. I am not confident to do that." (Participant 8)

Two interviewed students stated that staying engaged and motivated during grammar lessons was a significant challenge. Some students asserted that doing mechanical exercises frequently made grammar classes boring and repetitive, which demotivated them to learn grammar and made it harder to absorb the knowledge.

"Grammar classes are tedious with mechanical practice. I easily lose my interest and attention in grammar periods. I think grammar should be taught differently, where students can join interactive activities and practice grammar in contexts." (Participant 9)

"As for me, grammar lessons are just memorizing thousands of rules and then doing controlled practice. It's not useful in learning English. I prefer practicing listening or speaking more than learning grammar." (Participant 10)

Another noted difficulty in learning grammar, reported by 40% of the interviewees, was confusion over certain concepts caused by the differences between English and their native language. They explained that some grammatical structures in English do not exist in their native language; as a result, these rules confused them most of the time.

"I find it hard to learn about English tenses. There are no tenses in Vietnamese. So, it is a nightmare to distinguish the past tense from the present perfect or the present perfect continuous and the present perfect." (Participant 10)

"In Vietnamese, there is no rule on the agreement between subjects and verbs in sentences. But in English, the subject-verb agreement is one of the key components. This difference makes me confused, and I easily make mistakes with these exercises." (Participants 6, 7)

"We do not use auxiliary verbs in negative and interrogative sentences in Vietnamese, which is completely different from English. So it is difficult for me to remember the correct auxiliary verbs for different subjects and tenses." (Participant 8)

Question 3: What motivates you to study grammar?

In terms of motivations for learning grammar, most interviewees (80%) stated that grammar is essential for improving communication skills. They emphasized that learning grammar helped them produce grammatically correct sentences, especially in writing and speaking, and gave them more confidence in expressing themselves in English.

"I am motivated to learn grammar since grammar governs how sentences are constructed. Knowing grammar gives me confidence to write grammatically and semantically correct sentences in my essays." (Participants 1, 2)

"My motivation for learning grammar is that knowing grammar helps me avoid making

silly mistakes that cause misunderstanding during communication. Moreover, using correct grammar builds up a professional image, especially when I'm giving a presentation.” (Participants 4, 5,6)

“Learning grammar is a prerequisite in language learning. I major in English, so mastering grammar is a must to develop other language skills.” (Participants 3, 7, 8)

Around 60% of interviewees were motivated by academic and career-related goals. They shared that grammar was a fundamental part of the English curriculum and that doing well in grammar enhanced their grades. Some also linked grammar to future job prospects, especially in roles requiring high-level communication or English proficiency tests.

“Grammar courses are required in my university curriculum. So, I have to pass them if I want to graduate. Moreover, I know that grammar is the foundation of language learning, which shows my professional performance in the future workplace.” (Participants 3, 4)

“To get a good job in my area, I need to get a high score in the IELTS or TOEFL exams. And in these tests, grammar is an important part. Mastering grammar helps me get good scores in these exams, and my career prospects is, of course, better.” (Participants 5, 6)

“Producing grammatically correct sentences in communication proves that you have good English proficiency. This provides you with opportunities to apply for a job in the language area.” (Participants 7, 8)

There were four students who acknowledged that their motivation for learning grammar was the improvement of reading and listening skills. They pointed out that understanding grammar made it easier to comprehend complex texts and follow spoken English more accurately.

“There are different types of sentences in English concluding simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex. This makes reading long texts challenging if I do not know grammar.” (Participants 1, 6)

“Some listening exercises require learners to guess the words to fill in the blanks. Knowing grammar helps me narrow down the choices and easily to complete the exercise.” (Participants 2, 3)

Curiosity and personal interest in language learning motivated two participants to learn grammar. They explained that discovering differences in English and Vietnamese grammar was fascinating.

“I want to explore the differences in English and Vietnamese grammar. This curiosity motivates me to learn grammar. Sometimes, I discover many interesting points when comparing these two languages.” (Participants 7,8)

Question 4: How often does your teacher use Computer-Assisted Games (CAGs) in grammar lessons?

The responses from the interviews demonstrated that CAGs were widely used in grammar classes. Five interviewees reported that their teachers frequently conducted CAGs when teaching grammar, using them as a regular activity in teaching steps.

“My teacher conducts CAGs in almost every lesson in the course. Usually, the games are organized in practice sessions. It's a regular part of our class.” (Participants 1, 2)

“We usually play CAGs in grammar classes. The teacher often conducts these games to help us review the previous lessons. I feel excited to play the games and get a

bonus.” (Participant 3)

“Most of the lessons in the syllabus are explained with the use of CAGs. The teachers frequently use these games to clarify grammar structures.” (Participants 4, 5)

Four students stated that their teachers conduct CAGs in some lessons in the syllabus, especially when they were confronted with complicated structures or when their teachers intended to break the monotony of traditional exercises. They noted that while CAGs were engaging, they were not a daily occurrence and were often used selectively for certain topics or review sessions.

“My teacher sometimes implements CAGs in grammar class. He conducts these games when the lessons are quite complex.” (Participant 6)

“CAGs aren't a common feature in my grammar class. Sometimes, we play a game, particularly before a test, but usually, we stick to textbook exercises.” (Participant 7)

“Sometimes, my teacher holds CAGs in several grammar lessons. She often gets us to practice traditional exercises. Games are conducted only when we feel bored and hard to follow the lessons.” (Participants 8, 9)

One interviewee admitted that his teacher used CAGs only in one or two lessons in the course. He emphasized that the grammar lessons were mainly structured around lectures, worksheets, and traditional exercises.

“My teacher only holds CAGs in one or two grammar lessons in the syllabus. He often teaches grammar in a traditional way with worksheets, mechanical exercises, and handouts.” (Participant 10)

Question 5: How does your teacher conduct CAGs in grammar classes?

With the question investigating how CAGs were conducted in grammar classes, the majority of the interviewees (70%) shared that these activities were mainly conducted individually, often through platforms like Kahoot or Quizizz. These two platforms were favored for their user-friendly interface and real-time feedback. Additionally, the students noted that these games typically lasted under 10 minutes, usually used as a reviewing activity.

“My teacher often conducts Kahoot or Quizizz in grammar classes to practice new structures. Each session lasts from 5 to 7 minutes, and our class plays the game individually to compete with each other.” (Participant 1)

“My teacher uses Kahoot as a reviewing activity in grammar classes. The game usually has 10-15 questions and lasts around 6 minutes. We play Kahoot individually, and the top three students gain bonuses.” (Participants 2, 3)

“My teacher frequently organizes games for individual practice, like Kahoot or Quizizz. To gain a bonus, I have to be focused and answer questions quickly and correctly. There is no discussion with other classmates since each question is about 20 seconds, and we only play Kahoot for around 7 minutes.” (Participants 4, 5)

“We usually play Kahoot or Quizizz in grammar classes to get familiar with new structures. I compete with my classmates to be the top three students to get a bonus. So there is no discussion, and the game lasts around 7 minutes.” (Participants 6, 7)

Meanwhile, 20% of the interviewees mentioned pair work, especially for more interactive games like Bamboozle or Wordwall, which were used to reinforce grammar structures in context. The time for playing CAGs, therefore, lasted longer than individual sessions.

“Sometimes, my teacher conducts CAGs in pairs, especially when we are confronted with difficult questions. The game like Wordwall or Bamboozle lasts longer, around 10 to 12 minutes.” (Participant 8)

“Occasionally, my teacher asks our class to work in pairs and complete questions in Bamboozle. These questions require us to discuss the answers with partners, then submit them correctly. The time for each session usually lasts more than 12 minutes.” (Participant 9)

Out of 10 students, one interviewee stated experiencing group work, typically for longer game sessions that involved problem-solving or grammar races.

“I remember my teacher conducted a long reviewing session with Bamboozle to prepare us for the midterm test. We had to discuss in groups and complete the game in 15 minutes.” (Participant 10)

Question 6: In your opinion, how could CAGs benefit students in learning grammar?

Discussing the benefits of CAGs in learning grammar, a significant number of interviewees (80%) emphasized that CAGs made grammar lessons more enjoyable and engaging. They asserted that the interaction during these games kept them interested and focused during lessons. They stated that the learning activities were not mechanical practice with worksheets, paper, or coursebooks. Instead, the use of CAGs with smartphones or computers enabled them to learn grammar innovatively and made grammar practice more exciting.

“With the implementation of CAGs in grammar classes, the learning atmosphere is unthreatening. Now, we can practice new structures or review previous lessons in a fun way. This reduces stress and tiredness in grammar classes.” (Participants 1, 3)

“I like a competitive atmosphere when playing CAGs in grammar classes. I’m really excited to answer quizzes in these games quickly and correctly to be the winner. This motivates me to learn and remember grammar rules.” (Participants 2, 4)

“Instead of doing mechanical exercises to practice new structures, my class can now play CAGs to be familiar with new lessons. The practice sessions are more exciting, especially when we have to remember grammar rules, answer questions correctly, become the winner, and gain a bonus.” (Participants 5, 6)

“Playing CAGs sharpens my memory. I remember structures better through answering different questions that demonstrate clearly how to use rules.” (Participants 7, 8)

Another idea emphasized the effectiveness of CAGs in helping students remember the grammar rules more effectively. Seventy percent of the interviewees asserted that repeated exposure through games reinforces their learning and makes it easier to recall grammatical structures in different contexts. They pointed out that the immediate feedback in CAGs was crucial to their learning. Instead of waiting for the teacher to check their work, they could instantly see the correct answers and understand their mistakes. This immediate correction process made learning more efficient and reduced the risk of repeatedly making the same errors.

“When I complete questions in CAGs like Kahoot or Quizizz, I explore new structures through different examples. This demonstrates clearly how they are used, which helps me remember the rules longer.” (Participants 3, 4)

“The answers to questions in CAGs are automatically shown after I complete each one. So, I can check whether I’m correct or not immediately. This helps me gain experience and learn from my mistakes.” (Participant 5)

“There are various activities offered by CAGs like multiple choice, matching or fill-in-the-blank. Each of them is suitable for practicing specific aspects of grammar rules. I can practice new structures in different formats and know how to use them correctly.” (Participants 6, 7)

“Mechanical exercises and traditional routine in grammar classes demotivate me to learn grammar. CAGs are conducted in my class and get me engaged in different stages of the lessons. I’m excited to compete with other classmates and check how much I understand new lesson through answering questions quickly and see the scores.” (Participants 8, 9)

Five out of ten interviewees asserted that CAGs helped them grasp grammar concepts more thoroughly by providing clear examples and immediate feedback. Unlike traditional lectures that primarily focus on rules and theory, CAGs offer students opportunities to interact with the rules in various ways with visual elements and color-coded answers. These interactive elements help enhance comprehension and allow students to experiment with grammar structures in an unthreatening learning environment.

“CAGs demonstrate different contexts of using grammatical structures. So, I can see how grammar rules govern sentences clearly. Playing Wordwall or Bamboozle is a good way to get familiar with new structures.” (Participants 1, 2)

“My teacher conducts different kinds of CAGs in grammar classes, each of which is used to help our class understand certain grammar structures. These games provide me with opportunities to practice new lessons in an innovative way.” (Participants 3, 4, 5)

The other idea mentioned by 40% of the participants was the practical and valuable practice that CAGs created for writing and speaking. They explained that instead of understanding grammar rules in isolation or just recognizing them in tests or worksheets, now they could use grammar actively through the discussion with partners to justify their grammatical choices for different speaking or writing tasks.

“To complete the quiz, sometimes we have to construct sentences using the structure we’ve learned. The game makes the practice section vivid and more interesting.” (Participants 1, 2)

“To be the winner of the game, I have to discuss the answers with my partner. Discussion help us understand grammatical points clearly and remember them longer.” (Participants 3, 4)

Question 7: What may be potential concerns over the use of CAGs in grammar classes?

Although most of the interviewees perceived CAGs as a useful factor enhancing their grammar learning experience, a small portion of the sample raised concerns over minor issues regarding excessive use, distractions, and stress.

Two interviewees expressed their boredom when CAGs were conducted too frequently with the same kinds of games. These students stated that games were interesting but playing the same type too frequently was tedious and mechanical.

“I lose my excitement when my teacher holds the same type of CAGs frequently in grammar classes. Repetition makes me bored and feel games less special.” (Participant 1)

“The combination of CAGs and other learning activities is better than just having games so much. I played the same game over and over, which made the lesson quite

repetitive.” (Participant 2)

Another concern was distraction during games. Two students raised the notion that when playing CAGs, they just paid attention to answering questions quickly and did not think carefully about content or grammar structures. Additionally, noises from their classmates and the competitive atmosphere distracted them and enabled them to neglect the main focus of the lessons.

“Trying to be the first one answering questions makes me lose my focus on the content of lessons. Sometimes, I do quizzes quickly and do not read the content carefully.” (Participant 3)

“The atmosphere is exciting but also noisy. This distracts me and makes me lose my concentration on the lessons.” (Participant 4)

Feeling stressed when competing with classmates during games was reported by two participants. They noted that the competitive atmosphere rushed them, causing panic and tiredness. Therefore, they often made silly mistakes and felt embarrassed when their scores were shown on the listing board.

“Competitive atmosphere makes me stressed. I have to rush every time to be the winner or to get a bonus from my teacher.” (Participant 9)

“I feel stressed when the teacher shows the board of each game. If I get a low score, I lose my confidence and feel really embarrassed.” (Participant 10)

Discussion

Research Question 1: What are EFL sophomores' attitudes towards grammar learning?

The study investigated EFL sophomores' attitudes toward grammar learning by exploring their opinions on the role of grammar in language learning and their motivation for learning it. The findings emphasized that most of the participants perceived the importance of grammar

in English learning ($M = 3.55$) and its relevance to their future careers ($M = 3.6$). Interviews confirmed this view. Seven out of 10 interviewees acknowledged that grammar plays a vital role in communication, writing accuracy, and the use of professional language. This trend aligned with the results of previous studies by Borg and Burns (2008), who found that learners perceived grammar as fundamental to language learning.

One of the most striking findings was that over 70% of students reported difficulty in remembering grammatical structures ($M = 4.15$). Through the interviews, they explained that the diverse structures with irregularities and the differences between English and their native language caused the problem. In addition, traditional teaching methods with mechanical exercises made it challenging to absorb grammatical structures. The findings confirmed the conclusions of different studies. The research by Celce-Murcia (2001) stated that grammar retention caused challenges, especially in contexts where it was taught abstractly or without meaningful application.

In terms of learning purposes, the data indicated that students were highly motivated to learn grammar with a strong belief that learning grammar would instruct them to produce accurate and appropriate sentence structures ($M = 4.07$). They also asserted that learning grammar helped enhance their reading and listening skills ($M = 3.86$). The results of the structured interview reinforced these points. Eighty percent of the interviewees stressed the value of

grammar in forming precise and well-structured sentences, especially in academic or workplace contexts. Moreover, they reported that grammar courses were compulsory components of their university curriculum, and having a brilliant performance in grammar learning could contribute to improving their academic outcomes. These findings were in line with Ellis (2006), who emphasized that mastering grammar could provide students with better opportunities to be successful in career related to language.

Generally, the mixed methods utilizing an online survey and structured interview collected reliable data on students' attitudes towards grammar learning. Reportedly, EFL sophomores perceived grammar as a vital factor for academic performance and future career development. Regardless, it was challenging to remember and apply grammar properly in communication. These findings proposed that an innovative grammar instruction was a prerequisite.

Research Question 2: How do second-year English majors experience the implementation of computer-assisted games in grammar classes?

The gathered data examined participants' experiences with the implementation of CAGs in grammar lessons, focusing on four key aspects: the frequency of CAGs in grammar classes, the types of games implemented, the organization, and the instructional purposes behind their use. The results of the recent study concluded that all participants had opportunities to play CAGs in grammar classes. Nearly 40% of the students reported that their teachers frequently employed CAGs in grammar lessons. The other 45% of the sophomores stated that their teacher utilized CAGs in several lessons during the course. Through the interviews, the participants explained reasons for the frequency of CAGs. Half of the interviewees affirmed that their teacher regularly integrated CAGs into grammar lessons, treating them as a central instructional method rather than occasional or supplementary tools. The other interviewed students asserted that their teachers incorporated CAGs into specific lessons within the syllabus, particularly when tackling complex grammar structures or aiming to add variety to routine exercises.

Regarding the types of CAGs conducted in grammar classes, more than 80% of the participants noted that Quizizz and Kahoot emerged as the most commonly used and favored tools, followed by Bamboozle with over 55%. More than 40% of the students played Wordwall and Quizlet in their grammar classes, while only 20% had encountered Blocket.

The types of CAGs employed in grammar lessons were in line with the organization and duration of games conducted in each session. A majority of the sophomores (70%) asserted that CAGs were commonly implemented through individual activities and lasted under 10 minutes, indicating a tendency to utilize CAGs for personal grammar practice. Approximately 23% of students shared that their teachers occasionally used pair work to encourage peer collaboration during CAG activities. The interviews strengthened the results of the questionnaire. Seven out of ten interviewees affirmed that Kahoot and Quizizz were the two friendly platforms that lasted under 10 minutes, keeping them engaged in grammar periods. The other two students stated that CAGs, such as Bamboozle or Wordwall, were conducted for pairwork, especially when the questions were more challenging and students needed to discuss with their partners. Group work was rarely organized with CAGs. Only one student reported that a session of 15 minutes was held for discussion among group members to review lessons before the midterm test through Bamboozle.

The findings of the study revealed that the most popular instructional purpose behind teachers' use of CAGs in grammar lessons was to provide students with opportunities to practice newly introduced grammar rules and structures (68.6%). The purpose of using CAGs as a review tool was also the common one in grammar classes of nearly 60% of the participants. The

participants explained that frequent exposure through games significantly enhanced their learning and helped them recall grammatical structures easily in various contexts. The findings match with the results of the research by Mohamad and Amin (2009), who asserted that a motivating and engaging learning environment created by CAGs enabled students to grasp complex grammatical concepts more effectively. Another aim of employing CAGs in grammar classes, which was reported by more than 35% of sophomores, was to introduce the new lesson. This point was supported by the research of Can and Cagiltay (2006), who noted the effectiveness of CAGs in arousing students' attention to grammar lessons.

Research Question 3: How do second-year English majors perceive the application of computer-assisted games in grammar classes?

The results of the present study concluded that EFL sophomores at Van Lang University had a positive attitude toward the application of CAGs in grammar classes. Most of the participants acknowledged the substantial benefits of these games in learning grammar. More than 80% of the sophomores affirmed that CAGs increased their motivation for learning grammar ($M=4.12$), made grammar lessons more interesting ($M=4.03$), and got them more engaged in grammar classes ($M=4.03$). The answers from the interviews clarified these findings of the questionnaire. Eight out of ten interviewees asserted that the interactive format of CAGs maintained their attention and increased their participation in grammar classes. Instead of doing mechanical exercises and getting information through a large amount of paper like worksheets, handouts, or coursebooks, students now absorb grammar innovatively with the operation of computers or smartphones through an unthreatening learning atmosphere of games. These findings aligned with the conclusions of different studies. The research conducted by Mohamad and Amin (2009) highlighted that CAGs enhanced the learning process by creating an engaging and motivating environment where students can grasp complex grammar concepts. Similarly, Whitton (2007) noted that CAGs excited grammar learning, changing a tedious routine into interesting practice.

Moreover, the research found that the majority of the participants asserted that CAGs were beneficial in facilitating the students' learning process. The sophomores recognized that CAGs helped deepen their understanding of grammatical structures ($M = 3.97$), enhanced their long-term retention of these structures ($M = 3.86$), and offered chances to apply them in speaking or writing activities ($M = 3.93$). An in-depth analysis of interviews confirms these findings. The participants explained that exposure to different examples demonstrated with visual elements and diverse color-coded answers in CAGs helped them to understand grammar structures easily. Furthermore, immediate feedback in CAGs helped them constantly recognize their mistakes and recall the lessons longer. These findings were consistent with the ideas discussed in Deesri's (2002) study, which stated that these games enhance learners' ability to practice grammar communicatively. The findings also supported the theory proposed by Mohamad and Amin (2009), as these authors asserted that CAGs helped students understand complex concepts via an enjoyable and interactive learning atmosphere.

The result of the current study revealed that EFL sophomores at Van Lang University did not perceive CAGs as a significant concern in grammar classes. Most of the participants disagreed with the ideas of considering CAGs as time-consuming ($M=2.20$), as a source of stress ($M=2.47$), or as a cause of boredom ($M=2.56$). The responses from the interview supported these findings. They stated that playing CAGs saved time in understanding lessons, released stress from theories, and aroused their interest in learning. The results support the idea stated by Nutta (1998), who affirmed that using CAGs in the classroom is an effective way to teach the grammar of a second language.

Conclusion

The study exploring how EFL sophomores at Van Lang University perceive the implementation of CAGs in grammar classes utilized a mixed method with a combination of an online survey and structured interviews. These research methods gather data to answer the questions on students' attitudes towards grammar learning, their experience of CAGs in grammar classes, and their perspectives on the use of CAGs in grammar lessons.

The findings revealed that most of the participants acknowledged the substantial importance of grammar in language learning. They also stated that they were motivated to learn grammar since it played a vital role in enhancing communicative competence, increasing their academic scores, and being professional in their future careers. However, the second-year students admitted that it was challenging to remember and apply grammatical structures properly due to the complexity of these structures and traditional teaching methods.

Regarding the implementation of CAGs in grammar classes, all participants had opportunities to play these games during the course, and 50% of them stated that their teachers frequently conducted CAGs in most of the lessons of the course. According to the results, the participants reported that Kahoot and Quizziz were the most popular ones since they were user-friendly and easy to integrate. Moreover, most of the sophomores asserted that each session of CAGs lasted around 10 minutes, and they usually completed the questions individually. This setup promotes focused practice and quick reviews rather than collaborative learning. Concerning the objectives of holding CAGs, a majority of the students noted that their teachers organized these games as a practice activity, helping them get familiar with new structures. Additionally, CAGs were held as reviewing sessions, making them remember the previous lessons. The purpose of using CAGs as a lead-in activity to introduce new lessons and arouse students' interest was also reported.

The findings from the online survey and structured interviews concluded that EFL sophomores have a positive attitude towards the implementation of CAGs in grammar classes. The students claimed that CAGs were beneficial to increasing their motivation for learning grammar by making lessons more exciting and getting them more engaged in classes. Moreover, EFL students at Van Lang University perceived CAGs as a helpful factor that could facilitate their learning process. They asserted that playing CAGs made them understand lessons easily and remember structures longer thanks to practical applications. These insights suggest that incorporating CAGs more frequently and strategically could enhance students' grammar learning experience.

Overall, EFL sophomores did not perceive CAGs as a major concern in learning grammar. However, there were minor worries on specific issues like overuse, distraction, or stress from competition. These findings suggest that while CAGs are perceived as a useful method to facilitate students' learning process, an effective and proper way to integrate these games, combined with other instructional methods, should be taken into consideration to address the above minor issues.

Limitation

Although this study offers meaningful insights into the use of Computer-Assisted Games (CAGs) for grammar instruction, it has certain limitations. To begin with, the sample size was relatively small and limited to only one educational institution, which may limit the extent to which the results can be applied to other settings. Moreover, differences in students' levels of technological proficiency may have influenced their perceptions of CAGs regardless of the games' instructional value.

Implication

Based on the results of data collection and analysis, the use of Computer-Assisted Games (CAGs) in grammar instruction appears to be an effective method for enhancing learners' access to grammatical content. This approach is likely to increase student motivation, improve engagement, and enhance the practical application of grammar in real-life contexts. For language educators, the study supports the adoption of game-based tools to promote learner-centered instruction and address varying proficiency levels. Curriculum developers are advised to align CAGs with instructional objectives and incorporate them strategically across lessons. Moreover, the results highlight the need for professional development in educational technology to facilitate the effective use of CAGs in classroom settings.

Recommendation for further research

The current study provides useful insights into the employment of CAGs in grammar classes. However, further research should examine the long-term impact of these games on students' performance with the use of a pretest and posttest. Additionally, a study on the most effective kind of CAGs in grammar classes is also valued to conduct. Future research may also explore how to implement CAGs properly and effectively in grammar classes, providing valuable suggestions for teachers who tend to apply innovative approaches to teaching grammar.

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Biodata

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The Impact of Extroversion and Introversion on EFL Students' Second Language Acquisition

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: Second Language Acquisition, extroversion and introversion, EFL students, differences in personality

Internal factors like the personality traits of EFL students are also significant aspects that affect whether the learner's language acquisition is successful or not. This study aims to discover the differences between language learners' personality traits and examine the impact of personality traits (Extroversion and Introversion) on EFL students' Second Language Acquisition. Data regarding the topic in question were collected through questionnaires from 70 first-year English majors and three English teachers at Tra Vinh University, and interviews were conducted to find out the differences between language learners in terms of personality traits. The findings revealed that first-year English majors have two common personality types in the SLA process, and these personalities significantly impact their SLA. Extroverted learners are more likely to acquire second languages well, especially in terms of speaking skills. Whereas it is difficult to know whether introverted learners acquire a second language well or not, most of the time, their learning speed is often slower than extroverted learners. In addition, the teachers from interviews also offered suggestions to support introverted learners in acquiring a second language.

Introduction

Successful acquisition of a second language, in this case English as a Foreign Language (EFL), requires many factors such as learning environment, learning styles, teaching strategies, or the learner's cognition. Acquiring a second language besides the mother tongue is not easy for any individual in a country where English is not the first language. Recently, internal factors of language learners, such as cognition or personality traits (Extroversion and Introversion), have also been paid attention to in the process of Second language acquisition. The results of recent studies showed that personality traits had an essential impact on successful second language acquisition as well as the attainment of language proficiency (Wakamoto, 2007). Numerous theories express that personality factors of individuals like extroversion or introversion significantly affect acquiring a second language (Douglas, 2014). Along with that, Liang and Kelsen (2018) stated, "Personality traits of language learners might affect learners' second language learning." It is known that personality will more or less impact the performance of

skills in SLA.

The classification of personality traits (Extroversion and Introversion) was recognized by Jung (1971) at the beginning of the 20th century. Accordingly, extroverts are defined as people with a lot of energy; they like talking and communicating with others. They think communication will stimulate them to develop. Introverts tend to be more emotional; they feel that communication drains their energy. Therefore, they seem shy and afraid of communicating or talking with someone or a crowd, and they are not confident when participating in activities. Therefore, they will have limited opportunities to gain knowledge due to a lack of communication (Tuong, 2022). Because of personality differences, extroverted and introverted language learners' SLA may differ in many ways. Nussbaum (2002) found that "Extroverts and introverts approached small group discussion differently." In other words, when SLA occurs in the class, extroverted learners often discuss enthusiastically and argue with their partners or groups to come up with the best ideas, while introverted learners tend to listen and agree with their partner's or groups' points of view rather than arguing. As a result, the approaches of these two personalities are different, so the process and results of language acquisition will also be different. Abali (2006) also found out that "The extroverts tend to begin the discussion, introduce new topics and restate ideas in language classrooms, while the introverts generally ask questions."

The differences between extroversion and introversion in acquiring a second language have attracted much research. Previous researchers have confirmed the various roles of these two personality types in the language learning process. However, Brown (2001) also stated that extroverts seem to be better language learners because of their flexibility, love of communication, and energy in communication.

In addition, personality is one of the most important factors researchers are interested in for language learners. Because an individual's temperament (extroversion or introversion) will be linked to the language learning process, especially a second language which can be English. Numerous previous researchers also suggest that extroverted learners tend to absorb the second language better. An extrovert seems to be more hospitable, excited in communication, and enthusiastic about group activities in class (Hurd, 2002) and even outside the class (Swain, 1985). Thus, extroverted learners will take advantage of more opportunities to acquire a second language better. Extroverted learners will more easily progress and develop in SLA because of the chance they have to practice due to a lot of communication. They usually communicate and are bold in discussions, so extroverted learners tend to be risk-taking learners. This means they are ready to express their ideas, face many challenges, and take more risks to develop their own language proficiency (Cervantes, 2013).

This is not to say that introverted learners do not acquire a second language well. Garder and Clément (1990) clarified, "Both types of learners had equal opportunities for achievement and that language teachers should address the needs of both personality types." Moreover, when facing with situations or tasks that require careful and in-depth handling, introverted learners tend to perform better (Sharp, 2009) and their speaking skills will be outperformed when they are in their own space compared to when they perform in class but are surrounded by many peers watching them, they may get confused and stutter (Tehrani et al., 2014). While extroverts have short-term memory, introverts will often have longer-term memory because they need more time to absorb, think and evaluate information (Nussbaum, 2002). It can be seen that when studying in class, introverts will be quieter because they need time to reshape the knowledge they receive, and their own stress and anxiety will create pressure for them. That is why they are rarely enthusiastic and speak up in class.

In general, from numerous previous studies, extroverted learners who are outgoing, open in communication, and more accepting of challenges are better at acquiring a second language than introverted learners who are quiet and less communicative in class and outside the classroom. According to Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982),

“... in nearly all the studies conducted to determine the personality characteristics associated with successful L2 learning, researchers have concluded that lower anxiety levels and a tendency to be outgoing were connected with successful L2 acquisition.”

In general, the language acquisition of these two groups of learners is also affected by many factors that need further research. Factors such as teachers' teaching methods, learning environment, or learning style can also determine the acquisition process of these two groups of learners.

Literature review

Extroversion and Introversion

The concepts of extroversion and introversion relate to human psychological characteristics. The relationship between extroversion and introversion was also recognized by Jung (1971), who observed differences in these two personalities as they expressed themselves to the outside world. Accordingly, extroverts are said to be open in communication; they like to talk with others, while introverts live in their own world and are withdrawn. Extroverts will tend to like participating in group activities, interacting, and exchanging information with their peers. On the contrary, introverts will be less active and tend to prefer being alone. Brown (2001) stated, "An extrovert is one who gets the energy from outside while an introvert finds it in their external world."

Table 1

Personality classification on which the MBTI model is based (Jung, 1971)

	Thinking	Feeling
Extroverts	analytical, strategic, plans, implements, organizes others	sociable, sentimental,
Introverts	Contemplative, theoretical, seeks self-knowledge	Inaccessible, enigmatic, self-contained, seeks inner intensity

Here is a summary of Jung's personality model on introversion and extroversion, including common traits of both types. The tables show two traits out of four MBTI traits: thinking and feeling. The adjectives describing personality given in Jung's findings clearly indicate the personality traits of the two types of people, extrovert and introvert. These characteristics can be considered common personality traits in language learners during their second language acquisition. Observing the adjectives describing the thinking of the extrovert group in the table, it can be seen that this type of person will tend to think quickly, make quick decisions, concentrate quickly, organize, and plan quickly. Meanwhile, the introverted group will tend to be calmer; they think thoroughly and meticulously and need a lot of time to concentrate, self-study, and then plan. Emotionally, introverts will be open and sociable; they will be easy to talk to and always ready to communicate. Jung's adjectives describing introverts will not be easy to talk to because they tend to be withdrawn, difficult to approach, and afraid to communicate.

Perhaps, due to different personalities, the process of acquiring a second language will also be different, and this is one of the most common topics discussed by researchers (Dornyei, 2005). Introverted learners tend to be careful, afraid of making mistakes, and avoid taking challenges (Eysenck, 2004). This will create quite a barrier or inhibition for language learners because accepting challenges and not being afraid to make mistakes will make it easier for learners to succeed and progress in their SLA. Guiora (1972) states, "Inhibition has a negative impact on at least second language pronunciation performance."

Previous studies

Many different researchers have carried out studies on the impact of personality traits in SLA. All of the researchers have revealed that there are differences between extroverted learners and introverted learners in acquiring a second language.

One of these researchers in this field is Suliman (2014), who studied the role of extroverted and introverted personalities in second language acquisition. This study aimed to discover the differences in the language acquisition process of extroverts and introverts. Besides, this current study aimed to examine some researchers' opinions about the effect of extroversion and introversion on acquiring a second language. The participants consisted of 20 English major students at Misurata University Libya. The questionnaire was the only instrument used for collecting the data. The result of this research revealed that there were clear differences in the SLA process of the two personality types of learners (extroversion and introversion). In other words, the extroverts felt it was easy to talk and communicate with their friends; even though they did not know the answers, they were still confident in the class. Besides, they would make progress in the SLA process because they overcome the challenges in pronunciation and vocabulary. In contrast, introverts seemed to avoid communication and interaction with others in the class because they were afraid of making mistakes in the learning process. Although they still had a good performance, it seemed to be slower, and they needed more time to make up the answers in their mind. Finally, the researcher declared that extroverted learners were more fluent and better in SLA than introverted learners, who were often shy in communication.

Another similar study was conducted by Zafar and Meenakshi (2012) on the relationship between extroversion-introversion and risk-taking in the context of second language acquisition at VIT University, India. The object of this study was to identify the differences between the two personality types as well as their factors in SLA. The research found that extroverted learners took advantage of better language acquisition opportunities. They were excited to talk and communicate and enjoyed participating in group activities. However, some introverts might be suited for some learning skills such as reading and writing.

Besides these previous studies, Phuong (2021) also carried out a study on the influences of personality on students' speaking performance at ULIS University, Viet Nam. The aim of this study was to find out the influences of two types of personality on a student's speaking performance. It also mentioned some possible recommendations to help students overcome this issue. The participants consisted of 52 freshmen who were English majors and 2 English teachers who had experience in instructing speaking skills. Interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations were the three main data collection instruments. The result from this research showed that introverted students seemed to be quite excited in daily life but shy and less active in class. They are moody, anxious, and pessimistic, so they are not active in speaking performance. Meanwhile, extroverted students seemed to be talkative, outgoing, and sociable during the class activities. They enjoyed working in groups and helping their friends as much as possible in speaking lessons. From the findings above, some recommendations were suggested to reduce the negative impact on speaking performance as follows: speaking teachers

should assign tasks for individuals to make each learner engage in the speaking tasks and vice versa. Quiet learners talk more. Another way is the teacher should be a good observer when learners work in pairs or groups, encourage each individual to speak and give a speech, and then stand up to speak and present in front of the class.

Research gap

Numerous previous studies have been conducted on the impact of personality traits (extroversion and introversion) on language learners in acquiring a second language. Most of them worked from different angles. For example, some researchers conducted their study by surveying, others used observation forms for their research, and some even used personality tests for language learners. The research context, participants, and work progress could be different. However, it seems that quite a few researchers use interviewing as an instrument for this study, and the university participants are also less targeted to do the research. For that reason, this study will be carried out to fill a gap, contributing to providing a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the field of the research.

Research Questions

The study was conducted to determine the influence of extroversion and introversion on language learners in SLA. Moreover, this study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the typical personality traits of learners of Second Language Acquisition?
2. How do the personality traits affect the learners' Second Language Acquisition?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

This study was conducted at Tra Vinh University (TVU). The participants involved in this study included 70 first-year English majors out of 120 students. They were chosen randomly to carry out a questionnaire survey, and 3 English teachers were chosen to conduct an interview. The teachers were selected as people who were instructed at the School of Foreign Languages at TVU and had rich experience in teaching English as a second language to students majoring in English. They would be asked about the learners' personality traits and the effect of personality traits on first-year English majors in the process of SLA. After that, they also can give possible solutions to improve the second language acquisition process for better language learners. We chose students as first-year English majors because, during the first year, students are just getting used to the University environment; everything will be quite new to them, and personality traits when acquiring a second language will easily be revealed. Thus, it will make it easier to identify their personality and survey the effect of their personality traits in SLA.

Design of the Study

The current study was conducted with the aim of examining the influence of extroversion and introversion on EFL students in SLA. Therefore, this paper was designed as a descriptive study with mixed methods (Quantitative and qualitative). The questionnaire was chosen to collect participants' data of students, and the interview was conducted to gather information about teachers. This design was also chosen because it allowed the researchers to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data with regard to obtaining deeper and more detailed results that contributed to a better study. The questionnaire consists of 3 main parts: personal information, types of learners' personalities, and the effect of personality traits in the process of SLA. The

questionnaire used in the study was adapted from the framework of Suliman's study (2014), and the draft of the questionnaire was also drawn out based on the literature review and the researcher's experience.

Data collection & analysis

A descriptive statistic test was performed to analyze data in order to determine the results of the study. The technique was selected due to the fact through this research, it became extremely necessary to analyze in a deep way the content provided by the data, which made easier the process of understanding the influence of personalities on language learner's and teachers' perspectives on second language learners' personalities as well as what they expected to be improved in the future.

Pilot and procedure

First, the questionnaire was designed and piloted for its validity and internal reliability coefficient. The participants in the pilot were 10 first-year English majors. Then, the questionnaires were delivered to the official quantity. The data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using the software SPSS version 20 (Statistic Package for the Social Sciences).

Questionnaires

In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire that consisted of 3 parts and was answered by a group of first-year English majors to collect information. All the items were designed by using a 5-point Likert Scale method of the frequency of behavior questions ranking from always, often, sometimes, rarely to never for part 2; agree, strongly agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree for part 3. The questionnaire is a powerful tool that researchers use to gather, analyze, and use data to formulate strategies. In addition, surveys are not really expensive. For instance, an online survey has a very small cost per respondent. Moreover, surveys can be flexible due to their various modes, and using a mixed mode of survey research may be necessary. The surveys allow respondents to answer with valid answers.

Interviews

The interview with three English teachers at TVU aimed to identify the common personalities of second language learners and find out the impact of personalities on the SLA process of first-year English majors. Teachers were asked questions based on the results of previous research as well as referencing related research documents. The interview lasted nearly 30 minutes for a teacher. The teachers were very enthusiastic in contributing ideas based on their teaching experience.

Findings

This section presents the findings and discussion according to the study's objectives. The study aimed to examine the impact of extroversion and introversion on EFL students' SLA. The researchers will summarize and analyze all information collected from the data collection instruments. Data is presented using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, tables, and graphs. All the statistics collected from the questionnaires were computed to check the frequency and the internal reliability coefficient.

The final result revealed that the questionnaire employed in this study was reliable, with a significantly high Cronbach Alpha's coefficient of .85 for 21 items in total. The following sections discuss key findings of the current research in depth. From students' responses, the researchers are able to obtain a great deal of information about learners' personalities and their

impact on the SLA process. The statistical analysis and the data analysis results are performed using SPSS.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Personalities affect SLA	70	1,00	5,00	2,6457	,91044
Valid N (listwise)	70				

First, the descriptive statistic test was performed on the mean score of the influence of extroversion and introversion on EFL students' Second Language Acquisition. The result showed that first-year English majors agree that personality traits impact Second Language Acquisition ($M=2.64$, $SD=.91$). Also, a one-sample t-test was conducted on the mean score of linguistic problems compared with the test value of 3. The result indicated that this mean score was considerably different from 3. It is reported that the participants acknowledged that introversion or extroversion influenced their Second Language Acquisition process. In other words, introverted and extroverted learners acquire second languages differently.

Research question 1: The common personalities of first-year students of TVU as perceived by the students.

Table 2

Personality types of second language learners.

No	Statement	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	Do you like working in groups?	18.6%	37.1%	31.4%	7.1%	5.7%
2	During break time, do you like chatting with your friends?	24.2%	40%	28.6%	7.14%	0%
3	Are you comfortable when your peers correct your writing and point out your mistakes?	42.9%	34.3%	17.1%	4.2%	1.4%
4.	Are you excited about participating in clubs (English clubs, radio clubs...)?	18.6%	40%	28.5%	12.8%	0%
5.	If you take a test, do you like doing the oral test?	12.8%	18.5%	48.6%	14.3%	5.7%
6.	Do you like arguing during group activities?	12.8%	22.8%	44.3%	17.1%	2.9%

The final results show that first-year English majors demonstrated two basic personality types. The first and most obvious type from Table 2 is extroversion. These extroverts are always comfortable and feel natural when their friends correct their writing or help them point out mistakes (42.9%) without fear or embarrassment. Next, extroverted learners like chatting with their friends during break time (40%). It can be seen that the personality of extroverts is that they love to communicate and talk to others regardless of whether they know them or not. Besides that, these extroverts also enjoy participating in clubs at school (40%). In addition, one thing that is easy to see about this personality is that they like to work in groups (37.1%) instead of working independently, and they also tend to argue animatedly when working in groups (44.3%). Moreover, it can be seen that extroverted learners will sometimes prefer speaking tests to writing tests (48.6%).

Table 3

Personality types of second language learners.

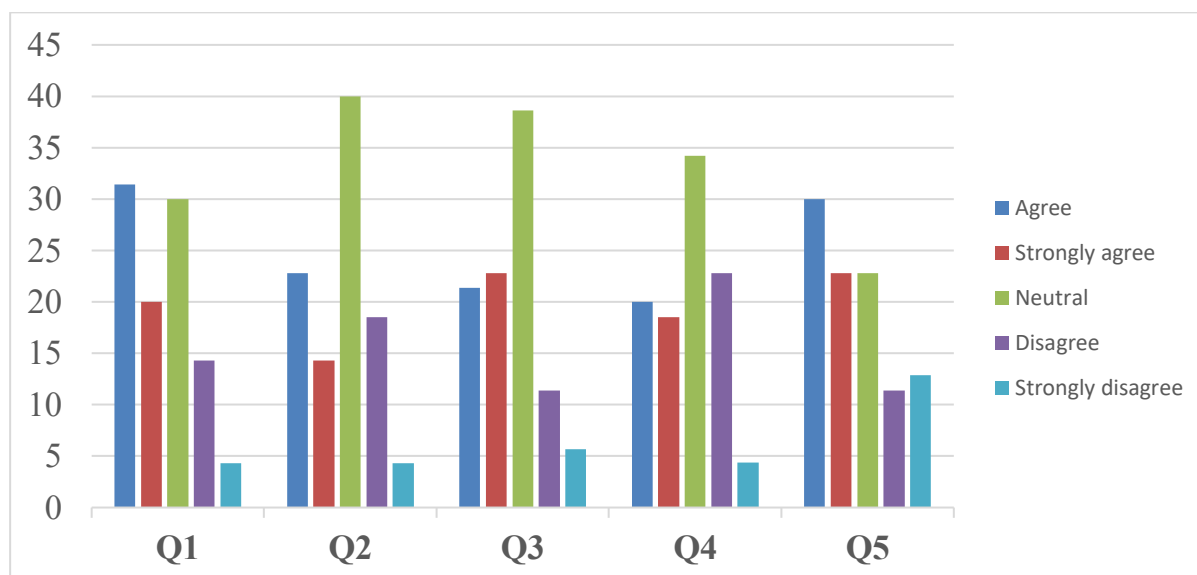
No	Statements	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	Before you give the answers, are you worried and have to organize everything in your mind?	34.3%	42.8%	12.8%	8.6%	1.4%
2	Do you like studying alone at the library?	22.8%	25.7%	38.9%	5.7%	7.1%
3	While talking, do you feel comfortable if you are in front of a crowd?	5.7%	25.7%	35.7%	25.7%	7.1%
4.	When participating in conversations, are you mostly the one doing the talking?	5.7%	27.1%	48.5%	18.6%	0%
5.	Do you find it easy to get to know and talk to strangers?	10%	21.4%	37.1%	27.1%	4.3%

From the participant's responses, a second personality was also revealed in Table 3. That is introversion. First and foremost, introverts rarely act as talkative people (48.5%) when participating in a conversation because they prefer to listen rather than communicate. The next most obvious characteristic of introverts is before giving the answers, they always worry and have to organize everything in their mind (42.8%). This means they are very cautious and not ready to answer immediately. Moreover, introverts sometimes tend to study in the library (38.9%) because they like quiet places and like to study alone to concentrate easily instead of studying with friends or groups. One common thing with introverts is that they sometimes feel uncomfortable speaking in front of a crowd (35.7%), making it difficult for them to get to know and talk to strangers (37.1%).

Research question 2: The influences of personality (extroversion and introversion) on EFL students' Second Language Acquisition.

Figure 1

The Influences of extroversion and introversion on EFL students' SLA.

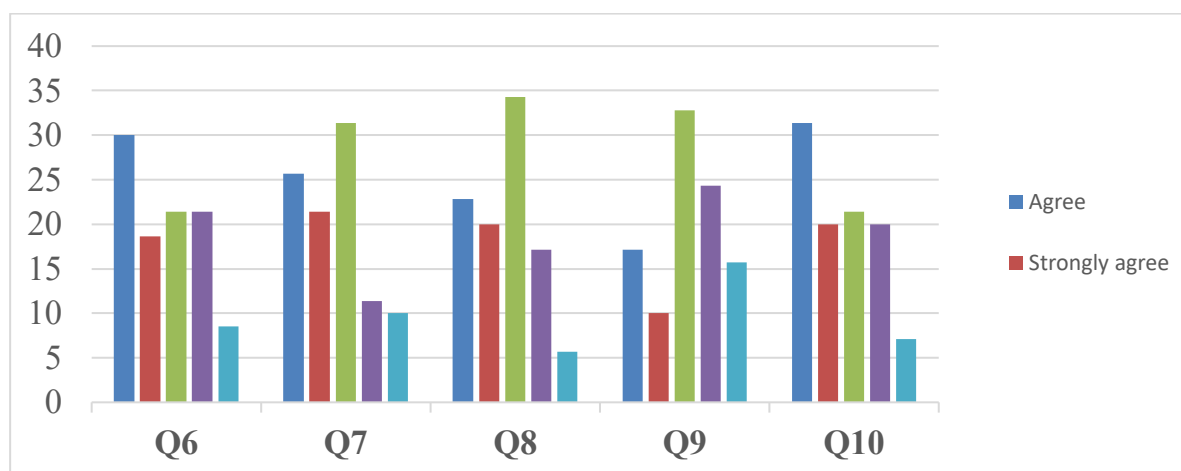


Accordingly, the survey obtained students' agreement on the impact of personality on their second language acquisition as follows.

Firstly, a lot of participants agreed that their speaking skills are not proficient due to fear of communication – Q1 (31.4%). This can be considered a common thing among introverted learners because they are afraid to communicate and practice. On the contrary, extroverts like to communicate, so they will have more chances to improve their speaking skills than introverts. Secondly, learning motivation and interest in learning play an essential role in SLA, so many students agreed that they easily lose motivation and feel bored when they rarely share and communicate with friends – Q2 (40%). Thirdly, the learning process has not progressed much because of lacking interaction with others, which many students vote off– Q3 (38.6%). The participants think that the most important thing when acquiring a second language is to constantly communicate, interact, and practice with their peers. Without those things, the learning process will take a long time to improve, making progress difficult. Fourthly, the language acquisition process is limited because of a lack of cooperation with everyone – Q4 (34.2%). It can be seen that in the process of acquiring a second language, many activities require cooperation with partners, teachers, and peers to solve the tasks or problems. If introverted learners do not often enjoy such activities, their language skills will not have a chance to develop. As a result, it will become a limitation, hindering their progress in SLA. Therefore, many first-year students contributed their votes that language skills take a long time to improve because they are often afraid to express themselves – Q5 (30%).

Figure 2

The Influences of extroversion and introversion on EFL students' SLA.



In addition, other personality effects such as the speaking speed are not proficient because of lack of practice (30%) – Q6, few partners, and little participation in communication will make the SLA process less effective (31.4%) – Q7. Besides, the participants, especially introverted learners, also admitted that they have a good language acquisition process, but the rate of progress is quite slow – Q8 (34.3%). Furthermore, 24.3 % of votes from participants disagreed with the statement that introverts and extroverts acquire second languages equally – Q9. It means they admitted that introverted and extroverted learners will acquire a second language differently. Finally, the most important conclusion is that 31.4 % of the votes received from first-year students agreed that personality traits (extroversion and introversion) influence the process of second language acquisition – Q10. This assertion is similar to the results obtained from the in-depth interviews with 3 English teachers. They all agreed that personality traits affect the process of second language acquisition, especially affecting speaking skills.

Discussion

The results from Table 2 showed the extroverted personality in first-year students. Specifically, extroverted learners are willing to have their friends correct their work and point out mistakes for them. They feel comfortable with that because they tend to accept mistakes and challenges to improve. On the contrary, if introverted learners are, they will rarely feel comfortable if others point out their mistakes because they usually do not want others to discover them. Besides that, the next obvious characteristic of extroverted learners is that they like to talk and chat with people, whether during class or outside the class. That is also the reason why they prefer group work and collaborative activities in pairs and groups rather than working independently. To explain this issue, there are some following reasons. It can be clearly seen that extroverts' characteristics are being open, energetic, and love communication; they are also the type of people who like to argue during a group discussion. This is quite consistent with the results obtained from an interview with an English teacher. Mr. P believes, *"When extroverted students are given a topic, they immediately get excited and argue compared to introverted students, who are often quieter, mostly listen and will vote on the answer afterward."*

Finally, extroverted learners tend to prefer oral tests over written ones. The truth is that because their characteristics are that they excel in communication, it is understandable that they prefer speaking tests. They feel comfortable and stress-free when taking an oral test instead of taking a written test. This is also the interview result obtained from the second English teacher. Mr. A thinks, *"Most extroverted learners like something comfortable and unstructured, so they perform quite well on oral tests. Their speaking speed is quite good, and they are fluent because they are not afraid to make mistakes. As for introverts, they mostly prefer written tests."*

Before answering or giving an answer, introverted learners always worry and arrange the answer in their minds perfectly. This is understandable because most introverts are very meticulous, careful, and think a lot. They are always careful when speaking or giving answers. Therefore, this can also be a limitation in their language acquisition process because it inhibits their speed and flexibility. A teacher in an interview talked about this - Ms. Q said, *"The introverted students she used to teach when she called them to answer questions, they stood for a long time to give the answer. It was not because they did not know, it was because they did not know how to interpret it and they were afraid of saying the wrong things."*

Moreover, because of existing characteristics such as not enjoying talking and not communicating often, they will also choose to study alone in the library rather than studying with friends or in groups. They like quiet places; they express themselves well when they work independently. In addition, for introverted learners, getting acquainted, making friends, or talking with strangers is also difficult for them. Mr. P, from the in-depth interview, expressed that *"Communication and conversation are often very rare in introverted learners. They tend not to like to make many friends and only talk to 1 or 2 people who are really close to them. Classroom activities are also really difficult to engage introverted learners."*

The result from Figure 1 illustrates the influences of extroversion and introversion on EFL students' SLA. Typically, the communication speed of people acquiring a second language is not yet proficient because they are afraid of communication. Communication is an important key in acquiring any language. Only by communicating can learners realize where they are lacking and need to improve every day. Fear of communication when acquiring a second language will greatly inhibit learners' speaking skills. This will happen more in introverts than extroverts, so it can be seen that most introverts' speaking skills are not as dominant as extroverts.

In addition, motivation and interest in learning play vital roles for both types of learners (extroversion and introversion). However, if learners rarely communicate and share with friends during the language acquisition process, they will sometimes become discouraged because of pressure, disorientation, and a lack of learning experience. Therefore, learning combined with sharing and interacting with friends will give learners twice the energy and motivation to learn, contributing to making their second language acquisition process easier and better.

The results from Figure 2 also demonstrated the effects of personality on learners' second language acquisition. Lack of practice will lead to poor speaking speed. This is more likely to happen in introverted learners because, as mentioned above, they communicate less, share less, and are more inclined to practice individually rather than practice with friends. Therefore, they will have less opportunity to learn from others and not recognize their own shortcomings in the process of language acquisition. Besides, introverted and extroverted learners acquire second languages differently. Many participants agreed with this statement, as did the in-depth interview results from English teachers. Indeed, these two types of learners will acquire a second language differently depending on their speed, learning style, and learning goals. Many previous studies also match this result, but most extroverts will have a more dominant and flexible learning process in acquiring a second language.

Finally, personality traits (extroversion and introversion) also influence first-year students' second language acquisition. This means personality is also a factor in deciding whether a learner can absorb a second language well or not. Introverts will have a different way of acquiring from their perspective, although the learning process will be quite slow or take a long time to progress. Meanwhile, extroverts will also have a different way of learning by loving communication; they may speed up their learning speed, and the process of acquiring a second language will be more successful.

Table 4

Results from in-depth interviews on the question of personality traits affecting learners' second language acquisition process.

Teacher	Statement	Extroverted learners	Introverted learners
T1	"Agree that personality partly affects the process of acquiring a second language."	acquiring a second language better because they are confident, not afraid to make mistakes, and enthusiastic about activities.	Acquiring a second language more slowly because they are timid, shy, and afraid to show off in public.
T2	"Personality traits have potentially affect second language learners."	more agile and quicker to absorb; although sometimes it cannot be said that they absorb thoroughly or fully, their speaking skills will be better than introverts.	Quiet, less enthusiastic, and rarely proactive in learning, introverts may absorb lessons more slowly than extroverts.
T3	"Personality traits have a significant effect quite a lot on second language learners."	Acquiring a second language more quickly, tending to speak positively, and not being afraid of being wrong.	They like to explore and discover, but only in their own space. They will rarely share, communicate, and express themselves in class.

In addition, the teachers participating in the interviews also offered some possible solutions for introverted learners to help them find a better learning environment in the SLA process. Firstly, the teacher in class should spend time chatting and asking questions to introverts after class to see if they have any problems in the learning process or if they have any wishes in class activities. Sometimes introverts still absorb the lesson well but do not like to show it off, or sometimes they have difficulties in learning but are afraid to share it. Secondly, it is difficult to attract introverted students to participate in classroom activities, so teachers can start with individual activities, slowly move to pairs, and then flexibly switch to groups if teachers notice that those students are gradually comfortable with the atmosphere in the classroom. In addition, it also enhances reading or writing activities such as designing posters, drawing comic books, drawing themed paintings, or giving individual speaking assignments because they can improve students' vocabulary significantly (Dinh, 2023). Because introverts are more inclined towards those skills. Finally, teachers should survey and discover the topics that introverts are interested in or love to increase their participation and motivation as well as stimulate sharing and cooperation among classmates. Moreover, teachers can pay attention to seating arrangements and can alternate an extroverted student with an introverted student to harmonize and help the introverted students gradually get acquainted. Teachers also play an important role in responding to responses in class. For introverted students, teachers should pay attention to feedback to help them confidently give their opinions instead of criticizing or disparaging them.

The above findings showed that the results of this study are quite similar to the results research of Suliman (2014) at the English Department, Faculty of Arts Misurata University, Libya. They proved that "Students of the English Department at Misurata University have two common personalities: introverts and extroverts. Besides, extroversion and introversion have a significant influence on the second language acquisition process". We totally agree with their findings. These are also two personality types that are similar to the research results of first-year English majors at Tra Vinh University that I am conducting. Along with that, the influence of personalities on the process of second language acquisition is too obvious.

Conclusion

In conclusion, according to the participants' responses to the questionnaire, first-year English majors revealed two typical personalities that can be seen in the process of acquiring a second language: extroversion and introversion. The results obtained from questionnaires and in-depth interviews with teachers confirmed that personality influences the second language acquisition of first-year English majors. In other words, extroverted and introverted learners acquire second languages differently.

In addition, the teachers involved in the interviews were also enthusiastic in offering suggestions to assist introverted learners in acquiring a second language more effectively with the hope that both types of learners, extroverts, and introverts, acquire a second language in one way or another will still be effective and successful that the teachers participating in the interview continuously contributed their experiences, solutions and interactions to bring useful results to the interview.

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Biodata

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Investigating High School Students' Attitudes Towards Friends Global Textbook


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ABSTRACT

Keywords: General Education English Curriculum 2018, textbook evaluation, attitudes, learners' needs, Friends Global textbook

Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training's nationwide English educational reforms have introduced a new English textbook series aimed at enhancing students' communicative competencies. Although extensive research has evaluated these English textbook series based on the General Education English Curriculum 2018, it has focused solely on educators' perspectives. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the high school students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes towards one of those series, the Friends Global textbook, regarding learners' needs. Utilizing a mixed-method design, the study combined questionnaire data from 226 grade-ten and grade-eleven students with insights from semi-structured interviews with eight participants. Findings reveal that students generally hold positive attitudes towards the textbook's reading skills, vocabulary, and grammar but display ambivalence towards speaking, listening, and writing skills and are opposed to phonology. These results offer valuable insights for the Ministry of Education and Training, textbook authors, and ELT educators, supporting future curriculum development, textbook evaluation, and instructional planning.

Introduction

English subject not only helps students develop their communicative competency in English, but also contributes to the formation and development of other abilities necessary for their work, lives, and lifelong learning. Therefore, the Vietnamese General Education English Curriculum (GEEC) must be designed properly in order to assist students in achieving the aforementioned goals. In 2018, a new version of the GEEC, updated from the old one in 2006, was imposed, yet not until 2020 was it officially launched nationwide. With the advent of the new curriculum, there have been many nationwide renovations in teaching English to achieve the aims set out by the curriculum, especially in Ho Chi Minh City. In addition to teacher retraining, teachers are equipped with teaching materials and resources to prepare their lessons and facilitate their students' learning process. More specifically, English language textbooks in Ho Chi Minh City

have undergone significant changes when the new textbook series mainly based on CLT consisting of different versions from various publishers, including the Friends Global textbook. This textbook has been chosen as the core teaching and learning materials in various educational institutions due to its structure and approach, which are designed in accordance with the GEEC 2018. Therefore, the researchers aim to investigate students' attitudes toward this material, specifically examining its alignment with students' perceived needs.

In the realm of textbook evaluation, many studies have been conducted on EFL textbooks in Vietnam. These studies have delved into various facets such as language and culture (Dang & Seals, 2016), intercultural communication (T. T. M. Nguyen et al., 2020), communicative competencies and intercultural communication (T. H. Bui, 2022), pragmatic content (Ton Nu & Murray, 2020), gender bias (M. T. Vu & Pham, 2021), design, structure and quality (Hoang, 2016), or a specific skill (Phan et al., 2020). However, these evaluations predominantly reflect educators' perspectives while largely neglecting students' viewpoints on these English textbook series. To address this gap, further research is needed to explore high school students' attitudes toward Friends Global textbooks in terms of learners' needs at high schools, especially in the context of Vietnam. This gap justifies the significance of the current research.

The result of this study could be helpful for Vietnamese educators by granting them more profound insights into their students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward the Friends Global textbook. Understanding could guide high school teachers in adapting their instructional planning to foster students' interest and classroom engagement and in providing supplemental materials to promote learner autonomy and self-study. Those insights could also enable school administrators to choose suitable textbook sets for their high schools, especially given the variety of textbook sets available in Vietnam. Additionally, the data from this study can be a useful source of reference for the textbook authors and the Ministry of Education and Training if there are any plans for modifications of the GEEC in the future. Furthermore, it might suggest a broader hypothesis for further research into the attitudes of students towards the Friends Global textbook in terms of learners' needs in different contexts.

Literature review

Attitudes

Attitude is defined as a response or psychological tendency to evaluate an antecedent stimulus or attitude object with favor or disfavor (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Anvik et al., 2007; Breckler, 1984). According to Melissa and John (2007), attitude objects have typically included physical, concrete objects (like apples or garbage), individuals or groups (such as Michael Jordan or Blacks), abstract ideals and values (such as equality or freedom), and various matters and policies (like abortion or voting rights). Within the context of this study, the stimulus or attitude object is the Friends Global textbook.

Attitude has three major components: affective component (the way we feel), cognitive component (the way we think), and behavioral component (the way we act) towards stimuli or a particular entity (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Breckler, 1984).

Cognition has to do with the role of cognition in a person's attitude towards stimuli, including beliefs, knowledge structures, perceptual responses, and thoughts (Breckler, 1984; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In this case, attitudes towards Friends Global textbook are based on high school students' beliefs about "textbook," and those beliefs - cognitive component - may vary from favorable to unfavorable (e.g., supporting versus derogating arguments) (Allport, 1935).

Affect refers to an emotional response, a gut reaction, or sympathetic nervous activity that are caused by stimuli (Breckler, 1984). Based on Breckler's perspective, one can measure it by monitoring physiological responses (e.g., heart rate, galvanic skin response) or by collecting verbal reports of feelings or mood. Within the context of this study, affect can vary from pleasurable feelings (feeling good, happy) to unpleasurable feelings (feeling bad, unhappy).

Behavior includes overt actions, behavioral intentions, and verbal statements regarding behavior with respect to stimuli (Breckler, 1984). Furthermore, behavior is a manifestation of underlying cognitive and affective components (Anvik et al., 2007). In this study, attitudes towards Friends Global textbooks are based on high school students' emotions and beliefs about "textbooks," and those emotions and beliefs can have an impact on their behavior. More specifically, students' behavior with respect to the Friends Global textbook would be reflected by their classroom engagement and self-study.

Textbook evaluation

According to Littlejohn (2022), textbook evaluation is the process of examining and making a judgment on the suitability of a set of textbooks for a particular context and a specific teaching and learning purpose, which necessarily implies a view of how the textbooks should be. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) also stated that textbook evaluation is a straightforward, analytical matching process involving matching learners' needs to available solutions.

From the perspective of McGrath (2002), materials evaluation, which needs to be learner-related and context-related, is of paramount significance, which aligns with the perspective of Cunningsworth (1979). According to the framework of McGrath (2002), materials evaluation encompasses the micro-evaluation (internal) and the macro-evaluation (external). Learner factors, learners' needs, teacher factors, institutions, and the specific program are five essential existing factors in the micro-evaluation (internal). Meanwhile, macro-evaluation (external) includes the larger educational system or the overall socio-political system.

Learners' needs

As discussed by McDonough et al. (2013) and Nation and Macalister (2010), learners' needs encompass various elements that should be analyzed to design a syllabus, decide on course content, and develop effective language instruction programs. Building on this foundation, drawing on McGrath's (2002) synthesis and analysis of research by Bruder (1978), Daoud and Celce-Murcia (1979), and Harmer (1991), the evaluation of learners' needs should encompass a comprehensive set of ten criteria. The first prevalent criterion forming any foreign language textbook's basis is "language-skill emphasis". According to Dakowska (2014), this encompasses the four essential skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, the foundation of language competency, and speakers' effective engagement in unpredictable and changing language environments. Within those primary skills are "sub-skills," which provide a more

detailed focus on skill acquisition. In addition, "language-system emphasis" or language materials emphasis also plays a part in choosing an English textbook. This aspect refers to the focus on the underlying systems of the language being taught, namely grammar (the rules of language structure), vocabulary (the words and phrases of the language), and phonology (the sounds of the language).

Closely related to language materials is "language forms," a criterion listed in the literature as a tangible organization and presentation of language elements. These include structural patterns (grammar), specific words and phrases (vocabulary), and phonetic features such as stress and intonation, which constitute language's surface features. However, language itself is not always consistent across various geographical areas. For this reason, "dialect" should be considered when designing textbooks. "Dialect" covers aspects of pronunciation, vocabulary, and syntax that are slightly different from the standard variety, encompassing variations found in regional contexts such as British, American, or Australian English (D. H. Bui & Truong, 2021). Such differences are often emphasized differently in textbooks to develop learners' English language proficiency. Moreover, there is also a diversity of "contexts and registers", stemming from various situations and environments where language is used, including text types such as dialogues, essays, and letters, and texts with different levels of formality. Other criteria center around the practical use of language and the ideas it expresses. They include "language usage," "functions," and "notions." The last criterion is referred to as "mechanics", focusing on technical aspects of written language to ensure that texts are coherent and readable. Collectively, these criteria provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing learners' needs, facilitating targeted and effective textbook evaluation.

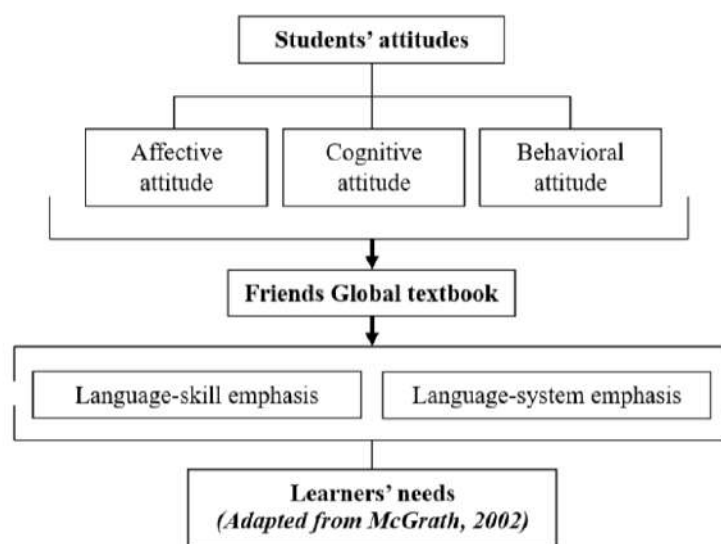
On the other hand, according to the GEEC 2018, high school students need to reach certain targets related to qualities and competencies, which are further divided into general competencies and specialized competencies. In terms of qualities and general competencies, learners graduating from high school will have developed patriotism, compassion, industry, honesty, and responsibility, as well as autonomy, self-learning, communication and cooperation, problem-solving, and creativity. With regard to specialized competencies, students need to achieve Level 3 of the six-level Foreign Language Competency Framework for Vietnam before graduation. Specifically, they must understand the gist of a paragraph or speech on a familiar topic, write a simple paragraph on a personal topic, or solve problems in situations where English is spoken. Furthermore, phonology, vocabulary, and grammar knowledge is also required so that students can communicate in English effectively through four skills.

To explore students' attitudes (affective, cognitive, and behavioral) towards the Friends Global textbook at a high school in Ho Chi Minh City, the conceptual framework of this study was developed and adapted from the theoretical framework of McGrath (2002) and the content of the GEEC 2018. The framework focuses on two main criteria: language-skill emphasis and language-system emphasis. These elements were chosen because the GEEC 2018 prioritizes Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which incorporates both language skills and systems. Other elements in McGrath's framework were omitted as they are not central to the Friends Global textbook or the GEEC 2018's emphasis and objectives. Thus, the selection of language-skill emphasis and language-system emphasis aligns well with the GEEC 2018's

orientation and objectives. To demonstrate this, a conceptual framework was created as follows:

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework of Students' Attitudes towards Friends Global Textbook in Terms of Learners' Needs



Previous studies

There have been numerous studies on textbook evaluation in Vietnam that have examined various aspects of EFL textbooks. In the research implemented by T. T. M. Nguyen et al. (2020), by adopting Hu and McKay's (2014) analytic scheme in the textbook analysis, it was found that although communication in the twenty-first century involves a broad spectrum of speakers from vastly diverse backgrounds, the new textbook series in the GEEC 2018 tended to focus mainly on preparing students to use English for communication with non-Asian English users, particularly those from the West.

T. H. Bui (2022) evaluated the effectiveness of two grade-12 Pearson textbooks in achieving the goals of the Vietnam National Foreign Language Project (Project 2020). Using Cunningsworth's (1995) evaluation checklist, the study primarily focused on two objectives of the Project that the textbooks were designed to address: communicative competencies and intercultural communication. The findings indicated that the textbooks failed to achieve their intended goals regarding communicative competences fully.

In another study, Ton Nu and Murray (2020) employed content analysis to examine the provision of pragmatic content in the current national EFL textbook series. The findings revealed that this series included a very limited amount of explicit information about pragmatics. Furthermore, the explicit presentation of various elements that could facilitate the learning of pragmatics was found to be quite infrequent.

Moreover, Hoang (2016) conducted a study on renovation in curriculum design and textbooks development, focusing on the ten-year textbook series with three piloted books. The results showed that teachers evaluated these textbooks as having good quality, a clear structure, an

appealing layout, being user-friendly for both teachers and students, and meeting regional and international standards.

Also, Phan et al. (2020) conducted a study evaluating the piloted English 10 textbook (Pearson), specifically its listening tasks. The research utilized questionnaires, classroom observations, and interviews involving 50 teachers and eight high school EFL teachers. The findings showed that teachers rated the listening exercises as above average, with the goals receiving the highest rating for their clear focus on communication. However, insufficient input, such as vocabulary and structures, highlighted the need for improvements to better support learners.

From the above-mentioned previous studies, it is patently obvious that the evaluation of the textbook series just concentrated on the educators' opinions and did not exploit the high school students' perspectives. Although much work has been done to date, few studies have been conducted to investigate students' attitudes toward an English textbook at a high school, especially in terms of learners' needs in the context of Vietnam. This, therefore, serves as an adequate rationale for the existence of this paper, offering more comprehensive insights into high school students' attitudes towards an English textbook regarding learners' needs.

Research Questions

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the cognitive attitudes of students at Gia Dinh High School towards the Friends Global textbook in terms of learners' needs?
2. What are the affective attitudes of students at Gia Dinh High School towards the Friends Global textbook in terms of learners' needs?
3. What are the behavioral attitudes of students at Gia Dinh High School towards the Friends Global textbook in terms of learners' needs?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

The study was conducted at Gia Dinh High School, one of the most prestigious high schools in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. With high entrance examination scores, the students at this high school are academically capable, well-educated, and exhibit a wide range of English proficiency levels, ranging from A1 to C1. The participants in the study were selected using a convenience sampling method, a cost-effective and accessible approach where students from the researcher's educational institution served as the primary participants (Dörnyei, 2007; Saunders et al., 2019). Specifically, the study involved 226 students from three grade ten classes and three grade eleven classes, representing the total sample size of this research. According to Brannen (2017), quantitative research can serve as a basis for sampling cases and comparison groups for detailed analysis. Therefore, from the 226-student cohort, eight individuals were selected to participate in semi-structured interviews. These participants were chosen based on their academic performances and categorized as good or average. Furthermore, considerable attention was paid to key sample characteristics such as gender, grade, years of English study, and daily hours of

English learning to ensure diversity. This approach aligns with Milroy and Gordon's (2003) assertion that the strength of data collected from a small cohort depends on how well the group represents the broader population. It is clear that the participants in this study, with their diverse English proficiency levels, academic capabilities, learning attitudes, and experiences with Friends Global textbook - the main coursebook of their school - are instrumental in exploring the cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes of grade 10 and 11 students at Gia Dinh High School towards Friends Global textbook in terms of learners' needs. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the participants completing the questionnaire, encompassing variables such as gender, grade, duration of English language study, and daily English learning hours. Meanwhile, table 1 demonstrates the demographic profile of the participants taking part in the semi-structured interview section, encompassing variables such as gender, age, grade, academic performance, duration of English language study, and daily English learning hours.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Survey Participants

Background Information		N = 226		
		F	%	
Gender	Male	67	29.6	population; F:
	Female	159	70.4	
Class	10L	35	15.5	
	10TN4	43	19.0	
	10TN5	36	15.9	
	11CV	36	15.9	
	11XH1	41	18.1	
	11TN2	35	15.5	
Years of learning English	Less than 1 year	6	2.7	
	1-3 years	6	2.7	
	5-7 years	50	22.1	
	More than 7 years	164	72.6	
Daily hours for learning English	Less than 1 hour	97	42.9	
	1-3 hours	116	51.3	
	3-5 hours	7	3.1	
	More than 5 hours	6	2.7	
Frequency; %: Percent				

Regarding semi-structured interviews, eight students were selected from the 226-student group who had completed the questionnaire and were labeled from S1 to S8. The sample included an equal number of students from grades 10 and 11, and a balanced gender distribution with four males and four females. Academic performance was evenly split, with four students (two from each grade) classified as having good performance and four as having average performance, based on first-semester results. All participants had studied English for more than seven years. Most students (six) reported studying English for 1–3 hours daily, while only two studied for less than one hour per day.

Design of the Study

To answer the above-mentioned research questions, which delve into the cognitive, affective, and behavioural attitudes of students from grades 10 and 11 in Gia Dinh High School towards

the Friends Global textbook in terms of learners' needs, this study was carried out using a mixed methods design. In fact, the qualitative researcher is often said to observe through a wide lens, aiming to identify connections and patterns among a previously unspecified set of concepts, whereas the quantitative researcher witnesses via a narrow lens on a predetermined set of variables (Brannen, 2017). Due to this, it is not enough to merely analyze qualitative or quantitative data, and data tend to exhibit "greater validity" when they result from the utilization of multiple instruments. Hence, integrating the two databases helps gain deeper insight into the research problems and questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Likewise, Pardede (2018) also contended that mixed methods allow researchers to explore both the "what" questions, encompassing quantitative and qualitative facets, and the "how" or "why" predominantly qualitative questions. Consequently, this approach offered researchers insights into varying perspectives concerning a specific phenomenon. For those reasons, the researchers conducted a mixed-methods research, combining a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

Data collection & analysis

Google Form links were sent to 226 students at Gia Dinh High School through the Zalo platform to answer three research questions. Each student spent five to ten minutes reading the instructions and completing the questionnaire for quantitative data. After that, eight students in the 226-student group above, including three grade-ten students and three grade-eleven students, were invited to take part in semi-structured interviews individually for qualitative data. This seems to be because circumstances where qualitative fieldwork is conducted after quantitative work involve seeking further clarification of a confusing result that quantitative data alone cannot elucidate, and the need to delve deeper into small but notable subgroups that emerge from the initial data (Brannen, 2017).

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted with the assistance of 84 students at Gia Dinh High School, after which the results were analysed using Cronbach's Alpha measurement. The total reliability score was 0.944 ($\alpha = 0.944$), which was also evident across cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes, with scores of 0.836, 0.841, and 0.877, respectively. These scores indicated a very high level of internal consistency among the test items, as Deniz and Alsaffar (2013) stated that a questionnaire is deemed sufficiently reliable if the alpha value (α) in the reliability statistics is 0.7 or above.

Table 2

Reliability Statistics

No.	Attitudes	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Cognitive attitudes	7	0.836
2	Affective attitudes	7	0.841
3	Behavioral attitudes	7	0.877
Total		21	0.944

Concerning quantitative data analysis, the data collected via questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS 20, a software that Saunders et al. (2019) describe as suitable for "advanced data management and statistical analysis" (p. 556). This software was employed to produce statistics on frequency, mean, and standard deviation. To further enhance the validity of the study, the

researchers adopted a new interpretation scheme for the 4-point Likert Scale to interpret the mean scores of Gia Dinh high school students' attitudes towards the Friends Global textbook. This scheme, which utilized the integers' natural boundaries as scale anchors, has demonstrated over 90% efficiency in accurately assessing respondents' underlying abilities and effectively avoids the bias inherent in conventional interpretation methods. The interpretation scheme is as follows:

1.00 - 1.49: Very negative

1.50 - 2.49: Negative

2.50 - 3.49: Positive

3.50 - 4.00: Very positive

In terms of qualitative data analysis, once all 8 recordings were collected, the authors personally transcribed them, adhering to Dörnyei's (2007) assertion that the transcription process markedly aids in data comprehension. The transcripts were thereafter manually coded from Vietnamese to English to facilitate detailed analysis. Dörnyei also describes coding as marking parts of the transcribed data with labels for easy identification, retrieval, and grouping.

Results/Findings

Research Question 1: High school students' cognitive attitudes towards Friends Global textbook in terms of learners' needs.

Table 3

High School Students' Cognitive Attitudes toward the Friends Global Textbook in Terms of Language-Skill Emphasis

No.	Statements	N = 226	
		Mean	Std. Deviation
1.1	I think the textbook helps me understand texts' detailed content on current and familiar topics.	2.74	0.775
1.2	I think the textbook helps me listen and understand main ideas of current events, broadcasts, interviews on familiar topics.	2.66	0.785
1.3	I think the textbook provides writing activities with full instructions like model essays, outlines, and guiding questions.	2.64	0.789
1.4	I think the textbook provides lots of vocabulary, structures, model speeches, and a "speaking strategies" section.	2.64	0.843
Total		2.67	0.798

In general, high school students' cognitive attitudes towards Friends Global textbook's language-skill emphasis were favorable (Table 3), evidenced by the total mean score indicating a generally positive outlook ($M = 2.67$), and a standard deviation reflecting moderate response variability ($SD = 0.798$). In terms of speaking skills, there was total agreement on the Friends Global textbook's provision of lots of vocabulary, structures, model speeches, and a "speaking

strategies" section (item 1.4: $M = 2.64$; $SD = 0.843$). The same picture was evident in the textbook's reading skills; students adopted positive cognitive attitudes towards its strength to improve students' reading for details on familiar topics (item 1.1: $M = 2.74$; $SD = 0.775$). Similarly, most learners also concurred that "the textbook [helped them] listen and understand main ideas of current events, broadcasts, interviews on familiar topics" (item 1.2: $M = 2.66$, $SD = 0.785$), and "the textbook [provided] writing activities with full instructions like model essays, outlines, and guiding questions" (item 1.3: $M = 2.64$; $SD = 0.789$).

Qualitative data supported these findings, with students praising the textbook's appropriately challenging reading and realistic topics and the moderate speed and natural conversations in the listening exercises. The productive skills were also well-received, with students appreciating the clear guidelines, strategies, and additional vocabulary for speaking and writing. The findings are detailed as follows:

"The reading section isn't too difficult and helps develop reading for details. The topics are realistic, making it easy to engage. The speaking section offers varied topics, vocabulary, structures, and detailed guidance on speaking strategies." (S2)

"The listening exercises feature natural conversations at a moderate speed, making them easy to understand." (S3)

"The writing section provides clear guidelines, outlines, and structures, making it understandable." (S5)

However, the qualitative evidence also suggested that the Friends Global textbook provided a few instructions on writing essays, suggesting a need for more instructional support and practice.

Table 4

High School Students' Cognitive Attitudes toward the Friends Global Textbook in Terms of Language-System Emphasis

No.	Statements	N = 226	
		Mean	Std. Deviation
2.1	I think the textbook's repeating new vocabulary in subsequent lessons help me remember them longer.	2.85	0.826
2.2	I think the textbook provides enough material for pronunciation practice (vowels, consonants, word stress, sentence stress, and intonation).	2.47	0.828
2.3	I think the examples in the textbook help me understand grammar's practical usage.	2.88	0.773
Total		2.73	0.829

Generally, as can be seen in the Table 4, high school students had positive cognitive attitudes toward the Friends Global textbook's language-system emphasis, with moderate diversity among responses ($M = 2.73$; $SD = 0.829$). The highest mean score belonged to item 2.3 ($M = 2.88$; $SD = 0.773$), "[they thought] the examples in the textbook [helped them] understand grammar's practical usage". This was followed by item 2.1 ($M = 2.85$; $SD = 0.826$), "[they thought] the textbook's repeating new vocabulary in subsequent lessons [helped them]

remember them longer”. In contrast to the textbook’s vocabulary and grammar, most of them objected to phonology, with item 2.2 ($M = 2.47$; $SD = 0.828$), “[they thought] the textbook provided enough material for pronunciation practice”.

The interview responses were consistent with the numerical findings, with interviewees showing positive cognitive attitudes toward the textbook's vocabulary and grammar. More precisely, they celebrated the repetition of new vocabulary for retention and the clarification of grammar’s practical use through examples. The opposite was true for phonology; they had not been exposed to phonology-related guidelines, activities, and exercises.

“I find it helpful that new vocabulary is repeated in subsequent lessons because frequent review is necessary to remember and use it.” (S2)

“As for phonology, I find that the textbook almost lacks any instruction on pronunciation or distinguishing different sounds, as well as phonology-related activities.” (S6)

“The textbook visually provides grammar examples and explains them directly, which helps us understand how to use them correctly.” (S8)

Research Question 2: High school students’ affective attitudes towards Friends Global textbook in terms of learners’ needs.

Table 5

High School Students’ Affective Attitudes toward the Friends Global Textbook in Terms of Language-Skill Emphasis

No.	Statements	N = 226	
		Mean	Std. Deviation
3.1	I find the vocabulary and structures extracted from the textbook's reading passages very applicable to English communication.	2.72	0.782
3.2	I feel the textbook has current and familiar listening topics suitable for my interests.	2.48	0.834
3.3	I find practicing writing common administrative forms like CVs, job applications very useful.	2.62	0.868
3.4	I feel the textbook has current and familiar speaking topics suitable for my interests.	2.61	0.848
Total		2.61	0.837

By and large, Table 5 indicates that the total mean score of 2.61 characterized a generally affirmative outlook on the Friends Global textbook's language-skill emphasis, with a standard deviation of 0.837 showing moderate differences in responses. Item 3.1 ranked highest ($M = 2.72$; $SD = 0.782$), where students found the vocabulary and structures from the reading passages very applicable to English communication. Many students also agreed on the speaking topics’ currency, familiarity, and suitability (item 3.4: $M = 2.61$; $SD = 0.848$), and the usefulness of practice in writing administrative forms (item 3.3: $M = 2.62$; $SD = 0.868$). Conversely, item 3.2 ($M = 2.48$; $SD = 0.834$) revealed that students found the listening topics less familiar, current, or engaging for their interests.

Consistent with the numerical data, qualitative data illustrated that many students praised the textbook's reading, writing, and speaking skills for their practical and engaging content. However, they found the listening topics monotonous, suggesting the inclusion of more stimulating subjects such as social media, video games, and aspects of young people's school life to enhance learners' motivation and interest. The interviewees' responses include:

"I can apply words from reading and listening sections to my speaking or writing." (S1)

"The listening topics aren't very interesting, so the textbook should include topics like social media, video games, school life or young people's lives" (S2)

"Writing common administrative forms is useful for work and life. Apart from this, I find the speaking topics quite varied and engaging." (S6)

Despite the above-mentioned similarity to quantitative data, several students mentioned that listening to topics like sports and music could increase classroom engagement, suggesting that promoting these familiar topics could be advantageous.

Table 6

High School Students' Affective Attitudes towards Friends Global Textbook in Terms of Language-System Emphasis

No.	Statements	N = 226	
		Mean	Std. Deviation
4.1	I find the textbook's vocabulary exercises very useful in my memorization and language usage.	2.85	0.789
4.2	I find the textbook's pronunciation practice activities very useful and interesting.	2.42	0.841
4.3	I find the textbook's grammar explanations understandable.	2.85	0.759
Total		2.71	0.821

Overall, Table 6 reveals that high school students' affective attitudes on the Friends Global textbook's language-system emphasis were mostly positive, with a total mean score of 2.71 and a standard deviation of 0.821, underscoring moderate variance in responses. Securing the first rank was the usefulness of this textbook's vocabulary exercises in memorization and language usage (item 4.1: $M = 2.85$; $SD = 0.789$) and the comprehensibility of its grammar explanations (item 4.3: $M = 2.85$; $SD = 0.759$). The opposite picture was evident in item 4.2 ($M = 2.42$; $SD = 0.841$); students found the pronunciation practice activities less useful and interesting.

Qualitative evidence aligned with these findings, as students praised the vocabulary exercises for aiding memorization and language usage, along with grammar explanations for the use of simple English and the direct analysis within examples. However, they noted that the textbook did not provide many exercises and explanations on phonology, which they found in the Friends Global Workbook instead. The particulars are listed as follows:

"The textbook's vocabulary exercises also help me remember words longer and apply them across the four skills." (S3)

"The grammar explanations and examples are easy to understand because the

vocabulary is simpler, helping me visualize how grammar is used.” (S8)

“I’ve noticed that there are not many exercises or explanations on phonology in the Student’s Book; I practice phonology in the Workbook.” (S7)

Conversely, a handful of learners, especially those with good academic performance, found the vocabulary exercises too easy, simple, and limited in number, suggesting a supplementary workbook for more advanced practice. In addition, some students also found the academic terms used in grammar explanations confusing.

Research Question 3: High school students’ behavioral attitudes towards Friends Global textbook in terms of learners’ needs.

Table 7

High School Students’ Behavioral Attitudes toward the Friends Global Textbook in Terms of Language-Skill Emphasis

No.	Statements	N = 226	
		Mean	Std. Deviation
5.1	The textbook’s reading passages and associated activities increase my classroom engagement.	2.62	0.841
5.2	I will continue to use the textbook as a resource for practicing my listening skills.	2.36	0.933
5.3	Thanks to the textbook, I can write common administrative forms like CVs, leave applications on my own.	2.39	0.884
5.4	Thanks to the textbook, I can confidently communicate in English with others on familiar topics.	2.43	0.893
Total		2.45	0.893

Overall, Table 7 shows that the total mean score of 2.45 reflected negative behavioral attitudes towards Friends Global textbook’s language-skill emphasis, and the standard deviation of 0.893 demonstrated moderate diversity among learners’ responses. More specifically, students held negative behavioral attitudes towards listening (item 5.2: $M = 2.36$; $SD = 0.933$), speaking (item 5.4: $M = 2.43$; $SD = 0.893$), and writing skills (item 5.3: $M = 2.39$; $SD = 0.884$). The opposite was evident in students’ behavioral attitudes on the Friends Global textbook’s reading skills; most of them agreed upon item 5.1 ($M = 2.62$; $SD = 0.841$), especially regarding classroom engagement through reading passages and associated activities.

Qualitative evidence confirmed the quantitative statistics above. Students found the listening tasks too easy, which discouraged them from using the textbook for self-study. Regarding speaking skills, students felt uncertain whether the activities improved their confidence, attributing this to a lack of challenging questions, washback effects, and limited class time. They suggested adding more debate topics to address these issues for better speaking practice. Regarding writing skills, students expressed difficulty writing administrative forms independently, citing inadequate writing instructions, washback effects, and teachers’ underutilization of writing tasks in class. However, most students showed positive attitudes towards reading skills, particularly appreciating the engagement provided by reading passages and identifying information exercises. Selected student comments include:

“The textbook’s reading exercises with True/False tasks make the lessons more engaging, allowing me to express my opinions and choose answers.” (S4)

“The textbook’s listening exercises are too easy, not significantly improving my listening skills. Therefore, I don’t use the textbook to practice listening. Moreover, the textbook doesn’t focus much on writing administrative forms. Also, teachers don’t fully exploit these parts because they aren’t included in the midterm and final tests.” (S5)

“The textbook’s speaking section isn’t useless, but teachers focus more on grammar; vocabulary, writing, and reading due to limited class time. The speaking section only includes a few questions and lacks depth. More challenging questions and debate topics would engage me more, but the textbook lacks these.” (S7)

Despite these critiques, a few students still used the textbook’s listening exercises for self-study, finding them suitable for their levels with informative and motivating topics. Additionally, several interviewees reported that the textbook’s speaking activities increased their confidence by allowing them to apply newly learned grammar and vocabulary in their conversations.

Table 8

High School Students’ Behavioral Attitudes towards Friends Global Textbook in Terms of Language-System Emphasis

No.	Statements	N = 226	
		Mean	Std. Deviation
6.1	I often apply the textbook’s vocabulary in communication with my surroundings.	2.58	0.862
6.2	With the textbook’s guidance, I spend more time self-studying pronunciation (vowels, consonants, word stress, sentence stress, and intonation).	2.42	0.887
6.3	I often apply the textbook’s grammar in communication with my surroundings.	2.61	0.827
Total		2.54	0.862

Generally, high school students adopted fairly positive behavioral attitudes toward the Friends Global textbook’s language-system emphasis (Table 8), with moderate response variation ($M = 2.54$; $SD = 0.862$). In detail, the high mean scores of item 6.3 ($M = 2.61$; $SD = 0.827$), and item 6.1 ($M = 2.58$; $SD = 0.862$) indicated that students often applied the textbook’s grammar and vocabulary in communication with their surroundings. However, similar to their cognitive and affective attitudes towards the textbook’s phonology, students continued expressing their objections to item 6.2 ($M = 2.42$; $SD = 0.887$), “[they spent] more time self-studying pronunciation (vowels, consonants, word stress, sentence stress, and intonation) with the textbook’s guidance.” This proved that there is insufficient guidance on pronunciation, leading students to spare little or no time for self-studying pronunciation.

In accordance with the quantitative results, the qualitative evidence further indicated that students expressed their agreement over the applicability of vocabulary and grammar but criticized the shortage of detailed instructions on phonology, which discouraged self-study.

“I find the vocabulary and grammar in this textbook very useful, especially when I can

apply the vocabulary and grammar in communicating with people around me.” (S2)

“The phonology section in the textbook lacks detailed tips and guidance, so I rarely self-study it at home, which negatively affects my performance in that part of the test.” (S8)

Nevertheless, the qualitative data disclosed that some students hardly ever applied grammar points to communicate with surroundings by virtue of a substantial mismatch between the textbook’s grammar and real-life conversational language.

Discussion

Cognitive attitudes

The results indicated that high school students showed generally positive cognitive attitudes towards the Friends Global textbook regarding reading, listening, speaking, writing, vocabulary, and grammar. Obviously, grammar was one of the strong points of the Friends Global textbook, as opposed to Pearson's textbook. T. H. Bui (2022) stated that Pearson's textbook lacked contextualized grammar presentation, which may lead to students being deprived of the opportunities to make connections between grammatical patterns, meanings of texts, and uses in real-life communication. Concerning speaking skills, the Friends Global textbook included age-appropriate topics. With respect to writing skills, the Friends Global textbook provided students with numerous writing activities with full instructions. This is similar to Pearson's textbook, which offered controlled practice exercises (e.g., gap fills, matching), allowing students to brainstorm and develop ideas for their writing, and concluded with a free practice task requiring students to produce a complete written output. As for listening skills, most students found the Friends Global textbook helpful for understanding the main ideas in current events, praising the exercises' moderate speed and natural conversations. This contrasts with T. K. L. Bui's (2024) research, where students found their materials' listening texts too difficult, citing unfamiliar pronunciation and many new words as the main reasons.

On the other hand, students expressed dissatisfaction with the Friends Global textbook's phonology. Pronunciation practice materials were rare and not detailed. Friends Global textbook did not present pronunciation lessons explicitly, which is quite different from Pearson's textbook, in which the Pronunciation section of each unit revolves around one pronunciation feature, which can either be individual sounds, word stress, sentence stress, or intonation (T. H. Bui, 2022). Moreover, Pearson’s textbook also provides more frequent and detailed practice, starting with a listening input, followed by an exercise to help students identify and recognize the target pronunciation feature.

Affective attitudes

It is noticeable that regarding learners' needs, the Friends Global textbook received positive affective attitudes from high school students. The factors garnering praise from them were reading, speaking, writing, vocabulary, and grammar. Concerning reading skills, the Friends Global textbook offered communicative tasks after reading exercises, which was a strength compared to old textbooks in Vietnam. Dat (2008) asserted that many controversial readings in English 7, 11, and 12 textbooks were, sadly, followed by tasks eliciting universal knowledge

rather than inviting critical judgment, and usually, learners were not provided with sufficient opportunities to make discoveries about how English is used. As for vocabulary, the Friends Global textbook may be superior to Pearson's one in which, according to T. H. Bui (2022), new words were usually introduced alongside their English definitions through straightforward matching or gap-fill activities, followed by further gap-fill exercises designed to reinforce the students' comprehension of the words' meanings within context as well as their grammatical accuracy. On the other hand, the Friends Global textbook often presented new items through reading passages and listening exercises with clear contexts, allowing students to deduce meanings themselves.

In contrast, high school students still showed their strong disapproval of the Friends Global textbook's listening skills and phonology. First, they perceived the listening topics in the Friends Global textbook as uninteresting and dull, noting a lack of engaging topics like social media, video games, and facets of young people's school life. Hence, this textbook's listening topics failed to boost learner motivation and interest. This is contrary to Hoang's (2016) research, which stated that the ten-year English textbook series was organized around topics familiar to Vietnamese students and suited to their age group. Also, research by Phan et al. (2020) indicated that, among ten listening topics presented in Pearson's textbook, most topics were familiar, authentic, and interesting, while some were new. Another disagreement was the usefulness and excitement of its pronunciation practice activities. The result is rather similar to the study of T. H. Bui (2022) on Pearson's textbook in which pronunciation practice mainly involved listening to and repeating dialogues without connecting pronunciation features to speaking, limiting its effectiveness in improving pronunciation through meaningful communicative contexts.

Behavioral attitudes

It is clear that the behavioral attitudes of high school students towards the Friends Global textbook were generally unfavorable, particularly regarding listening skills, writing skills, speaking skills, and phonology. More specifically, this textbook's role in enhancing their self-study regarding listening skills and phonology was devalued by most learners. This finding is consistent with T. H. N. Tran's (2022) study, where most students seldom practiced listening at home using their textbooks. Furthermore, the textbook's speaking activities nearly had little impact on learners' confidence in English communication with others on familiar topics owing to a lack of challenging speaking questions and topics. This is also a shortcoming of English 10, 11, and 12 textbooks, according to T. T. M. Nguyen (2007), stated that many of these old textbooks' speaking activities are found to be non-communicative, failing to elicit negotiation of meaning and presenting unrealistic and unnatural discourse. As for writing skills, students reported being unable to write common administrative forms, such as CVs and leave applications, on their own due to the absence of this writing type in the Friends Global textbook. By stark contrast, T. H. Bui (2022) mentioned that Pearson's textbook tailored each unit around a specific topic and focused on two main text types - essays and descriptive reports of simple charts - along with other genres, including reports and CVs or job application letters. Additionally, as revealed during the semi-structured interviews, other key reasons for students' negative feedback about the textbook's productive skills encompassed teachers' underutilization of textbook resources for productive skills, lack of assessment, and current time

constraints. This aligns with T. T. T. Nguyen's (2018) study on five high school teachers in which most expressed concern about insufficient time and program allocation for writing, with only 45 minutes allotted, while students needed more. Similarly, Dat's (2008) study on the BAVE course in Vietnam, developed to enhance students' communicative competence, highlighted three conflicting pressures: the need to improve communicative learning mode, the need to adhere to the national examination structure, and the need to comply with time constraints set by the state curriculum. By contrast, our finding differs from T. H. T. Tran's (2024) research, which highlighted the widespread use of the Communicative Language Teaching approach in high schools, with teachers consistently using it to develop students' speaking skills.

On the contrary, they adopted fairly positive behavioral attitudes towards Friends Global textbook's reading skills, vocabulary, and grammar. In more detail, high school students acknowledged how reading activities increased classroom engagement, a distinct benefit of Friends Global textbook compared to older ones, which, according to Dat (2008), included boring texts and ineffective reading activities. In addition, students praised the textbook's focus on applying vocabulary and grammar in English communication with their surroundings, adopting a "focus on form" approach - a central construct in task-based language teaching (Long, 1991). According to Ellis (2016), the aforementioned approach would not only facilitate the gradual process involved in learning L2 linguistic features but also assist the development of form-function mapping, thereby enhancing both fluency and accuracy. This recognition suggested that the Friends Global textbook was useful in helping learners communicate in English, a goal not achieved by many textbooks in other countries. For instance, Lim's (2019) analysis of five Korean textbooks showed that too many form-oriented activities inevitably restricted learners' ability to use language for real communication and develop well-balanced communicative competencies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the paper was conducted to examine high school students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes towards the Friends Global textbook regarding learners' needs. As for the first research question, it is clear that high school students displayed positive cognitive attitudes towards the Friends Global textbook in terms of learners' needs, especially reading, listening, speaking, vocabulary, and grammar. Nevertheless, they opposed the textbook's phonology due to limited pronunciation practice materials. Turning to the second research question, students held positive affective attitudes toward learners' needs, including reading, speaking, writing, vocabulary, and grammar. Yet, they disapproved of phonology and listening, emphasizing the limited appeal of the pronunciation practice activities and the listening topics. Ultimately, concerning the third research question, the behavioral attitudes of high school students toward the Friends Global textbook were negative, particularly regarding listening, writing, speaking, and phonology. The reasons for such negative feedback about the textbook's role in boosting students' confidence and self-study encompassed the ease of listening tasks, the shortage of challenging speaking questions, unclear writing instructions, insufficient guidance on phonology, the teachers' underutilization of the textbook's speaking and writing activities,

washback effects, lack of assessment on these skills, and limited class time. Conversely, they adopted fairly positive behavioral attitudes toward the Friends Global textbook's reading, vocabulary, and grammar, acknowledging that reading activities enhanced classroom participation and that grammar and vocabulary were applicable in real-life communication.

Implications and Recommendations

The above-mentioned findings have several pedagogical implications, providing teachers, textbook authors, and policymakers with practical recommendations and insights into the Friends Global textbook's strengths and weaknesses. Specifically, textbook authors are encouraged to expand content on phonology, listening, speaking, and writing skills (including essays and common administrative forms), and add more engaging topics such as social media platforms, video games, aspects of youth school life, popular TV shows, music, and relevant political discussions (Rost, 2011). Meanwhile, teachers should use the study's insights to adapt their instructional planning by offering more speaking and writing practice and providing supplementary materials on phonology, listening, and writing skills. Furthermore, policymakers, along with the Ministry of Education and Training, should also reassess the time allocated to teaching productive skills and mandate the testing and assessment of these skills. By implementing these refinements, educators can enhance students' self-study, classroom engagement, and academic performance.

In spite of these pedagogical implications, some limitations still exist, from which several recommendations for future studies can be drawn. First, it only explored the attitudes of students at Gia Dinh High School toward the Friends Global textbook, excluding other stakeholders such as teachers, experts, authors, and publishers. Therefore, involving such stakeholders in the textbook evaluation process via interviews and questionnaires would allow for comparative analysis, rendering conclusions more objective and accurate. Second, the small sample size of 226 students and the study's focus on Gia Dinh High School—where most students excel in English—raise concerns about the representativeness of the findings, particularly in reflecting the attitudes of students with lower English proficiency in other schools across Ho Chi Minh City. Thus, replicating this study with a larger sample size or across multiple high schools would provide a broader perspective, offering high school chief specialists and teachers deeper insights into Vietnamese students' attitudes towards the Friends Global textbook. Third, researchers in the field of textbook evaluation could apply this study's conceptual framework to evaluate other textbook sets, especially those orientated toward the GEEC 2018. Lastly, given the limited research on textbook evaluation in Vietnam, there is a pressing need for studies that enrich and synthesize the existing literature on this topic.

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