Language Education in Asia

Volume 5 | Issue 2 | 2014

ISSN: 1838-7365

LEiA
Language Education in Asia

CamTESOL

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Editor's Note

Language Education in Asia and Local Authors

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Language Education in Asia (LEiA) was established to support local authors whose voices may be underrepresented in peer-reviewed international English language academic journals and to provide academic articles with practical applications for our readers. As the journal completes its fifth year, the editorial team looks forward to a strengthened emphasis on supporting local authors in the Asian region. With the imminent economic integration of the ten states forming the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and its impact on language education policies, programs, practices, and more, we particularly encourage submissions from ASEAN-based authors.

The publication, which was inspired by the CamTESOL Conference Series in Cambodia, is based in a region where English is increasingly being used as a lingua franca. To support local authors, the LEiA editorial team is encouraging more recognition of English as a lingua franca (ELF) usage and diverse authorial voices in our publication process. As our Chief Copy Editor, John Middlecamp wrote, "Our goal is maintaining the writer's voice in our copy editing. We use well-thought-out but flexible style guidelines to collaborate with authors to provide clarity for all of our readers while maintaining the authenticity of our writers' experience as researchers or commentators, and in many cases, as English language learners. We seek a rich variety of styles, rather than an overly standardized monotone of rigidly edited academic prose" (personal communication, November 6, 2014).

The LEiA guidelines, available on our Submission of Papers webpage on the www.camtesol.org website, have been updated to support all prospective authors in writing papers which meet both the needs of our audience and the standards of the journal. In addition, John Middlecamp has created two new documents. The LEiA Preliminary Submission Requirements is a checklist for authors to thoroughly prepare their articles for the preliminary screening process (http://www.camtesol.org/Download/LEiA/LEiA_Preliminary_Submission_Requirements.pdf). We too often receive articles which clearly reveal the authors have not followed our guidelines; considering such papers requires an inordinate amount of our volunteer editors' time. From Volume 6, Issue 1, such papers will be returned to the author for possible resubmission for the next issue. The second document, the LEiA Author Guidelines, will be especially helpful to newer authors; in addition to outlining the elements that we expect good submissions to have, John has provided examples of successful article sections from past LEiA articles (http://www.camtesol.org/Download/LEiA/LEiA_Author_Guidelines_TPR.pdf).

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 183-185. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A01/Kimura

This editor's note is short for several reasons, one of which is that Volume 5, Issue 2 starts with a special paper on writing for publication in academic journals from Greg Rouault in Japan, and the article says everything I would like to say. I attended Mr. Rouault's excellent workshop on this topic at the first CamTESOL and UECA Regional ELT Research Symposium preceding the 10th CamTESOL Conference last year and am very pleased to publish this paper in LEiA. The advice from highly respected editors of prominent international journals and the additional essential information provided are what all authors seeking publication should know, and importantly, follow.

I am also pleased to publish our first CamTESOL Regional ELT Research Grant Paper, "Factors Affecting Secondary-School English Teachers' Adoption of Technologies in Southwest Vietnam." Le Xuan Mai and Vo Kim Hong investigate teachers' use of information and communication technology (ICT) in ELT and the factors that constrain or support ICT use in the two contexts studied. As ICT use in language education becomes more widespread in the region, administrators may wish to consider factors influencing teachers' uptake of the technologies available to them.

The research section starts with a paper from Cambodia by Virak Chan. He writes about improving university students' social awareness and critical thinking through reading and writing about issues in the news. Students were first taught about voice and the summary-response genre from examples from a local newspaper; they then sought news stories and wrote weekly journal entries which the author analyzed. From Vietnam, Le Thi Hong Duyen reports on the challenges that English teachers face when assigned to teach ESP courses about a subject new to them through studies of two teachers learning how to teach medical English. Amanda Hilliard examines representation and culture in intermediate-level English language textbooks used internationally. While because of our editorial policy, and with the author's agreement, the names of the textbooks were omitted, the value and implications of the findings can still clearly be seen. The author also provides a useful framework to analyze the cultural content of textbooks. In the final research paper, Sathya Chea and Lee Shumow explore Cambodian university students' self-efficacy, goal orientation, and achievement specifically in the area of EFL writing and compare the results with those from studies done in western contexts. Implications for the classroom are also discussed.

Both papers in the teaching practice section are about critical thinking. First, Jeffrey Brown offers a content-based instructional model to develop critical thinking skills as well as language skills in EAP courses. The model, based on a framework of cognitive skills, was used in a pre-master's EAP course at a university in China. Next, from Thailand, Alexander Nanni and Philip Wilkinson explore the use of online resources to develop critical thinking skills and Facione's Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric to evaluate these skills. Students in a pre-university intensive English program were assessed pre- and post-intervention during structured discussions in small groups. The authors include links to online resources appropriate for English language learners; because of the scarcity of such resources, the authors created some of the resources themselves.

As always, we are grateful to the LEIA Advisory and Editorial Boards for their continued generous support of the journal and the authors, despite their very full professional lives. At the PAC@Thailand TESOL 35th Conference in Bangkok in January, I attended a panel discussion entitled "English Language Teaching Policies in Asia," moderated by Suchada Nimmannit and featuring, among others, Milagros Laurel, both LEiA Advisory Board members, and Jayakaran Mukundan and Watanaporn Ra-ngubtook, two LEiA Editorial Board members.

Thanks also go to the editorial team for their dedicated work on this issue. Most of them are on a well-deserved break from LEiA matters, but planning has already started for the next volume. John Middlecamp will become our new Associate Editor while remaining Chief Copy Editor; he will oversee much of the publication process from screening to copy-editing. We also are grateful for the support we receive from the IDP Education (Cambodia) and its staff; for them, tasks connected to LEiA often come in the midst of preparing for the symposium and conference.

We congratulate and thank the authors above for their submissions, and additionally thank all of the authors who submitted papers. We also hope our readers find the articles in this issue useful.

Finally, I am delighted to announce that IDP Education (Cambodia) is publishing *ASEAN Integration and the Role of English Language Teaching*, a special edition book that Richmond Stroupe and I had the pleasure of editing. Andrew Tweed and Mony Som, Diana Dudzik and Quynh Thi Ngoc Nguyen, Noor Azam Haji-Othman and Salbrina Sharbawi, Caroline Ho and Susan Gwee, Lan Nguyen Thi Phuong and Thuy Phung Nhu, Utami Widiati and Nur Hayati, and Stephen Hall examined challenges and shared lessons learned in increasing English language capacity in Cambodia, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia, respectively. The book is scheduled to be released at the 11th CamTESOL Conference.

Special Paper

Writing for Academic Publication: Advice Drawn from Experienced International Journal Editors

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Many researchers understand that publications are a necessary evil that they must negotiate as members of the academy for employment, promotion, and fulfilling research grant requirements. The expectations and requirements for successful submission to academic journals can often be daunting and may seem shrouded in secrecy. This paper looks to clarify the guidelines for getting articles published, outlines approaches to targeting appropriate journals, and improves upon understanding the reviewing and revision process. Drawing largely from a panel discussion featuring international journal editors, the elements of peer reviewing in publications, the scope and purpose of academic periodicals, and various research paper types are covered together with acceptance rates, response times, and APA style conventions. Along with new developments in academic publishing, the editors' advice shared here should help demystify the process for the authors in Asian contexts willing to take up the challenge to submit research papers and articles for publication.

The *publish or perish* decree often attributed to employment entry and career progress (or even survival) in tertiary education quite evidently has varying levels of rigor that it is held to. The declining student population in Japan has reduced the number of university and college instructor positions. More widely across Asia, improved access to postgraduate studies has increased the competition for desirable positions that can make life as an ex-pat or domestic academic more stable. Networking with peers for "social capital" (Cotsworth, 2012), demonstrating accomplishments in part-time work, and keeping up membership in professional development associations can be important subjective factors when applying for jobs in higher education (Miller, 2011). However, even such proactive steps can be shortchanged by the mere count and ranking of one's academic achievements, identified most specifically through publications. Since the number of publications may be merely tallied objectively by general administrators in the prescreening of standard application forms, one of the challenges applicants face is to build their list of published articles. Although books and monographs are positioned at the top of most standard application forms in Japan (and may even be a requirement for a tenure-track university position in American universities), this paper presents advice for publishing in peer-reviewed or refereed journals related to applied linguistics and ELT.

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 186-197. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A02/Rouault

Background

Evidence of the importance of writing for academic publication can be seen in conferences held recently around Asia, such as the JALT (Japan Association for Language Teaching) College and University Educators SIG ESP Symposium in 2013, Getting Published in English: Opportunities and Obstacles; the JACET (Japan Association of College English Teachers) National Convention in 2013, with keynote addresses from Ken Hyland (*Applied Linguistics* co-editor) and Alan Hirvela (*TESOL Quarterly* co-editor); and the Regional Research Symposium at CamTESOL 2014, with workshops on conducting research projects, planning replication studies, mentoring for regional research networks, and doing classroom action research. Academics can also now find many self-help and how-to books on writing for academic publication. Thomson and Kamler (2013) offer an insider's perspective into the secret of academic publication that is theoretically grounded and contains strategies and samples to support authors in the "complex tangle of identity work and text work" (p. 1) that writing for publication presents. In the epilogue of a volume co-edited with Roger Nunn, Adamson (2012) summarizes the approach taken in collecting the perspectives of editors, reviewers, and proofreaders from five regional publications based in Asia. Their investigation into the academic norms, the review procedure, and the positioning of an academic journal in terms of its scope and style of content as well as target readership is highlighted as "a relatively rare enquiry in the field of research into academic publishing which tends to focus much more on the authors experiences, particularly those of non-Anglophone scholars, struggling to publish" (p. 172). In a similar vein this paper strives to bring advice from international journal editors to readers and writers in the Asian context.

The comments presented here were collected largely during a panel session, Getting Papers Published, at the 16th World Congress of Applied Linguistics, organized by the International Association of Applied Linguistics (AILA) and held in Beijing in 2011. Facilitated by Leo van Lier, then editor of *Modern Language Journal* (*MLJ*) (who passed away in 2013), the following current or past editors representing well-known peer-reviewed journals shared responses to a list of FAQs (see Appendix) identified by the editors and used as an outline for the session: Allan Bell, *Journal of Sociolinguistics;* Elana Shohamy, *Language Policy;* Diane Belcher, *TESOL Quarterly;* Diane Larsen-Freeman, *Language Learning;* and Regine Hampel, *System*. (Authors seeking specific information about these journals should consult the most current guidelines for each.) With the goal of providing greater transparency and improved awareness, the opening section of this article covers guidelines for publishing in peer-reviewed publications. The second section addresses targeting an appropriate journal and is followed by information on acceptance rates and response times in the reviewing process. The final two sections look at quality of academic writing and current changes in academic publishing.

Guidelines for Getting Articles Published

Submissions to Peer-Reviewed Publications

Since the cardinal rule is to never submit the same paper for consideration to more than one journal, understanding the guidelines, format, and procedures for submissions to a particular journal is imperative. The panel cautioned that editors also work as reviewers and since reviewers may be involved with multiple publications, it is relatively easy to know if a paper is being sent around. The conclusion was clear that authors should not risk the blacklisting that would result from breaking this norm. Furthermore, all of the publications represented in the forum at AILA require authors to sign an agreement that the paper has not been submitted or published elsewhere. For these publications, this requirement then generally excluded submitting papers already published as department working papers (for Japan, an in-house *kiyo*), as well as any drafts published to a website. In many cases, translations of papers already

published in the L1 would not be considered as an original, unpublished work. While invariably there is overlap in an author's writings, the key element sought by the editors is the new contribution a paper makes to the literature, although replication studies in a new context or looking at a different variable could be considered (see Porte, 2012, for a recent edited volume on replication research). With the proliferation of online and self-published output, a simple caveat is that if an author hopes to submit a paper for consideration by a peer-reviewed journal, they should wait until it gets rejected before uploading it to a personal or department website. And even then, only once the author has decided not to submit their paper to another periodical for review should it be uploaded to its final resting place online.

Papers sent to reputable journals and their editorial / review team of experts are blind reviewed, meaning the reviewer is not aware of the name or status of the author. This suggests that, based on the merit of the submission, every author has the same chance to be accepted as their favorite guru. Often the key difference is that writing for academic publication itself is a skill and a genre to be learned and developed through experience and feedback on multiple attempts (see Feak & Swales, 2009, and Swales & Feak, 2009, for an exploration of writing literature reviews and abstracts, respectively). For those authors with more experience with both rejection and acceptance, the option to become a reviewer was suggested as another way to develop one's own writing skills. PhD students (and their advisors) were cautioned against thinking of just submitting a chapter from their dissertation. The editors noted that a submission to a journal should be a stand-alone study or a paper written specifically for publication in a periodical.

Style Conventions and Mechanics

In addition to overall writing quality in terms of organization and development of content, successful submissions for publication, according to the editors, follow the required style for the journal targeted. The websites for academic journals and their parent publishing houses provide a lot of support for the task of writing for publication by covering very specific elements in terms of word count, format, and layout. Van Lier noted that neither editors nor volunteer reviewers have the time for papers where the authors have not followed the submission guidelines. Correct formatting of a manuscript submitted for publication is important as it saves time in peer reviewing and, if the article is accepted, in proofreading. Consequently, papers weak in this area would not even be sent out for review. With examples and resources easily found online or in back issues, there is no justifiable reason for authors to not become acquainted with and subsequently follow the required format and style conventions. Certain journals may include some unique elements of style, but most will largely make use of the format adopted by one of the major style guides. Writing guides such as Lester and Lester Jr. (2010) provide examples of citations and references and the minutiae of punctuating each for the major styles from the American Psychological Association (APA) as well as the Modern Language Association (MLA), the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS), and the Council of Science Editors (CSE) Style Manual.

Many publications in the fields of linguistics, ELT, and SLA have adopted the *American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual* as their style guide (see VandenBos, 2010, for the most current features). A checklist on pages 241-243 in the manual draws attention to spacing, margins, sequence, typeface, the abstract, paragraphs, special characters, and more. Given the information and examples available, there is no reason a writer who is looking to have a manuscript published should not put in the time on these initial and finishing touches. It is important to understand that it is the author's responsibility, not the role of copy editors or layout artists, to make the text look like the finished product in print or online. The only impressions that can be taken from a submission that does not attend to the mechanical criteria

of the style sheet are a lack of care, little concern, or the notion that it is someone else's job – stances which will not endear editors or reviewers to your work and the possible merits of its content. Furthermore, in the *APA Publication Manual*, the largely mechanical items listed above only come after the very important (but often overlooked) discussion of the actual types of articles and the structure and content of the various sections of the manuscript (including the verb tense to be used in each).

Content and Structure

Looking in the table of contents (TOC) of the 6th edition of the *APA Publication Manual* (VandenBos, 2010), it is clear that adopting and writing in APA style is far more than just spaces, capitals, and commas (see Apple, 2008, for more dos and don'ts when writing with APA). The six-page TOC includes guidance on tables and figures, the mechanics of style (e.g., punctuation, capitalization, and numbers), the organization of writing (including the levels of headings and writing style, with a section on grammar), and important details on ethical reporting and reducing bias. Chapter 1 in the manual (VandenBos, 2010) looks at various types of writing in the behavioral sciences. Together with empirical studies and their typical IMRD sequence (Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion), four main types of articles are covered. These include literature reviews, such as meta-analyses or research syntheses; theoretical articles; new or modified methodological approaches; and case studies. In addition, brief reports, replies to previous articles, and book reviews are mentioned. Submitting reviews of teaching materials or academic and professional development titles was suggested by the editors as a useful entry point into writing for academic publishing. Each academic journal may accept and publish a range of article types, such as those highlighted by Belcher of *TESOL Quarterly*: research articles, discussion papers, summaries or reports on research in progress, and teaching or research issues, each with specific features and word counts. It is crucial, therefore, for authors to submit their paper to a journal that publishes in that genre.

Selecting an Appropriate Journal

Journal Scope and Purpose

In addition to following style guidelines and procedures, targeting an appropriate journal for the article type is a vital step. With access to the Internet, authors can easily review websites listing the aim and scope or positioning of the various journals they might consider suitable for their submission. For example, Bell noted that the *Journal of Sociolinguistics* looks broadly at papers with a social dimension while not being limited to language or teaching. In the opening chapter of his title focused on classroom research, Ellis (2012) explicates the scope of the journal he edits.

> *Language Teaching Research* will publish articles related to qualitative or quantitative research in fields of second and foreign language teaching. Articles dealing with the teaching of languages other than English will be welcome. Articles reporting studies of language learning without clear reference to the role of teaching will not be considered. (p. 1)

The editors suggested that, even before writing, authors should think about a particular journal and be familiar with its area of focus and style of writing. Submitting authors should also gain a sense of the content that has been published previously by reading back issues, scanning titles, reviewing abstracts, and searching for key words. One distinguishing feature to be aware of, the panel noted, is whether the journal accepts papers across topics for a more general audience, such as *System*, or if it has a narrower focus requiring additional background knowledge to effectively address the informed readership in that discourse community. At the

submission stage, discourse communities include not only eventual readers but the editor and editorial advisory board, the panel of reviewers, authors who have contributed previously, and those scholars and authorities cited in the paper (Thomson & Kamler, 2013). Taking this into account along with the stated aims and purpose which position the journal will allow an author to understand the expectations and the range of choices and alternatives available. The latest annotated list of applied linguistics and English teaching journals and serials compiled by TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) provides a useful resource to compare various publications and may also serve as a guide to brainstorm possible avenues for publication (see Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 2014 for a link to this resource).

Paper Types and Research Designs

To participate effectively in the academic publishing community, it is important to understand the precise framing for various types of papers and their research designs. The panel did indicate that empirical studies using either quantitative or qualitative methods would be considered and eventually published. It was also noted that mixed methods combinations, which incorporate both quantitative data (e.g., survey responses from students and their numerical grades) and qualitative data (e.g., interview comments from teachers and their lesson plan notes) have become increasingly popular. Authors were cautioned to ensure that complex statistics are accessible to a wide readership including those who are not specialists (see Language Learning & Technology, 2014, for details on how the online refereed journal *Language Learning & Technology* frames the guidelines for quantitative and qualitative research articles). According to the panel, the proportion of quantitative to qualitative articles seen published in the past issues of a journal is largely a reflection of the ratio of submissions received rather than of any editorial preference for a certain type of study. Shohamy noted that in addition to empirical research, *Language Policy* also publishes theoretical papers. Van Lier stated the *MLJ* also accepts conceptual papers but does not publish "survey papers," which Wagner (2010) summarizes as being different from experimental research in that "the researcher does not manipulate the setting or environment in order to investigate how this affects particular variables or the relationship between variables. . . . Instead the goal of survey research is to get information about learners' characteristics, beliefs, or attitudes" (p. 23). However, as Brown (2001) notes, survey instruments do allow the researcher to operationalize and measure abstract notions and psychological constructs that cannot be observed directly and therefore may be quite suitable for a journal with guidelines for research design different than *MLJ*'s. Clearly, researchers conducting survey-based studies in classrooms in Asia with convenience samples of captive learners would have to identify the international peer-reviewed journals that are open to reports on such investigations, sampling, and research design. Authors should complete this background work before following the procedures to submit their paper to a publication, completed most commonly now via e-mail or an online form.

Targeting Higher-Ranked Journals

Although publishing in prestigious journals may not be specifically required for positions or promotion in every academic context in Asia (see Stapleton, 2011, for a discussion of academic requirements in different contexts), some authors may be seeking to target higher-ranked journals in their field. Rankings can be reflected by the academic pedigree and publication experience of the editorial board and reviewers as well as through the journal's acceptance rates. A quick scan of which publications are cited frequently in other works in a particular discipline can also provide a general idea of the leading sources. Additionally, indices such as the *impact factor* can provide a more objective profile of a journal's position in the academic community. The impact factor is a ranking system used to compare journals in a particular field based upon the number of times an article is cited during the previous two years. As examples,

the current impact factors, available on the individual websites for each of the periodicals represented in the 2011 AILA forum, are as follows: *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 1.729; *Language Learning*, 1.433; *Modern Language Journal*, 1.181; *TESOL Quarterly*, 1.000; *System*, 0.889; and *Language Policy*, 0.581, with the larger numbers representing more frequently cited articles. Well-recognized and oft-cited regional periodicals also offer an opportunity to be published in a respected, blind reviewed publication. *RELC Journal*, published on behalf of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) Regional Language Centre, for example, ranks in the top 150 out of almost 600 journals in language and linguistics.

Reviewing and Revision Process

Improving Transparency

One of the main purposes the editors had for holding a session at the AILA Conference was to demystify some of the process for reviewing and revisions in academic publication. Efforts made to share this information more broadly should help authors to prepare better quality submissions for the reviewers and thereby improve the efficiency and turnaround time of the editorial process. Van Lier noted that submission rates at *MLJ* have skyrocketed with the number of *good papers* having more than doubled during his time as editor. Van Lier also commented that as a result of this influx, the number of papers rejected in-house by his editorial team without ever being sent out to a reviewer has increased from 20-25% to around 65%. The two major reasons van Lier stated for papers being rejected are:

1. The paper or research does not make a significant, new contribution to the field for the readership of that journal.
2. The research design is flawed or not solid.

In addition to due diligence by the editors as the first wave of gatekeeping, a principal notion for going with in-house rejections was to avoid irritating the pool of volunteer reviewers by sending them a paper with no chance of getting through to publication. Nevertheless, the goal of van Lier as *MLJ* editor was still to provide the authors of even those papers with no chance of publication a paragraph or two of feedback. These comments would suggest that the effort put in by the author before submitting can influence not only the chance of acceptance but also the quality of the feedback returned with the rejection, which could provide very useful insight into revising the paper for submission elsewhere.

Acceptance Rates

On the matter of acceptance rates, the editors were quite frank in pointing out the standard for top journals in applied linguistics and ELT to be under 10%, with the typical range, including *TESOL Quarterly*, at 5-7%. Since its scope is not limited to papers on teaching and learning English, *MLJ* acceptance rates run as low as 1-2% for its ESL / EFL manuscripts. Shohamy stated from her experience with journals in English for specific purposes that acceptance rates can be as high as 20%. One very enlightening factoid picked out from single-digit rejections rates is the simple math that if a journal publishes 24 papers in a year and their acceptance rate is 8%, then they must review around 300 submissions annually. For an editor or reviewer, managing that quantity of papers each year may seem like a task few would be ready to take on. But as a researcher / practitioner / author looking to submit for publication, that number may fall far short of the imagined total that the top journals receive. Ken Hyland, co-editor of *Applied Linguistics*, identified recently the number of papers reviewed annually for that journal to be around 350, with about 10% going through to publication (personal communication, February 23, 2013). With a clear understanding of these figures, hopeful authors can have a better sense whether publishing in a top-tier, internationally peer-reviewed publication is reasonably within

their reach. Of course success in making it into the short list of papers sent out for review still hinges on the quality of the submission.

Response Times

After meeting the guidelines for a targeted publication and being accepted for review, it can then be a matter of waiting for feedback from reviewers. Many authors, depending on the number of works they have already completed or might have in the pipeline, have had the experience of waiting in a state ranging from somewhat anxious to downright desperate on receiving feedback on their submission. Across the panel, the editors indicated that it would take 3-6 months for them to get feedback returned from their reviewers and possibly longer if a reviewer is busy or somewhat delinquent. It should also be noted that periodicals such as these send each submission to at least two reviewers, and even three in the case of *TESOL Quarterly*. The lengthy time frame is a reality associated first with the largely volunteer basis that academic publishing in applied linguistics runs on and second, on the breadth and scope of background positioning expected in papers in this field. Related to this time lag, Krashen (2011), in the conclusion to his paper for the International Symposium on English Teaching in Taiwan, called for shorter papers with less extensive literature reviews and more direct prose than that favored by the humanities, with no need to repeat findings in long conclusions with speculated implications. These suggestions would shorten the time to prepare, review, and publish papers, and even make more space in journals, while also making it easier for junior scholars to prepare papers for publication. While an innovative proposition, it does not yet seem to have taken much foothold in the publishing community. Part of the reason for this could be the disciplinary ideology in the social sciences and the academic identity of its members, who identify themselves and are identified through the language they use (Hyland, 2012), particularly in the forum of published academic discourse.

In terms of the time frame from submission to publication, most of the editors proposed an average of a year or two, depending on the quality of the initial submission, the degree of minor to major revisions expected, and the author's turnaround time in getting the revisions back in for editing. In academic publishing, there is little indication that the time frame for the process will be or can be shortened. A more common occurrence is a backlog of submitted or accepted papers that may cause further delays. Examples reported at the forum include that 200 papers were in for review at *System* and that *Language Learning* has published an extra issue every 2 years. This is likely not good news for authors waiting for accepted papers to be published, however, it was stated that very timely papers of exceptional quality are able to jump the queue. In any event, getting a paper to publication is clearly a lengthy process that requires advance planning and consideration of the lead time needed to secure publications in time for job hunting, promotion, or covering output requirements for research grants.

Quality in Academic Writing for Publication

One of the obvious functions of the editorial process is to maintain the quality standards of the publication and the content it provides to its readers. As mentioned, primary reasons for rejection include the lack of a novel contribution to the field, poor research design, or inattention to the submission guidelines. Novice writers or those writing in their second language can feel reassured by the editors' comments that if (a) the study has merit and (b) the guidelines and format were followed, then weaknesses in grammar, punctuation, or paragraph structuring were not stated as reasons for initial rejection. The responsibility to get the paper ready for submission does however rest with the author and requires meeting the standards of academic language for publication. Therefore, it was clearly stated that authors writing in their second language should have their academic writing checked by a proficient writer familiar with discourse in their field. Reviewers and editors could then act as peers and mentors to

advise authors on revisions to papers that have already addressed basic language concerns. Larsen-Freeman recounted that in her time as editor for *Language Learning*, more papers from native speakers were rejected than from second, foreign, or other language users. The essential math behind that statement was simply that more papers were received from native speakers and subsequently a higher percentage of the papers published (and rejected) came from that group. She did state, encouragingly, to the largely non-native-English-speaker audience at the forum, that it is important to *participate* by submitting articles. (To assist new authors in improving their academic writing quality, in addition to a series of webcasts [e.g., *Introduction to Scholarly Publishing* and *How to Get Published*] [Elsevier Publishing Connect, n.d.], Elsevier, which publishes *System*, offers an English language editing service with fees quoted online at http://webshop.elsevier.com/languageediting/.)

Ongoing Changes in Academic Publishing

Digital Object Identifier (DOI) System

The editors also took time to outline some of the developments in the field of academic publishing. Changes in publishing do not only affect authors and submissions but also readers and their interaction when searching for and accessing content. Gardner and Inger (n.d.) have conducted research focused on three main forms of reader behavior with respect to online journals, including "citation searching, core journal browsing, and subject searching" (p. 8). Of particular interest to authors are innovations such as the digital object identifier (DOI) system of the International DOI Foundation (IDF) whose website, http://www.doi.org/, offers links to handbooks, FAQs, and factsheets. In brief, the DOI provides "a generic framework for managing identification of content over digital networks" (International DOI Foundation [IDF], 2013, 1.2 History). In practice, a DOI is "a unique alphanumeric string assigned by a registration agency . . . to identify content and provide a persistent link to its location on the Internet" (VandenBos, 2010, p. 189). This system for managing intellectual property and information on digital networks is coordinated by the IDF, which was formed in 1997 as a joint initiative of trade associations in the publishing industry (IDF, 2013, 1.2 History). Wiley-Blackwell, which houses *MLJ, TESOL Quarterly, Journal of Sociolinguistics*, and *Language Learning*, uses its EarlyView online system to enable readers to cite and access information via DOI from full-text, peer-reviewed, copy-edited articles as soon as they are accepted ahead of hard copy printed editions. Springer, which publishes *Language Policy*, has its own Online First system where, although no volume or page numbers are given until the article is published in print, the article is considered accepted and able to be cited and searched for online by DOI.

Predatory Publishing

While many people look at the term open-access with quite favorable reactions, Beall (2012) brings up the topic of *predatory publishing*, where solicitations are made for authors to submit an article promising a very rapid turnaround but which involves the author paying to have their paper published. Brown and Cook (2013) looked at seven e-mail solicitations by such publishers and found a set of common characteristics, including: (a) appeal to legitimacy with ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) / indexes, (b) mention of peer review, (c) inner-circle country affiliation (e.g., the United States, Canada, or United Kingdom), (d) multidisciplinary scope, and (e) a very fast turnaround. They also noted several cautionary red flags in the e-mail messages in terms of obscure editorial roles and affiliations, language errors, flattery, and open invitations to become a reviewer. Hidden in the e-mail texts, webpage tabs, or links was the issue of fees charged to the author to be published. Clearly technology and improved reach and access may not always be used in a positive or reputable way. Yet authors doing due diligence and avoiding any panic to publish urgently should be able to effectively avoid such unscrupulous options. Beall maintains a readily accessible monthly blog listing

potentially predatory publishers at http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/.

In Parting

Drawing from a panel discussion with international journal editors on getting published in applied linguistics and ELT held at the AILA 2011 World Congress in Beijing, this paper has looked at general guidelines for academic submissions to peer-reviewed journals. The hurdles, time lags, rejection rates, and other challenges notwithstanding, the experienced editors who hosted the forum did say that they want authors to submit their papers. The editors also stated that while rejection is painful, they too had all experienced it (and still are!) and that having an article declined is a natural part of the professional development process. Wise words of counsel included understanding that acceptance with no revisions of a first submission very rarely happens, even for experienced researchers and authors. Rejection should therefore not be taken personally or too negatively, since in the blind review process, the person deciding to reject the submission does not know if it belongs to a beginning researcher or a leading figure in the field. Furthermore, the feedback given in reviews can provide an opportunity for growth and offer some direction toward improving the paper to resubmit it elsewhere. In addition to changes through technology, the recent growth in the number of authors active in language teaching and learning studies has been matched by an increase in the number of publications available – with all of these looking for papers to publish. In summary, the task of academic publishing for language teachers and researchers comes down to authors and editors finding a match of article quality and context in a mutually, co-created process of professional, yet highly subjective practice.

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Appendix

FAQ – Publishing in Applied Linguistics Journals – AILA, Beijing, 2011

1. How do I select an appropriate journal for my paper?
2. Procedures for submitting a paper. Are there guidelines?
3. Can I submit to more than one journal?
4. Can I submit a chapter from my dissertation?
5. How long will it take before getting feedback?
6. What is the average time from submission to publication?
7. What are the average acceptance rates?
8. How does the reviewing and revision process work?
9. What if my draft paper is published on my website, or in departmental working papers?
10. What do I do if my academic writing skills are not very good?
11. What are the policies regarding duplication and plagiarism?
12. Please explain the EarlyView system and the online DOI date.

CamTESOL Regional ELT Research Grant Paper

Factors Affecting Secondary-School English Teachers' Adoption of Technologies in Southwest Vietnam

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This paper reports the findings of a comparative case study which investigates EFL secondary teachers' perspectives regarding information and communication technology (ICT) adoption and integration in the context of English language teaching (ELT) in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. The research questions set out to examine the current teaching practices with ICT and the factors influencing the teachers' uptake of ICT. The participants were EFL teachers from secondary schools in two provinces: Dong Thap and Can Tho. Fifty participants completed the questionnaires, ten of whom contributed to semistructured interviews. In addition to findings about the influence of ICT infrastructure and facilities, indications are that school culture has significant impact. The implication is for policy makers and educational administrators to support and encourage staff to adopt and integrate ICT in their teaching practices and to be aware of possible drawbacks of using ICT in English language teaching.

Technologies such as computers, the Internet, software, and applications have been widely used in every aspect of society, and they are increasingly used in educational contexts. Vietnam, a developing country in Southeast Asia, has transformed its educational system in accordance with the global tendency to integrate information and communication technology (ICT) into education.

To foster the implementation of ICT in education, particularly in teaching English, the Vietnamese government and the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) have issued policies and invested in ICT infrastructure nationwide (Peeraer & Van Petegem, 2011; Quach, 2004). Two examples of such policies are Decision 1400/QD-TTg on the Scheme of Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages in the National Educational System Period 2008-2020 and Directive 55/2008/CT-BGDDT on Promoting Teaching, Training and Applying ICT in Teaching Period 2008–2012. According to Quach (2004), the director of the Information Technology Centre at MoET, the government supports the latter policy decision through cooperation agreements with ICT companies in order to build technology infrastructure, particularly in the

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 198-215. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A03/Le_Vo

education sector. MoET has also organized training workshops on ICT for instructors and administrators.

However, the actual implementation and the extent of teachers' classroom use of ICT still need to be investigated. One current problem is that few studies of ICT integration in English language teaching (ELT) at the secondary level have been conducted in Vietnam. Those few focused mainly on ELT at tertiary education, employed a quantitative approach, or were not conducted in the Mekong Delta (Dinh, 2009; Peeraer & Van Petegem, 2011). As a result, the picture of ICT integration in education, especially in secondary schools in the Mekong Delta, has not yet been described. The question remains as to what factors drive EFL teachers in Vietnam to adopt ICT in their work in secondary schools in the Mekong Delta.

As a result, this study aims to (1) examine the current teaching practices of EFL teachers using ICT and (2) investigate the factors that impact their uptake of ICT. The study's design is qualitative and represents a comparative study.

Two key data collection strategies were utilized: open-ended questionnaires and semistructured interviews. Although this qualitative comparative study has certain limitations, such as not recruiting principals and students as participants and no classroom observations, its findings will contribute to more effective incorporation of ICT in ELT at the secondary school level for the Mekong Delta.

This study is guided by two research questions:

1. How have EFL teachers responded to ICT in their teaching?
2. From the EFL teachers' perspectives, what factors influence the integration of ICT in their teaching?

Findings from secondary schools in two provinces in Vietnam's Mekong Delta are presented in this paper. Previous studies concerning ICT integration in ELT are summarized in the following section.

Factors Influencing Teachers' Use of ICT

Findings from previous studies on ICT use in education show different factors influencing teachers' adoption and integration of ICT in their teaching practices. Some focus on the teachers themselves, including teachers' age (Li & Walsh, 2010), years of teaching (Bussey, Dormody, & VanLeeuwen, 2000; Gueldenzoph, Guidera, Whipple, Mertler, & Dutton, 2000), teaching styles (Cooper, 2001; Gueldenzoph et al., 2000), previous experience or knowledge about using ICT (Groves & Zemel, 2000; Stone & Henry, 2003), compatibility (Groves & Zemel, 2000), relative advantage (Groves & Zemel, 2000), self-efficacy (Albion, 2001; Stone & Henry, 2003), confidence (Bingimlas, 2009), and anxiety and fear of change (Bussey et al., 2000). Other external factors refer to the infrastructure, learners' learning, and administrative aspects, for instance, the availability and accessibility of facilities and equipment (Li & Walsh, 2010); the stability of energy sources (Bussey, et al., 2000); students' interests and engagement in learning with ICT (Bussey et al., 2000; Groves & Zemel, 2000; Gueldenzoph et al., 2000); support in terms of technical and administrative areas (Bussey et al., 2000; Stone & Henry, 2003); and time, workload, and policies related to ICT use, such as incentives (Anderson, Varnhagen, & Campbell, 1998; Groves & Zemel, 2000; Wolcott & Betts, 1999).

In developing countries like Vietnam, one of the main barriers to the adoption of technology in educational settings is lack of infrastructure and technological devices needed for the

implementation process (Agyei & Voogt, 2011; Dinh, 2009; Marwan & Sweeney, 2010; Peeraer & Van Petegem, 2011). Yet providing sufficient ICT hardware does not guarantee that technology integration will occur in classrooms (Albion, 2001; Mulkeen, 2003; Ward, 2003). As mentioned in Drent and Meelissen (2008), computers are available in almost all Dutch teacher education institutions, but most teachers use them for administrative tasks rather than teaching and learning purposes. It is clear that implementation of ICT innovation requires not only the necessary facilities but also human resources – the teachers – because "beyond a certain level of necessity it would appear that more infrastructure does not automatically equate with more use," while "teachers who feel confident about their ability to use computers in the classroom and see clear advantages to doing so overcome any negative constraints that may otherwise limit their use" (Ward, 2003, p. 11).

Many studies confirm the key role of teachers in determining the effectiveness of integrating ICT in classrooms (Baylor & Ritchie, 2002; Law, 2008; Mumtaz, 2000; Voogt, 2003).

Research Methodology

The study aims to seek rich descriptions of the current environment of ICT integration and teaching practices accompanying it in ELT at the secondary level; thus, a qualitative research design was used (Creswell, 1998; Lichtman, 2006). The main data collection methods were open-ended questionnaire and semistructured interviews in English. Different sources of information and various types of data collection methods were used to minimize the biases that may occur in qualitative research (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Moreover, to increase the validity of the study, the participants' transcripts were returned to the EFL teacher participants for their checking (Punch, 2009).

Fifty EFL teachers from secondary schools in Can Tho and Dong Thap agreed to participate in the research. An equal number of teachers were recruited for each case (25 in Can Tho and 25 in Dong Thap). They completed the open-ended questionnaire, which aimed to collect data on the context, teachers' current ICT use, factors influencing their uptake and use of ICT, and their demographic data. From the results of the questionnaire and their indication of interest in participating in the interviews, 10 EFL teachers (five at each research site) were invited to answer the semistructured interview questions to elaborate on topics arising from the research in more depth.

The open-ended questionnaire (see Appendix A) was adapted from a number of previous studies in the related area of ICT in teaching (e.g., Arkin, 2003; Li & Walsh, 2010; Mumtaz, 2000; Phelps, Graham, & Watts, 2011). The semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix B) was designed based on the purpose of this study, the information obtained from the open-ended questionnaires and previous research (e.g., Chen, 2008; Marwan & Sweeney, 2010).

The data obtained via the open-ended questionnaires and transcripts of the semistructured interviews have been categorized according to two main categories: teachers' current ICT practices and factors influencing those teachers' ICT use. Under each main category there are subcategories.

Findings and Discussion

This section reports the findings from the open-ended questionnaire (Appendix A) and the semistructured interviews (Appendix B) about the ICT environment in secondary schools in Can Tho and Dong Thap, the teachers' current ICT use, and the factors affecting their ICT use as well as their expectations for further support in order to better implement ICT in classrooms.

Lecturers' Use of ICT and Purposes

Figure 1 shows the ICT tools usually used by EFL teachers in their teaching. It can be seen that the three most popular tools, used by approximately two-thirds of the teachers, are the Internet, computers or laptops, and audio players (CD players). Half of the teachers reported using CD-ROMs. The next most used ICT tools included websites, interactive whiteboards, and educational software (around one-third), followed by video recorders and emails (around a quarter). The least used tool was satellite TV (approximately 10%), and no teachers reported using a learning management system (LMS). The findings indicate that the teachers do not prefer to use ICT tools that are complex or are not user friendly, such as interactive whiteboards and LMS.

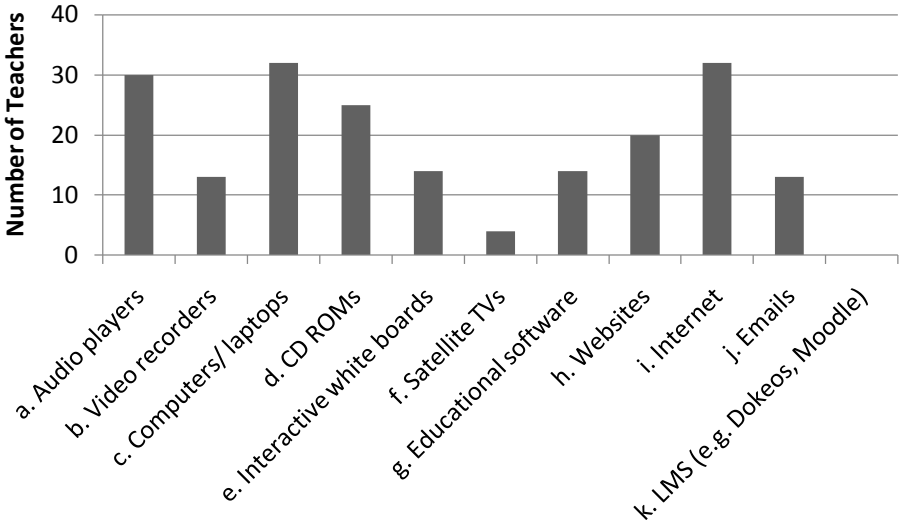

Figure 1. ICT tool use by EFL teachers.

Table 1 shows the comparison of the ICT tools EFL secondary teachers reported using between Can Tho and Dong Thap. It can be seen that both satellite TV and the LMS were not popular for teachers at either site; below 8% of the lecturers at each site reported using them. There are considerable differences in ICT tools adopted by teachers at the two sites. Teachers in Can Tho tended to use more audio players, interactive whiteboards, CD ROMs, educational software, and emails than those in Dong Thap. The most noticeable difference was the use of interactive whiteboards. Six times the number of teachers in Can Tho used this device compared to their colleagues in Dong Thap. Approximately twice as many teachers in Can Tho used audio players, emails, and educational software as those in Dong Thap. However, more teachers in Dong Thap used websites and video recorders as well as computers or laptops and the Internet than their colleagues in Can Tho.

Table 1

ICT Tools Used by EFL Secondary Teachers in Can Tho and Dong Thap

ICT Tools	Can Tho (*n* = 25)	Dong Thap (*n* = 25)	Total (*N* = 50)
a. Audio players	21	9	30
b. Video recorders	4	9	13
c. Computers / laptops	14	18	32
d. CD ROMs	14	11	25
e. Interactive whiteboards	12	2	14
f. Satellite TVs	2	2	4
g. Educational software	9	5	14
h. Websites	6	14	20
i. Internet	14	18	32
j. Emails	9	4	13
k. LMS (e.g., Dokeos, Moodle)	0	0	0

In general, the teachers in Can Tho used ICT tools more than their colleagues in Dong Thap, although the difference is not great. A possible explanation is that Can Tho is a central city while Dong Thap is not. Big cities and more central areas tend to receive more attention from the government in investment and development. It can be inferred that the schools in Can Tho are better equipped with ICT facilities such as interactive whiteboards and teaching resources, and Can Tho teachers are able to gain more access to ICT tools. In contrast, the teachers in Dong Thap are provided with fewer ICT tools like interactive whiteboards; thus, they possibly use alternative tools like computers or laptops and may use the Internet more to search for extra resources during their lesson preparation. In addition, the students in Dong Thap may not have easy access to ICT tools themselves because Dong Thap is not a central province in Southwest Vietnam or the Mekong Delta. This may help explain why the use of email exchanges between teachers and students in Dong Thap is less frequent than in Can Tho. This indicates that the issue of the digital divide among provinces in the same region needs special consideration.

Figure 2 reports the teachers' purpose for using ICT in their teaching and lesson preparation. The key purposes include providing drill and practice (100% of respondents) and explaining new knowledge, giving presentations, and sending and receiving emails (96% of the respondents for each). More than 70% of the teachers reported using ICT to provide authentic materials to their students and to search for information on the Internet. Approximately 55% used ICT to access a library catalogue or other online resources and provide students with exposure to cultural concepts. Less than one-third used ICT to support student self-study or to assign an individual or collaborative project.

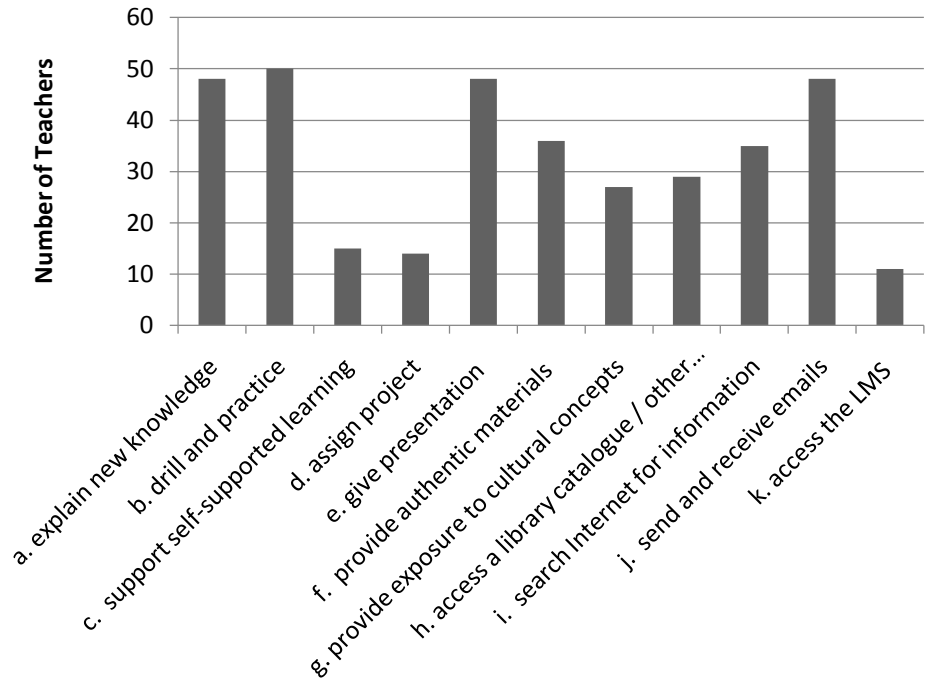

Figure 2. Purposes of ICT use.

These findings can be understood to be due to the low level of English proficiency of secondary students and the exam-oriented teaching and learning culture. The teachers are key informants and still play the major role in controlling the class activities. Therefore, ICT tools are mainly used for lesson preparation and presentation, in-class practice, and email exchanges, while students' self-study or collaborative assignments are neither popular nor encouraged.

Internal and External Factors Influencing the EFL Secondary Teachers' Use of ICT

Teachers' perceptions of the influence of beliefs about ICT use. Table 2 presents one subgroup of internal factors: beliefs about the importance and benefits of ICT in teaching (indicated by Items a-h and Item t from the open-ended questionnaire in Appendix A, Part B, Question 1). Over 80% of the teachers at both sites agreed that ICT is effective in student learning (Item c). In addition, teachers are also motivated by factors related to ICT enhancing the effectiveness of teaching pedagogies. At both sites, the teachers' positive beliefs are the major source of motivation for their integration of ICT into teaching.

The only contrast between the response rates of both sites refers to the perceived personal benefits of ICT use (Items g and h). It is also interesting to note that many more teachers in Dong Thap than in Can Tho believe ICT helps reduce their workload. A possible explanation is that in more central areas like Can Tho, the requirements of e-lesson plans may be higher than those in less urban areas like Dong Thap.

Table 2

Beliefs About the Importance and Benefits of ICT in Teaching

Motivating factors	Can Tho (*n* = 25)	Dong Thap (*n* = 25)	Total (*N* = 50)
a. It is becoming trendy to use ICT in teaching.	20	25	45
b. ICT is particularly important for teaching my course.	20	17	37
c. ICT helps students become more effective in their EFL learning.	25	23	48
d. ICT enhances students' motivation and interest in learning EFL.	25	18	43
e. ICT helps students develop other skills such as self-learning and lifelong learning skills, teamwork, and collaborative skills.	25	19	44
f. The teaching of some skills and knowledge can best be done through the use of ICT.	20	20	40
g. Using ICT enhances the effectiveness of my instruction.	13	17	30
h. ICT helps to incorporate new teaching methods.	18	13	31
t. ICT reduces my workload.	7	18	25

In the semistructured interviews, the teachers gave specific examples of the benefits ICT brings to their students. Participant 1 and Participant 3 in Can Tho and Participant 6 in Dong Thap listed some benefits when using ICT in their classes as follows:

- Images and short video clips are used in teaching vocabulary instead of long and complicated explanations.
- ICT is a great help in improving students' pronunciation.
- ICT provides authentic materials, so students are exposed to real target language contexts.
- The students are able to understand clearly and remember the lessons longer.
- ICT helps the English classes be more interesting and motivating for the students, so they get actively involved in learning activities.

The teachers are aware of the benefits of using ICT in teaching English. On the other hand, they also consider the overuse of ICT in teaching as inappropriate. Participant 1 in Can Tho, for example, observed that using a lot of animations, images, and effects in PowerPoint slides without respecting the lesson objectives and aims is time consuming.

Teachers' perceptions of the influence of ICT experience, training, skills, confidence, and interest in innovation. Table 3 presents other internal factors relating to the teachers' knowledge and skills as well as their interest in ICT use (Items i to m from the open-ended questionnaire in Appendix A, Part B, Question 1). Over 65% of the teachers agreed that their experience with ICT and their interests in innovation motivate them to use ICT in teaching. However, less than half of them felt confident about their ICT skills, especially those in Can Tho. This result may be linked to the responses that show the teachers did not think that they were offered enough training on the use of ICT in teaching (Item j). In brief, the findings show that ICT experience and interest in innovation are most influential in motivating these teachers to integrate ICT into classrooms.

Table 3

Impact of ICT Experience, Training, Skills, Confidence, and Interest in Innovation

Motivating factors	Can Tho (*n* = 25)	Dong Thap (*n* = 25)	Total (*N* = 50)
i. The more I use ICT, the more I see how it can be used to extend and enhance learning.	20	23	43
j. I am offered training on the use of ICT for my instruction.	10	13	23
k. I am good at using ICT, so I would like to try using it for teaching purposes.	12	11	23
l. I am confident about using ICT in my teaching.	8	15	23
m. I like innovation.	14	20	34

Teachers' perceptions of the influence of other external factors. Tables 4 and 5 present two subgroups of the external factors. They indicate the availability and accessibility of ICT hardware, software, technical support, and encouragement from colleagues and administrators. Table 4 presents the impact of ICT facilities and technical support (Items n to q from the open-ended questionnaire in Appendix A, Part B, Question 1). Table 5 presents the positive effect of encouragement from colleagues and administrators (Items r and s from the open-ended questionnaire in Appendix A, Part B, Question 1).

The teachers do not agree that it is easy for them to get access to hardware and software to use in the classroom. The barrier in obtaining access to ICT becomes an inhibiting factor that discourages the teachers from using ICT in their teaching.

Table 4

Impact of ICT Facilities and Technical Support

Motivating factors	Can Tho (*n* = 25)	Dong Thap (*n* = 25)	Total (*N* = 50)
n. There are lots of software packages available for me to use in teaching English to my students.	14	15	29
o. It is easy to get access to hardware to use in the classroom.	7	3	10
p. It is easy to get access to software to use in the classroom.	7	15	22
q. Reliable support personnel are available when I face difficulty in using ICT.	4	8	12

The following are quotes from the semistructured interviews (see Appendix B). Regarding inadequate ICT equipment and access, many teachers mentioned that there are not enough ICT rooms to meet the demand of teachers and students. For example, Participant 8 in Dong Thap shared her experience:

> My school has only a room equipped with ICT facilities for teaching with ICT, so it is sometimes difficult to get access to the ICT room because there may be two or more classes at the same time. In these cases, I must teach in a traditional way instead of using computers and projectors. Moreover, the ICT room is too small and hot and the desks are not good enough for teachers and students to feel comfortable.

In relation to lacking support for technical problems in class, Participant 1 in Can Tho said:

> I've encountered some technical problems in teaching with ICT. For example, one time my USB with all of my lesson plans preparation could not be used in class due to the incompatibility between the devices. At that time I did not know whom I could ask for help. That incident is one of the factors which makes me embarrassed and does not encourage me to use ICT in class.

Participant 6 in Dong Thap also shared similar views about difficulties in dealing with technical problems:

> I find it difficult to anticipate technical problems. When problems occur, I do not know how to fix it. There are no technicians to ask for help when needed.

Almost all of the teachers mentioned always having to be prepared to teach without technologies whenever there is a power cut.

Table 5

Impact of Encouragement From Colleagues and Administrators

Motivating factors	Can Tho (*n* = 25)	Dong Thap (*n* = 25)	Total (*N* = 50)
r. All my colleagues are keen to use ICT in teaching.	2	17	19
s. Our school is very supportive in using ICT in classrooms.	7	22	29

As can be seen in Table 5, Can Tho teachers report a weak learning culture within the schools, while approximately three times more teachers in Dong Thap agree that their schools are very supportive in using ICT in classrooms. Around eight times more teachers in Dong Thap agree that their colleagues' use of ICT has a positive impact on motivating their ICT use. A possible explanation is that in an urban area, people tend to work more independently and are less interested in "sharing, observing, and discussing each other's work" (Fullan, 2001, p. 118). These factors contribute to fostering or inhibiting the ICT integration into classroom practices.

In summary, it seems that teachers in Dong Thap show more positive signs than their colleagues in Can Tho regarding external factors and while teachers from both sites are generally quite motivated by internal factors, those in Can Tho are more so in some cases (see Table 2).

Needs and Expectations

Table 6 illustrates the supporting areas needed for better ICT use (see Appendix A, Part B, Question 2). Among the eight possible supporting elements, the majority of the teachers report looking forward to more encouragement from colleagues and more training on how to use

computers. They also expect to have more relevant software used in education. They hope to have more access to ICT facilities, technical support when they face technical problems, good examples to show how to successfully implement ICT in teaching English, and support from administration.

The teachers in Can Tho and Dong Thap have slightly different expectations. In general, the teachers in Dong Thap expect more support on how to use relevant software packages for teaching, access to ICT facilities, technical support, administrators' support, and good examples of successful ICT implementation in class. On the other hand, the teachers in Can Tho expressed a stronger wish to have more training on how to use computers. This area of support is of more interest to teachers in Can Tho (all 25, versus 15 in Dong Thap). In addition, more teachers in Can Tho wish to receive encouragement from colleagues and training on pedagogy in implementing ICT in class.

Table 6

Supporting Areas Needed for Better ICT Use by Can Tho and Dong Thap Teachers

Supporting Areas	Can Tho (n = 25)	Dong Thap (n = 25)	Total (N = 50)
a. More access to ICT facilities	14	20	34
b. More relevant software packages to choose from for my students	14	22	36
c. More technical support when there are technical problems	14	20	34
d. More training on how to use computer	25	15	40
e. More training on pedagogy in implementing technology into classroom	14	12	26
f. More good examples to show how to successfully implement ICT in teaching English	14	17	31
g. More support from administrators	14	18	32
h. More encouragement from colleagues	25	22	47

Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, the findings of this study indicate that external factors have a significant impact on teachers' uptake and integration of ICT in their classrooms. The first influential factor refers to ICT availability and accessibility (Agyei & Voogt, 2011; Zhao, Pugh, Sheld, & Byers, 2002). In addition, technical support is also necessary. The teachers in these provinces are also influenced by their colleagues' activities. The school culture motivates or inhibits the teachers' willingness to use ICT (Fullan, 2001; Tearle, 2004). The teachers indicate that they expect more encouragement from their colleagues in their uptake of ICT.

Internal factors are more influential in enabling teachers' ICT adoption and implementation in ELT. Their beliefs about the positive effects and benefits of ICT on their instruction and their students' performance motivate them to adopt and integrate ICT in their teaching. In addition, their personal interests contribute to motivating them to use more ICT in class. Among various factors that influence the teachers' decision to utilize ICT tools in their classrooms, creating a friendly and innovative school culture is crucial in addition to the availability of an ICT infrastructure and facilities (Fullan, 2001).

However, in order to guarantee these enabling conditions for teachers, the active and visionary involvement of administrators of the schools is required (Qureshi, 2013). The administrators should have a clear and detailed plan for ICT implementation in their organizations, how the ICT infrastructure is to be installed and managed, and how the teachers are to be trained and encouraged to use ICT to maximize student learning.

This study suggests that teachers are mostly enthusiastic about ICT learning. Further research is required to uncover the constraints that administrators face, the type of training that is considered most useful by teachers and by administrators, the types of activities that are considered most useful for encouraging student learning and autonomy, the funding constraints, and the possible inequality in distribution. It would also be useful to conduct research into student perceptions of the ICT training they receive and what training they would appreciate receiving. An area that seems neglected is collaborative learning and self-learning; this is another area that could be investigated further.

Author Note

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The authors wish to express their special thanks to the Regional Research Small Grant by CamTESOL and mentor Darren Brookes for his delicate support and advice.

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Appendix A
Open-Ended Questionnaire

Instructions:
This questionnaire consists of three sections: (A) teachers' use of ICT, (B) factors influencing the teachers' adoption and use of ICT, and (C) teachers' demographic data.

In each section, there are statements where you are required to tick only one appropriate option, or tick all the applicable options. Following some items in the questionnaire, there is room for you to add more ideas or comments or explanations to your response if you wish to. The questionnaire should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. Your replies are kept confidential and are coded so that you are not identified by other external parties.

Notes:
The term "ICT" refers to technologies or digital devices such as CD players, TVs, projectors, computers, the Internet, the software and applications, and the learning management system (e.g., DOKEOS, Moodle, etc.). The term "institution" refers to your faculty or department, your current workplace.

QUESTIONS

A. Teachers' use of ICT

1. The ICT tools I use with my students in my course

(Tick all the options which apply)

ICT tools	
a. Audio players	
b. Video recorders	
c. Computers / laptops	
d. CD ROMs	
e. Interactive whiteboards	
f. Satellite TVs	
g. Educational software	
h. Websites	
i. Internet	
j. Emails	
k. LMS (e.g., Dokeos, Moodle)	
l. Others: _____ _____	

2. In my teaching, I use ICT to . . .

(Tick all the options which apply)

a.	explain new knowledge.	
b.	drill and practice.	
c.	support student self-supported learning.	
d.	assign student individual or collaborative project.	
e.	give presentation of work.	
f.	provide authentic materials to students.	
g.	provide exposure to cultural concepts to students.	
h.	access a library catalogue or other online resources.	
i.	search for information on the Internet for projects or assignments.	
j.	send and receive emails.	
k.	access the LMS (e.g., Dokeos, Moodle) for discussion forum, online learning materials, etc.	

l. Other purposes (please specify):

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Factors influencing teachers' use of ICT

1. Factors motivating me to use ICT

(Tick all the options which apply)

Statements	
a. It is becoming trendy to use ICT in teaching.	
b. ICT is particularly important for teaching my course.	
c. ICT helps students become more effective in their EFL learning.	
d. ICT enhances students' motivation and interest in learning EFL.	
e. ICT helps students develop other skills such as self-learning and lifelong learning skills, teamwork, and collaborative skills.	
f. The teaching of some skills and knowledge can best be done through the use of ICT.	
g. Using ICT enhances the effectiveness of my instruction.	
h. ICT helps to incorporate new teaching methods.	
i. The more I use ICT, the more I see how it can be used to extend and enhance learning.	
j. I am offered training on the use of ICT for my instruction.	
k. I am good at using ICT, so I would like to try using it for teaching purposes.	
l. I am confident about using ICT in my teaching.	
m. I like innovation.	
n. There are lots of software packages available for me to use in teaching English to my students.	
o. It is easy to get access to hardware to use in the classroom.	
p. It is easy to get access to software to use in the classroom.	
q. Reliable support personnel are available when I face difficulty in using ICT.	
r. All my colleagues are keen to use ICT in teaching.	
s. Our school is very supportive in using ICT in classrooms.	
t. ICT reduces my workload.	

u. Other factors (please specify):

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. The areas I'd like to get support to facilitate (better) ICT integration into my teaching

(Tick all the options applied)

a.	More access to ICT facilities	
b.	More relevant software packages to choose from for my students	
c.	More technical support when there are technical problems	
d.	More training on how to use computers	
e.	More training on pedagogy in implementing technology into classroom	
f.	More good examples to show how to successfully implement ICT in teaching English	
g.	More support from administrators	
h.	More encouragement from colleagues	

i. Other suggestions (please specify):

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. Demographic data

(Circle the appropriate option)

1. School name:
2. School level: a. Elementary b. Secondary
3. District & Province / City:
4. Gender: a. Male b. Female
5. Age:
   a. Under 25 b. 26-35 c. 36-45 d. 46-55 e. Over 55
6. Number of years teaching:
   a. 1-5 years b. 6-15 years c. 16-25 years d. Over 25 years
7. Current position:
   a. Junior lecturer b. Senior lecturer c. Teaching assistant d. Administrator
   e. Other (please specify): _____
8. Highest academic qualifications:
   a. Bachelor's degree b. Master's degree c. Doctoral degree
   d. Other (please specify): _____
9. Number of classes assigned to teach this semester: _____
10. Average number of learners in your class
    a. Less than 20 b. 21-30 c. 31-40 d. 41-50 e. 50+

Name:

Email:

Thank you for your time

Appendix B
Semistructured Interview Questions

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) - CD player, satellite TV, interactive whiteboard, computer, the Internet, educational software, etc.

1. Tell me about your use of ICT tools in your teaching.
   [Describe in details your use of ICTs in class]
   a. What kinds of ICTs do you use in your teaching?
   b. How often do you use them?
   c. How do you use them to teach/ in class?
2. What benefits can you get from using ICT in your teaching?
3. What difficulties/problems do you have when you use ICT?
   a. What have you done when facing these difficulties / problems?
      [What have you done to solve these difficulties / problems?]
4. Please give comments / ideas about ICT infrastructure and support from your school and administrators.
5. What factors influence directly and indirectly your adoption/use of ICT? How?
   a. Which factor is the most influential one? Why?
6. What kinds of support do you need/expect to adopt / use ICT more efficiently?

Research

Integrating Social Awareness Through Reading and Writing: A Classroom Action Research

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As part of professional and course development, a 16-week action research project was carried out in one academic writing class at a university in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Twenty-four students participated in this research. Students were initially introduced to a structure of a summary-response genre, and were encouraged to read a local newspaper, The Cambodia Daily, every weekday. Each week, students were required to submit one journal entry, in which they summarized one piece of news of their interest and responded to it. At the end of the 16 weeks, analysis of the contents of students' writing showed increase in their social awareness reflected in the sources of news they read and improvement in their ability to give critical responses to news they read. Implications for the use of journal and genre approach are discussed at the end of this paper.

The English Department of the University of Foreign Languages (a pseudonym referred to hereafter as ED-UFL) in Phnom Penh, Cambodia offers 4-year bachelor's degree programs in teaching English as a foreign language, English for translation and interpreting, and English for professional communication. These programs require eight semesters to complete. To enter the programs, students are required to successfully complete high school and pass the entrance examination, which puts their English proficiency at an intermediate level. They start their first year with foundation classes both in English and Khmer. For their second and third years, they take four classes all in English: Core English, Literature, Global Studies, and Writing Skills (with Research Methodology classes added to the second semester of their third year). In Year 4, their subjects vary depending on their major.

This action research project arises from issues identified in one of the writing classes at the ED-UFL. The concern that students' lack of reading hinders their writing proficiency and their ability to think critically on issues surrounding them is also shared in monthly meetings at the department.

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 216-227. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A04/Chan

Literature Review

Reading-Writing Relationship

Fitzgerald and Shanahan (2000) discussed reasons for the segregation between reading and writing in American education. However, they pointed out the important shared knowledge that both readers and writers used, including metaknowledge, domain knowledge about substance and content, knowledge about universal text attributes, and procedural knowledge and skill to negotiate reading and writing. They suggested that educators should consider the critical shared thinking underlying both reading and writing rather than focusing on these skills separately. Consequently, analyzing the thought processes involved in reading a text may be beneficial for understanding how the text is constructed.

In L2 (second language) writing development, reading either in L1 (first language) or L2 has played an increasingly important role. Grabe (2003) recognized this importance, especially with the increasing need to prepare students to deal with academic tasks, which usually combine reading and writing. Tabatabaei and Ali (2012) examined the effects of different types of reading tasks on the writing performance of pre- and post-intermediate EFL learners in a university in Iran. Although the study did not employ an experimental design, the pre- and post-test results showed statistically significant improvement in students' writing performance. This seemed to suggest the effectiveness of using different reading tasks (comparison / contrast, description, cause / effect, and problem / solution) to improve writing performance.

Genre Approach to Writing Instruction

Genre is a social and cognitive concept that helps group texts according to their shared linguistic and discourse features. According to Hyland, "members of a community usually have little difficulty in recognizing similarities in the texts they use frequently and are able to draw on their repeated experiences with such texts to read, understand and perhaps write them relatively easily" (2008, p. 544). For instance, readers may know immediately if a text is a manual, a love letter, or a newspaper article because of its linguistic and discourse features. Myskow and Gordon (2010) illustrated how a university application letter genre was taught in an EFL (English as a foreign language) high school writing course. Parts of the teaching included getting students to build contextual knowledge of the genre, such as the possible audience and purpose of the letter, and to analyze for the linguistic and organizational features of the model letters, which they identified as following these rhetorical moves: introduction, dreams / goals, experiences, academic accomplishments, reasons for applying, contributions, and conclusion.

Hyland (2008) believed that this approach is suitable for academic writing classes in many contexts because it illuminates how language use is constrained by social contexts. The benefits of this approach to teaching writing have also been confirmed by a number of studies (see Johns, 2003; Yasuda, 2011).

Journal Writing

Dialogue and reflective journals provide spaces for students to reflect on their learning and thinking processes and to communicate these reflections with their instructors. As Ferris (2003, p. 126) has stated, "student journal entries are typically designed to build students' fluency and reflective thinking abilities and are almost never revised by students; feedback or correction on these is not likely to have much effect on student writing."

To promote students' writing and literacy skills, many ESL (English as a second language) teachers have made quite effective use of journal writing in their classrooms. Kim (2005) used

dialogue journal writing in his adult ESL class to promote a sense of community and engage adult ESL learners in authentic and meaningful learning. Holmes and Moulton (1997), in their multiple case studies on students' perceptions of the use of dialogue journals, reported students' positive reactions to the use of dialogue journals as a learning strategy and on the students' improved fluency and motivation in writing, which they attributed to the use of dialogue journals. Dialogue and reflective journals have also been used as an effective data collection technique in classroom research, such as in Harris (2008) and Fazio (2001).

Voice in Written Text

Voice is an important concept in reading and writing pedagogy. Elbow (2007) discussed two conflicting perspectives on this concept. On the one hand, it is seen as an important dimension of text and deserves more attention because the writer's self and rhetorical power are represented by his / her voice in the text. On the other hand, it is considered to be a misleading metaphor and does not deserve much focus since the voice that is believed to be one's own is actually greatly influenced by one's history and culture. Elbow also distinguished between *text* and *voice*:

> "text" stands for words on page and "voice" for the spoken medium of language. Thus, the text lens highlights the visual and spatial features of language as print . . . ; the voice lens highlights language as sounded, heard, and existing in time. The text lens foregrounds language as an abstract system (Saussure's *langue*) in which words have the same meaning whoever utters them in whatever context – words as interchangeable and not attached to persons; the voice lens highlights how language issues from individual persons and physical bodies and how the same words differ, depending on who says them and how. (2007, p. 175)

He subsequently pointed out the common ground of these two conflicting perspectives, concluding that students need to be more empowered in the classroom. In an effort to promote student empowerment, Lovejoy (2009) encouraged students' voice through self-directed writing in his writing class; he created opportunities for students to write on topics of their interest using their own natural voice in different genres. Students' testimonials showed their positive attitudes and confidence as writers through discovery of their own voices. Drawing from Elbow's two important aspects of written discourse, text and voice, Luce-Kapler, Catlin, Sumara, and Kocher (2011) also illustrated how different writing practices can be designed to raise students' awareness in writing.

Research Questions

This action research hypothesized that utilizing the local newspaper (*The Cambodia Daily*) in the classroom, training students in a summary-response genre, and providing them with opportunities to voice themselves through a dialogue journal could encourage students to expand their knowledge of their society and write more critically about it. This research was guided by the following questions:

RQ 1: Do the utilization of a local newspaper, the training of students in a summary-response genre, and journal writing in a writing class expand students' knowledge of their society?

RQ 2: Do the utilization of a local newspaper, the training of students in a summary-response genre, and creating opportunities for them to express their voices through journal writing in a writing class increase their critical ability in writing as reflected in their responses to news in their journal entries?

Methodology

This study employs action research design, which according to Nunan (1992) is becoming popular in language education. It is usually carried out by practitioners (language teachers), and its aim is to understand or solve a specific problem. This action research identified the lack of student social awareness and critical thinking as a concern shared among instructors at the ED-UFL. Although English is a foreign language in Cambodia, it is used as a medium of instruction in almost every course at the ED-UFL. This study was guided by Koshy's (2005, p. 38) framework for action research, which includes the following steps:

- Identifying a topic and setting the context
- Reviewing and analyzing the literature
- Focusing on a topic and formulating a research question or hypothesis
- Planning activities
- Implementing and acting
- Gathering and analyzing data
- Analyzing the data further
- Reflecting on outcomes and generating evidence
- Reporting findings

This action research project was conducted in the September-to-December semester in 2012 in a writing class at the ED-UFL with 24 Cambodian students in their late teens and early twenties. This was a 16-week long semester, and classes met for 90 minutes every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. After the introduction to their writing class in the first meeting, the students were trained in identifying voices in text and the organizational and linguistic features of a summary-response genre in the second and third class meetings.

A Summary-Response Genre

This genre consists of elements of both summaries and responses, which are important for writing at college and university levels. Summaries require comprehension of the reading material and a concise explanation of its main ideas. Responses involve expression of opinion, analysis, and expansion of ideas. A good example of a summary-response genre would be a letter to the editor or an opinion page in a newspaper, in which the authors summarize articles in the previous issues and respond to them. The summary-response genre was selected as part of the intervention in this action research because of its importance in academic essay examinations and papers (Meyers, 2005) and its real-life application.

Two Intervening Lessons

In the first lesson, students were given a copy of a local newspaper article from *The Cambodia Daily* to read. While reading, they were required to underline all the direct and indirect speech examples in the article. After reading, they worked in small groups to compare their underlined parts and to discuss whose voices were represented there (some of the voices included those of the government, NGOs (nongovernmental organizations), social groups, an individual, or the author). The teacher led class discussion asking guided questions such as: "Whose voices are represented in the article?" "Considering the issue reported in the article, is there any voice that has not been represented in it?" and "Is the report biased? And why?" This lesson draws from

the concept of voice in Elbow (2007), Lovejoy (2009), and Luce-Kapler et al. (2011), but students did not begin to use their voice until they had analyzed the newspaper text first to see how the author represented different voices in it. To conclude the first lesson, the teacher introduced students to the summary-response genre by drawing their attention to the opinion page of *The Cambodia Daily* and briefly explaining that people can write a letter to the editor expressing themselves on issues they read in the paper and may even have it published on this page.

In the second lesson, the teacher gave students a copy of a letter to the editor from the opinion page of *The Cambodia Daily*. After the article was read, the teacher told the students that this was a typical summary-response text and got them to identify which part was a summary and which a response. This lesson is based on the genre approach to writing informed by Hyland (2008), Johns (2003), Myskow and Gordon (2010), and Yasuda (2011). In small groups, students discussed what characterizes a summary and a response in terms of purpose, organization, and word and grammatical choices. On the whiteboard, the teacher drew two separate columns, Summary and Response, and invited each group to fill in each column. The teacher asked eliciting questions such as "What is the author summarizing?" "What are some words or phrases used to make reference in the text?" "Is there any reporting verb?" "What is the purpose of the response?" How does the author organize his / her response?" and "What are some words or phrases used to express opinion?" At the end of the second lesson, the teacher reminded students about journal writing and encouraged them to read news articles and write a summary-response text for their entries.

Data Collection and Analysis

To keep track of their reading and writing, students wrote one journal entry every week on topics of their choice; these were submitted every two weeks. They were encouraged to read *The Cambodia Daily*, which they could borrow to read at home, and to use the summary-response genre for their journal entries. They were required to submit a total of 12 entries starting from Week 3, and these entries were used as data to look at the development of their reading and writing.

Data for this project were analyzed using NVivo software, which is known for its power in organizing and managing qualitative data. For anonymity purposes, all students were identified as F (female) 1, F2, etc., or as M (male) 1, M2, etc., in the data. Only their Journal Entries 3 to 9 were selected for analysis because at the beginning and towards the end of the semester more administrative work, such as registration, orientation, course evaluation, tests, and semester exam preparation, was performed. Thus, Entries 3 to 9 better reflected students' work. All journal entries were organized and coded using NVivo 10, and three important codes were examined: the sources of information, the issues discussed, and the level of elaboration in the summary-response genre.

Results

Research Question 1

An analysis was conducted of the sources of news the students read and responded to and the issues they discussed in their responses. Although *The Cambodia Daily* is a recommended source, students referred to many other Internet and broadcast sources, including Dem Ampil News (DAP), Cambodia Express News, Yahoo, CNN, the Associated Press, Channel News Asia, and the BBC. Students read the news articles both in Khmer and in English. Students' expanding knowledge of society is probably best expressed in their expanding sources of

information as they progressed from Journal Entry 3 to 9, and this is illustrated in the model in Figure 1.

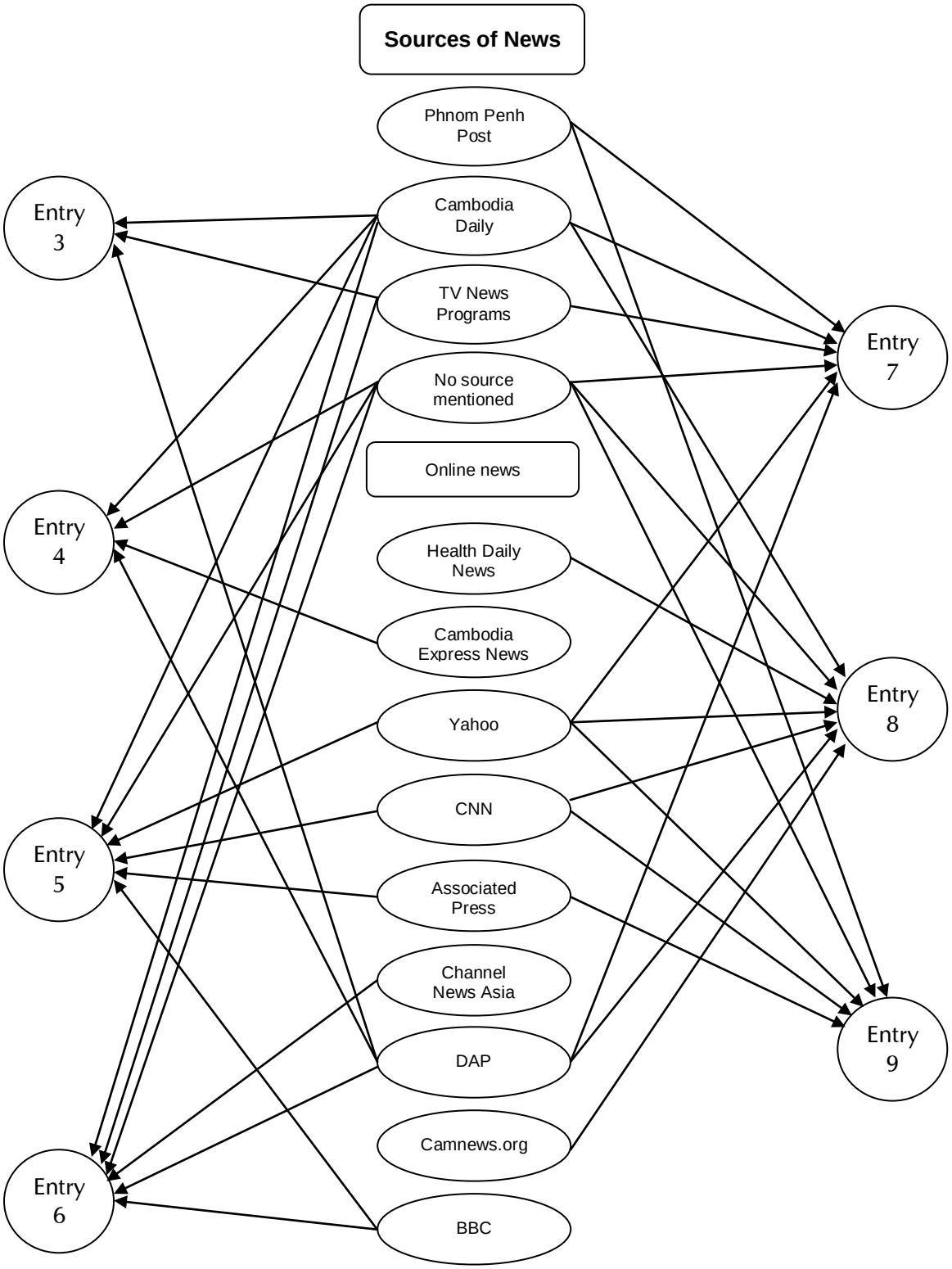

Figure 1. Sources of information from Journal Entries 3 to 9.

According to Figure 1, Entries 3 and 4 draw on news from only three to four sources, including *The Cambodia Daily* and DAP; but from Entries 5 to 9 the students started reading news from five to seven sources, including Yahoo, CNN, the Associated Press, Channel News Asia, and the BBC.

Students' increasing knowledge of society is also reflected in the choices of issues they discussed in their journal entries. Most of the issues are controversial and real-life happenings around them, including land disputes, traffic accidents, Cambodians migrating to work in the neighboring countries, the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, and domestic violence. The following two entries illustrate how students discuss some of these issues (for the purpose of this illustration, an example from Journal Entry 10 is also used):

Abroad Maids

> Prime Minister Hun Sen personally ordered an immediate ban on sending Cambodian maids to Malaysia. But only two days after, the ministry of labor offered job recruitment agencies as exemption allowing them to continue to send thousands of registered recruit abroad. A secretary of ACRA, Association of Cambodian Recruitment Agencies said he allows who are under training and registered. New recruitment is not allowed any more. He added that, this allowed his company to recover the costs it had incurred for training, transport and travel documents or recruits which were at least $500, $600 per recruit. However, if this company keep on doing this, it seem like they act against the Prime Minister's order. A suspension is a suspension. It should not have an exemption to allow the sending of maids to continue. The total of trainees is about id [*sic*] about 7,000 which is a large number. So continuing sending is continuing those trainees to become new generation victims since there are a lot of examples in the past of this problem.
>
> (F5 Journal Entry 9)

Overdue Trials?

> In another one of Cambodia Daily issue today, one article was about the Khmer Rouge leader, brother "number two", Nuon Chea, who's being trialed alongside his other colleagues. In the article he talks about his side of the story of the Khmer Rouge. In short, he protested that their plan was the liberate the country from foreign influence and that the massacre was not their intention but ploys of their enemies, (The Lon Nol government, the Americans and the Vietnamese). In my opinions, these trials have long since passed their due date two decades ago. The ringleaders of the regime, including Mr Nuon Chea, had already lived their lives and are now old men just waiting for their deathbed. In just a few years, all of them would probably just died of old age. Then all these late overdue trials are just pointless in the end. Justice should've been dealt upon them as soon as they were caught. They should have all been given capital punishments for their crimes again humanity and their own countrymen. These people are responsible for approximately two millions deaths during their regime which they started and ran. Hatred for them burns for every living Cambodian who experienced their death-era. Yet when everybody were killed and starved in those four years, these men get to live out their lives for over thirty years and a decisive judgment for them hasn't even been given yet.
>
> (M3 Journal Entry 10)

Data showing the increasing sources of information students referred to and the choices of issues they discussed in their journal entries suggest that they were expanding their knowledge and awareness of their surrounding environment. Moreover, this was not actually limited to what was happening in Cambodia; some entries discussed more international issues such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), globalization, natural disasters, and social networking.

Research Question 2

An analysis was conducted of students' journal entries to observe their level of elaboration in their responses to the news summary. Each journal entry was coded at one of three levels. Level A contained only a summary of the news students read with no response to it. Level B consisted of a summary and a response, but the response was limited to one sentence only. Level C also had a summary and a response, which was more elaborate and at a paragraph length or longer. An example of each level follows, with the response part (in Levels B and C) in italics:

Level A

iPhone Battery Issues

> Based on CNN news website updated on 10pm, Apple has fixed iOS5 on the battery performance by releasing iOS5.0.1 after admitted that iOS5 had battery issues. Few weeks ago Apple has released iphone 4S and got many complaints about the fast draining out of battery performance. In the mean time, iOS5 which has useful and new improvements on iphone, ipad and ipod, was also released, iOS5 users face with those issues as well. Noticeable what special in iOS5 is iCloud. After checking the performance of iOS5, iOS5.0.1 is released to fix the bug that keep iphone, ipad and ipod processing. However, now Apple is trying to figure out the problem if it still exists.
>
> (F15 Journal Entry 8)

Level B

The Oil Price

> On March 21, 2012, the BBC news report stated that the oil price of the world is now increasing to a very high level. In that morning the oil price trading for Brent crude was up to $124.43 per barrel and New York light was $106.57 per barrel. It continued that this matter was caused by the trouble in the Middle East and North America and the Iran sanction recently. It was a very big concern for all the country in the world that it will cause all the expenses and the cost of the products will highly increase that may lead too economics obstacle to the world. This main threat has made the oil minister of Saudi Arabia, Ali al-Naimi, said that the country will boost their output to about 3 million barrel more if needed. *Hence, even though it is a choice that makes us feel a bit relief, we should still worry about it and try to find some other ways that may better lift up the world economics out of this trouble.*
>
> (F10 Journal Entry 6)

Level C

Rice Wine Poisoning Hits People to Death and Serious Injuries

Recently I have heard lots about rice wine poisoning in few provinces in Cambodia such as Kampong Thom, Pursat and Kratie. Minority of the victims died while the majority of them are being hospitalized. *This news clearly indicates all kinds of alcohol especially the poor quality ones are bad for our health. If you are consuming alcohol, means you are taking high risk already. Wasting money, affecting health, causing death, and losing family and personal honor are the disadvantages alcohols leave for abusers. Thus, to promote harmony life and peaceful society, Cambodia should do away with all kinds of alcohols as well as those addictive drugs. Government should strictly enforce the law about sale and consumptions. Regular checking the quality of alcohol and the due date and limiting the legal age for buying alcohol help bring the government policies to efficiency and effectiveness about this issue. Furthermore, to make sure that everyone all over the country is aware of this, media is the best way to bring this news—laws and disadvantages of alcohol to them in a convenient and fast way.*

(F8 Journal Entry 5)

Changes in the level of elaboration in students' responses to the news they read were reflected in their seven entries as shown in Table 1:

Table 1

Elaboration Level of Responses From Entries 3 to 9

Entry	A: No elaboration (News summary only)	B: Sentence elaboration	C: Paragraph elaboration
3	0	3	2
4	0	1	6
5	0	1	9
6	0	2	8
7	0	0	9
8	1	0	8
9	0	0	7

According to Table 1, the number of responses at Level C rose significantly from Journal Entries 3 to 5 and remained high through Entry 9. Because the summary-response genre was not required and only recommended for students in writing their journal entries, not all of them used the genre, but when they did, they tended to be more elaborate in their responses. What is satisfying is not only the increase in their responses and elaboration, but also the quality of their responses, as seen in the following extract:

The Approval of Sending Maids to Malaysia

3000 women are planning to departure to work as maids in Malaysia, although there was a speech about the banning made by Prime Minister Hun Sen, for there is the high risk of being abused and exploitation on workers in this country, according to Cambodia Daily volume 50 issue 4. Labor Minister, Mr. Vong Sauth, who has approved this loophole of sending workers to Malaysia, defended his position by saying that what Prime Minister said about the banning applied only to new recruitment activities but not for the one that have already signed the contact with the agency. *However, I will not satisfy with these reasons that the banning is valid only to the new recruitment, for the prohibition of this is created because the government considers about the high risk of workers being badly treated in Malaysia, so why those 3000 women are still sent to Malaysia when we know they might face abusing from their employers? Moreover, in my understanding about Prime Minister Hun Sen speech, he did not say this focusing only to new or old recruitment but to the whole. His commend is to suspend all activities involving in the sending of workers to Malaysia, so the sending should not carry on. Additionally, the job as a maid itself is very vulnerable which workers are easy targets for abusing and exploitation since no one they can turn on when they have problem. They work in a house where owner can easily cut their communication from the outsider and abuse them. Overall, I do not accept the idea of sending women to Malaysia to work as maids, but it will be better if the agencies are able to alter the work from being a maid to the work in the factories.*

(M2 Journal Entry 5)

Student M2 wrote about the issue of sending Cambodian women to work in Malaysia as housemaids in his Journal Entry 5. Although there are some minor errors in writing, he has shown good understanding of the important conventions in a summary-response genre, which are underlined above. These include the use of reference words or phrases, the use of past tense of the reporting verbs in the summary, stating one's position on the issue, and supporting it with reasons. This is typical of an elaboration at Level C.

Limitations of the Study

In this action research, the utilization of a local newspaper, the training of students in summary-response genre, and the use of journal writing for students to express their voices were designed to address the problem of the students' lack of reading and critical thinking. The results seem to have shown the effectiveness of these interventions; however, any attempt to make generalizations beyond the scope of this study will require an experimental design in which a control group is used. Therefore, caution is needed in the examination of the causal relation between the treatment here and students' knowledge of society and critical thinking. Moreover, a large number of entries were coded as non-summary-response genre and were excluded from the analysis. These writings are in essay format and could be rich in students' opinions in social issues, but inclusion of these entries in the analysis might have slightly skewed the results.

Discussions and Implications

From the results of this study, it is important to recognize the value of a news-summary-response genre especially in a composition class. Not only can it enable students to be aware of the important conventions of the genre, but it also has the potential for promoting social justice. First, students get to read about something that is happening around them in real life. For instance, in this study, they read about and reacted to important social issues in Cambodia,

such as land disputes, traffic accidents, migration of Cambodian workers to their neighboring countries, the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, and domestic violence. These are controversial and ongoing issues in current Cambodian society. In addition to reading, the students also have a chance to react to the issues through writing. Some of the reactions in this study include identification of potential exploitations of the poor, critiques on the government's policies and measures, and solutions to social problems. As they read and react to news around them, the students become more analytical and critical of their surroundings. This skill is very important for any active citizen in a democratic society.

This study also illustrates that using a journal in the composition class provides students with opportunities to practice writing and also a space for them to express themselves in an anxiety-free environment. Students may be more motivated because they choose to write on their own topic without worrying about making errors, especially in their foreign language. Another reason for this motivation is the connection of their reactions to real-life problems in the news they read; this is also empowering since this journal closely represents the opinion page of a newspaper, where issues discussed are directly of writers' concerns.

Although this study examined the impacts of the use of journal writing, it did not include the instructor's responses as data because they were random and limited. Therefore, future research may include the examination of the roles of these responses on students' motivation and their actual writing.

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Learning to Teach ESP: Case Studies of Two Vietnamese General English Teachers

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Given increasing concern about teaching quality, more and more attention has been paid to the issue of teacher professional development. While there is a myriad of research on English language teaching (ELT) teacher professional development, little has been done on the same issue for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers. In Vietnam, most teachers of English in non-English-major universities or vocational colleges have to teach ESP courses while their backgrounds are unrelated to the disciplines they are asked to teach. Based on this fact, this study was designed to investigate how general English teachers learn to teach ESP through the cases of two teachers of English at a medical university. Semistructured interviews, classroom observations, and post-observation interviews were used to explore the challenges of those teachers in dealing with new subject matter and seeking appropriate solutions. Also, implications for ESP teacher professional development in Vietnam are drawn.

It is true that with the reconceptualization in teaching and learning over the past 50 years, research into teacher professional development has made significant changes (Schnellert, Butler, & Higginson, 2008). However, while research on English language teaching (ELT) teacher professional development seems to blossom, little has been done on the same issue for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers. This problem was once voiced by Chen (2000):

> In recent years, although ESP has been a popular catchphrase in the field of language learning and teaching, in light of the thin to non-existent provision of ESP teacher education, training programs and supervision in many areas of the world, the demand for ESP courses has gone largely unanswered. (p. 389)

In Vietnam, ESP teaching is still in its infancy. Most teachers of English who work in non-English-major universities or vocational colleges have to take charge of at least one ESP course as a common requirement of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), yet they are not trained to teach English of the disciplines that they are asked to undertake. The situation urges the researcher to study the ways those teachers try to survive as "reluctant dwellers in a strange and uncharted land" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 158), or simply put, the ways they learn to teach ESP.

In this study, the researcher does not intend to cover all ESP realms but focuses on case studies of two Vietnamese teachers of general English (GE) in a medical university. The scope of the

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 228-237. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A05/Duyen

study is not for generalization but allows the researcher to look deep inside the cases to see what is really happening.

Literature Review

ESP Teachers' Required Knowledge Base and Needed Competencies

According to Tom and Valli (1990), the term *knowledge base* refers to the repertoire of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that teachers need to effectively carry out classroom practices. Furthermore, Shulman (1986) proposed seven categories of teachers' knowledge, specifically, (1) content knowledge, (2) general pedagogical knowledge, (3) curriculum knowledge, (4) pedagogical content knowledge, (5) knowledge of learners and their characteristics, (6) knowledge of educational contexts, and (7) knowledge of educational ends, purposes, and values. These constructs of knowledge illustrate the complex nature of the teacher knowledge base.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) claimed that ESP teachers should have the same qualities as general English teachers. Similarly, Sadeghi (cited in Maleki, 2008, p. 9) proposed the qualifications of ESP teachers, including English language knowledge, thorough command of the course design, and expert knowledge of the related field. Additionally, the knowledge of "needs analysis, syllabus design, material writing or adaptation and evaluation" (Venkatraman & Prema, 2007, p. 1) and the understanding of typical genres featured in the disciplines (Hüttner, Smit, & Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2009) are also important for ESP teachers in order to satisfy the changing needs of ESP courses.

In terms of ESP teachers' knowledge of subject matter, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated that ESP teachers "have to struggle to master language and subject matter beyond the bounds of their previous experience" (p. 60). However, they also contend that ESP teachers require *three things only*: (1) a positive attitude towards the ESP content, (2) a knowledge of the fundamental principles of the subject area, and (3) an awareness of how much they probably already know (p. 163).

With regards to competencies that ESP teachers need to acquire if they want to succeed in ESP courses, Venkatraman and Prema (2007, 2013) have developed and validated a useful set of 65 necessary competencies for teachers of English in the engineering colleges in India. Those competencies are grouped under two main parts, namely, "General Competencies," comprising 17 items and "Subject-Specific Competencies," containing 48 statements related to different skills and grammar domains. By building such a set of competencies, the authors aimed at pointing out the training needs of the teachers of English in the engineering field and providing a framework for conducting both in-service and pre-service training programs for aspiring teachers of English for science and technology (EST). Although the list of competencies was developed particularly for EST teachers, it is believed to inspire researchers and teachers of other fields to establish their own ones so as to identify practical needs for ESP teacher training according to a competence-based approach.

ESP Teachers' Roles

In order to emphasize the fact that the ESP profession covers many more responsibilities than teaching, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) call teachers of this field "ESP practitioners" (p. 13) and have devised five critical roles they should play as (1) a teacher, (2) a course designer and materials provider, (3) a collaborator, (4) a researcher, and (5) an evaluator. According to the authors, as in the role of a teacher, an ESP practitioner is recommended to "draw on students' knowledge of the content in order to generate genuine communication in the classroom" (p.

13) and to negotiate with the students the suitable ways to reach lesson goals, as well as to be flexible and willing to take risks. Specifically, ESP teachers in many cases have to be not only the course designer but also provide materials by selecting, adapting, and even writing materials to suit the learners' needs. By the role of a collaborator, the authors elaborate that ESP practitioners should be interested in working with content departments, subject matter teachers, and specialists of the field in order to engage with the disciplines they need to focus on. The fourth role, researcher, refers to the ability to carry out studies on learners' needs, target situation analysis, and genre analysis, or the discourse of the text types that are related to the discipline. Another important role, that of an evaluator, is also mentioned, referring to the testing of students and the evaluation of the courses and teaching materials (p. 16).

Research on ESP Teacher Training

The lack of ESP teacher training courses has been reported in a number of articles in the literature. For example, Chen (2000) from Taiwan claimed that "the ESP profession faces twin problems, namely lack of teacher training programs in many areas of the world and the dissatisfaction with conventional theory-into-practice training models" (p. 389).

With the limitation of training, ESP teachers have been recommended to undertake self-training and self-reflection as temporary but helpful solutions. For instance, Master (1997) encouraged ESP practitioners to apply the self-training approach through a process of professional reflection, problem solving, and decision making, so as to cope with the challenges arising during their practice of ESP. Similarly, Chen (2000) conducted a study on self-training for ESP through action research, in which a GE teacher acquired and developed ESP expertise by reflecting on her own teaching tasks, hence improving performance in the classroom. The researcher added that this "is not a substitute for conventional training entirely: not the life boat itself, but rather a life belt" (p. 389). Also in terms of self-reflection, Wu and Badger (2009) conducted a case study with three teachers of maritime English in China to find out the strategies of those teachers in response to unpredicted problems in subject knowledge during their classes, the situation called "In-class Subject-Knowledge Dilemma" or ISKD (p. 19). In another study, Ghanbari and Rasekh (2012) examined the experiences and strategic behavior of two ESP professionals in Iran with the belief that new ESP teachers can learn precious lessons from those veteran ESP practitioners through their thorny journey of professionalization.

Although the issue of how GE teachers learn to teach ESP has started to gain attention from researchers worldwide, in Vietnam, such type of research seems to be absent, leaving a big gap for the topic of ESP teacher training in its context.

The Present Study

Objectives and Goals

This study is designed to investigate the ways two new teachers of ESP at a medical university learn to adapt themselves in a new teaching environment that they have never experienced before. At the same time, some challenges and possible solutions used by these two teachers during their journeys of learning to teach ESP are explored. With these aims in mind, the researcher has tried to answer the following research questions:

1. How do the two GE teachers evaluate their competencies and their roles as ESP teachers?
2. In what ways do those teachers learn to teach medical English?
3. What are their challenges, their respective solutions, and their expectations in teaching medical English?

The Setting

The study was conducted in a typical context of teaching ESP in a medical university in Vietnam. According to the regulations from MoET, students at non-English-major universities have to study a semester of ESP after they finish two terms of English for General Purposes (EGP). Therefore, GE teachers at those universities normally take charge of at least one or more ESP courses depending on the subdivisions within each discipline.

The Participants

As mentioned previously, the participants are two new teachers of ESP in a medical university in Vietnam. In order to guarantee their confidentiality, their real names were not used, and they were labeled as T1 and T2 hereinafter. They are both in their early thirties, one having 3 years and the other 1 year of experience in teaching medical English.

Methods and Procedures

Within the research design of a case study, the researcher took advantage of semistructured interviews and natural observation of teaching practices via video recording and post-observation interviews so as to meet the purpose of the study's research questions. The study was conducted within the 4 months of a medical English course. The first semistructured interviews were delivered 2 weeks after the beginning of the course. Each teacher was observed three different times with the observation interval of at least 2 weeks. After that, the researcher took notes from the observation and conducted the post-observation interviews to investigate the problems and issues arising from their ESP practice as well as to triangulate with the data collected from the first interviews.

Findings of the Study

Research Question 1: Self-Evaluation of Needed Competencies and Roles of ESP Teachers

Needed competencies. In the initial interviews, the teachers were asked to express their thoughts about the competencies needed to teach ESP. With some hesitation, they gave quite similar answers that they firstly needed to have qualities and competencies of a teacher of GE, and then they also had to equip themselves with as much knowledge of the subject matter as possible. However, neither of them could define the competencies in detail.

In evaluating their own competencies to teach the ESP course at their university, they both reported that they could meet the requirements of the course; but they also admitted their weakness and lack of medical knowledge, which was their big concern. For example, T2 said:

> I think I can teach the course at basic requirement but to be honest, I am not satisfied with myself, yes, my knowledge of specific medical disciplines is not enough. (T2, Interview 1)

Roles of ESP teachers. While sharing the ideas about the roles of ESP teachers, both teachers emphasized the word *orientation*, with the explanation that ESP teachers should be the ones who lead students into the subject, in this case, medical English.

After that, the participant teachers were asked to show their agreement or disagreement on the roles proposed by Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) as well as to evaluate their respective roles by grading on a scale from zero to ten. Interestingly, they both agreed with all the roles mentioned, though they could not articulate the specific roles in their own words. The results, shown in Table 1, reveal that not any role was rated under the average score of five, which also

corresponds to their self-evaluation of competencies needed.

Table 1

Teachers' Self-Evaluation of ESP Teachers' Roles

Roles of ESP practitioners	T1		T2	
	Grade	Explanation	Grade	Explanation
Teacher	8	"I think I can do a good job as a teacher."	8	"I am confident to be a teacher of English."
Course designer and materials provider	8	"I am one of the persons in the department to prepare for the course design and materials providing."	6	"I am not the person in charge of course design, but I often prepare my own extra materials for my lessons."
Researcher	6	"Honestly, I don't think I do research on the subject frequently."	5	"I think any ESP teacher should study more and deeply into the subject matter, I am a novice teacher so my research skill is still limited."
Collaborator	5	"I still haven't had many chances to connect with teachers from other departments as well as students."	7	"During my teaching, I often collaborate with students and sometimes help other teachers with some translation documents."
Evaluator	5	"I do not evaluate the course on regular basis, we only base on the results of the final written exam. It's not really an evaluation, I think."	6	"I am not sure that I do this role well because of our poor testing system."

Research Question 2: Ways of Learning to Teach ESP

Self-studying. Both teachers had quite similar educational backgrounds: they both achieved a master's degree in teaching English as a foreign language at one of the most prestigious universities in Vietnam. However, they both claimed that they only learnt from the MA course a few basic theories about ESP, which seemed to be vague and unhelpful. Therefore, when they were assigned to teach ESP, the first thing they did was self-studying. They spent a great deal of time studying the textbook, looking up the medical terminology in a dictionary, and searching for medical topics on the Internet. For example, T2 reported having to study the lessons in the textbook deeply, and often searched journals or information from Google for difficult medical terms. Also, T1 took it for granted that:

> before any course, you have to prepare the lessons, for ESP course, the terminology is very difficult, so you have to study it first. . . . We [the teachers of ESP] have to study by ourselves as a learner of a new subject. (T1, Interview 1)

Learning from colleagues. Apart from self-study, the teachers also learned from their colleagues, especially the experienced ones. In fact, they had to observe all kinds of classes in their teaching probation time. During that time, they both studied on their own and observed classes taught by their colleagues. In that way, they knew how to deliver the lessons and also learned new terminologies and content from medical English that were quite new to them.

Besides learning through the observation of the colleagues in their department, the teachers also found chances to consult with colleagues from other departments who were teachers of the subject matter. However, they did it only rarely because of a weak connection between ESP teachers and teachers of the subject matter:

> When I found any difficult concept in medicine, I first look it up in the internet or ask my students, I only ask other teachers of medicine in case I am still confused . . . but actually, I'm afraid to ask them such issues, you know, they are very busy. (T2, Interview 1)

By and large, the communication between ESP teachers and the subject teachers was not very close and systematic, as both teachers confessed.

Learning from students. From the interviews and the natural class observation, there were many times the two teachers had to ask students to help them explain some medical knowledge that they were not very clear about.

> Well, I think they [the students] are eager to help me and when being asked about medical knowledge, they seem to be more engaged in the lesson. So it is very useful and very interesting to consult with students the things that you do not know. (T1, Interview 1)

However, things did not always go smoothly. Sometimes the teachers had to cope with the problem that the students gave different answers and they argued with one another. In such situations, the teachers noted that:

> I ask students to check the issue later and give me the correct answer in the next class. At the same time, I note down the issue and find the explanation later. (T2, Interview 2)

> I was really confused in such situation. I myself do not know who is correct or not because my knowledge of medicine is limited. And you know, the students of the third year do not have a thorough knowledge of medical issues too. It's understandable. (T1, Interview 2)

It was quite obvious that in learning to teach ESP, the teachers had to struggle with a lot of difficulties which were both objective and subjective.

Research Question 3: Challenges in Teaching ESP, Solutions, and Expectations

Objective challenges. In reflecting on the objective challenges they had in teaching ESP, the teachers showed their dissatisfaction with the current textbooks for the course, which were very out-of-date and unattractive to learners. In addition, the structures of many ESP coursebooks were nearly the same in the way they only focused on the texts, terminologies, reading comprehension, and translation, which might hinder the creativeness of the teachers and motivation of the students.

Another objective challenge was concerned with the students' demotivation and low level of English competence. In Vietnam, in most non-English-major universities, a large portion of students only study English in general and ESP in particular as a compulsory subject. They do not have clear learning objectives and interest for the subject. Such common types of challenges in teaching ESP in the Vietnamese context were also voiced by the two participants

of this study.

> One of my difficulties in teaching ESP is the mixed English levels of students of the same class. There are some students who are quite good at English, they show great interest to the lessons. However, there still remain a large number of students who do not show positive attitudes towards learning ESP because of their limited ability in acquiring difficult terminologies in the coursebook. . . . I feel that they just study for passing the final exam, not for their real needs. (T1, Interview 1)

In addition to the two main challenges mentioned, some other difficulties, such as large-sized classes, limited time frame for the course, limited access to practice, and matters of course evaluation were also complained about by the teachers.

Subjective challenges. The main subjective challenges were found in the teachers themselves. They both confessed that they had limited knowledge of medicine, which caused them a lot of embarrassment in some cases. Moreover, in order to prepare for a lesson of medical English, the teachers had to spend a lot of time and effort in searching the Internet, looking up terminologies in specific dictionaries, or asking other colleagues for help. Consequently, it made them much more tired than preparing a normal lesson of GE would have.

> For the first time when I was delegated to teach the course, I was very eager to study new things, and then I found that it was really time-consuming and tiring. Then, after a long time, I find that I have lost my patience to study deeply into the subject matter, the fact is that I only focus on the things in the text book and deliver the lessons as normal routine. (T2, Interview 1)

Solutions and expectations. Firstly, regarding the out-of-date coursebooks, the teachers reported that they had prepared extra materials to supplement the lessons, but it was revealed from the classroom observations that both teachers had few chances to use such prepared materials. In the post-observation interviews, the participants blamed the lack of taking advantage of extra materials on the previously mentioned lack of time. Therefore, they expected to have had more time allocated for ESP classes.

Also, they would like to work with other colleagues in the department to compile a more practical syllabus. However, this is a long-term project. At the moment, the only temporary solution is that the teachers have to find the extra materials themselves to make lessons less boring and more effective (as mentioned by T2 in Interview 2). T1 remarked:

> I think in order to build up an appropriate syllabus for the course, it requires a lot of time and effort. It cannot be done overnight. And you know, we [the teachers at the department] are not really equipped fully with the necessary skills for course design and materials development. We really need help from other experts or organization. Well, it's really difficult anyway. (T1, Interview 2)

Secondly, for the problem of students' demotivation, during the class observations of the two teachers, it was recorded that in order to attract students to their lessons, the teachers also created more communicative activities such as role-play and problem solving as if they were in real-life working situations. However, not all students could follow the activities because of their mixed level of English competencies. Another problem was again the limited class time. The teachers had to accomplish the lessons of the current coursebook within certain periods.

Such a time issue was beyond their power to change. Therefore, in the final interviews, they expressed the wish to group students into different levels so that they could use appropriate activities as well as extra materials.

T1 proposed an idea of dividing the ESP course into two stages, in which the first stage would be compulsory for all students and the second stage optional. The first stage would be conducted like an introductory course to medical English; while in the second stage, based on students' needs, they would have a chance to study deeply what they really wanted for their future jobs. This solution was believed to be more effective because it would meet the demand of both low-level and high-level students.

For subjective challenges, the two teachers reported that they would still keep studying on their own and seek help from students and other colleagues so as to fill the gaps in their knowledge of subject matter while waiting for any formal ESP teacher training courses. They also realized that these temporary solutions sometimes made them feel tired and discouraged and that they had no other choices. Moreover, as the learning was spontaneous, the teachers were confused about their own career path and had no clear plans for their professional development, as reflected in T2's comments:

> I really want to do something for my own professional development but I don't have any plans at the moment and to be honest, I don't know where to start. . . . I wish we can be trained formally to be real ESP teachers. (T2, Interview 2)

Discussion and Implications for ESP Teacher Professional Development in Vietnam

Based on the findings of the study, three main points are discussed and some implications and recommendations are drawn for the work of professional development of ESP teachers accordingly.

Firstly, the confusing identification of ESP teachers' roles and needed competencies seen in the two participant teachers reflects the understandable fact that they are not fully trained in knowledge of ESP-related issues. The findings of this study echo the implications of a previous study of a research group in Vietnam that the failure in an ESP program in a university in Vietnam could be attributed to lack of ESP teacher training programs and inappropriate materials (Duong, Bui, & Bui, 2005). Obviously, if teachers cannot clearly articulate and understand what roles they have to do with their jobs and the skills required, they cannot be successful. It is recommended that in-service ESP training courses should be held nationwide so as to equip teachers with necessary knowledge of ESP, as well as to give them chances to raise their awareness of their own roles and for them to not only survive but to thrive in their career. Furthermore, in the long run, a framework of ESP teachers' required competencies for different disciplines, such as the one proposed by Venkatraman and Prema (2007), should be established in order to provide systematic guidelines for ESP teachers in the country.

Secondly, it can be seen from this study that there are still some existing problems in the ways the teachers learn to teach ESP. Although self-study is good, the teachers still lack self-reflection on their own practice, which is also very important. This explains why no clear strategies or stronger actions in response to the arising challenges were recorded in their reported statements, as well as in real class observations, compared to what has been observed in previous studies in other countries. Hence, self-reflection should be included in the contents of ESP teacher training courses. Also, networking and forums are good ways for teachers of the same disciplines to exchange and reflect on their own instructional practice of ESP. Via such channels, teachers will find more opportunities to engage more in ESP professional

development activities.

Another problem is that the collaboration between the ESP teachers in this study with content departments and subject matter teachers is still weak. Therefore, it requires facilitation from the institutional level to strengthen the relationship by offering strategic plans and encouraging both ESP teachers and content teachers to work for the improvement of the ESP courses. Additionally, in the ESP training courses, teachers should be instructed in how to benefit from such cooperation.

Finally, the findings on the teachers' solutions to challenges they coped with in their ESP teaching show some conflict between what they intended to do and the reality. For instance, in order to supplement the outdated coursebooks, extra materials were prepared, but the rigid and limited time frame prevented those materials from being applied in the lessons. Furthermore, the initiative of using real-life activities to motivate students was not always successful due to the mixed levels of students and large-sized classes. If such conflicts are not taken into serious consideration to reach harmonized solutions, the teachers will find themselves falling back into the old path of stagnant, *let-it-be* situations. Thus, while building ESP teacher training courses, such barriers cannot be ignored.

Conclusion

In short, during the journey of learning to teach ESP, the teachers encountered a lot of challenges which brought them to the situation of sink or swim. If the situation continues, that is to say, there are no training courses, no update of the coursebooks, or no proposed activities for their professional development to make them engaged in the courses and in the tasks of an ESP practitioner, it is likely that the teachers will find themselves becoming passive and demotivated, then gradually falling into boring routines.

Compared to the current extensive investment of MoET into the National Foreign Language 2020 Project, which aims at improving foreign language proficiencies of teachers and students in Vietnam, sadly, not any strategic plans are voiced for the ESP field. As long as ESP teacher training and education is still marginalized, the future of ESP and the decreasing quality of teaching it in Vietnam is foreseeable and predictable.

Although the present study was conducted with only two teachers and in short periods of time, which makes generalization impossible, it can be considered as a modest effort in investigating how GE teachers learn to teach ESP in a university context in Vietnam. In addition, it also raises the necessity of ESP teacher training in Vietnam. More importantly, it provides some recommendations for ESP teacher professional development as well as rings the warning bell about the status quo of ESP teaching in Vietnam. For a newly emerged environment of ESP, as in Vietnam, such research topics should be encouraged to develop the country's own model of ESP teacher training which will be very meaningful to the improvement of ESP teaching there.

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A Critical Examination of Representation and Culture in Four English Language Textbooks

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In light of the importance of intercultural communicative competence in today's global society, this study examined the topics, images, audio material, hidden ideologies, perspectives, cultural information, and cultural activities in four English language textbooks from a pedagogical perspective. Overall, the four textbooks were shown to include a limited scope of topics, under-represent a variety of minority groups in the culture represented, contain a limited range of accents in their audio material, generally lack in-depth cultural information, and contain a paucity of cultural activities targeting the development of students' intercultural communicative skills. The study concludes that textbook publishers need to improve the cultural representation of minorities, variety of accents included in audio material, depth of cultural information, and effectiveness of cultural activities in their English language textbooks. Furthermore, teachers must be aware of hidden stereotypes, values, and ideologies to overcome the pedagogical limitations of the cultural information and activities of language textbooks.

Cultural values are expressed in the different ways languages categorize items, express politeness, and maintain hierarchies, as well as through different vocabulary items, idioms, proverbs, and other sayings (Decapua & Wintergerst, 2004). Because culture is such an integral part of language, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to teach a language without teaching at least some aspects of its culture.

A number of researchers and teachers have advocated making the development of students' intercultural communicative competence one goal of the language classroom and thus advocate teaching culture in the language classroom (Byram, 2008; Sercu, 2010). Intercultural communicative competence can be defined as the ability "to interact with people from another country and culture in a foreign language" (Byram, 1997, p. 71). Developing intercultural competence goes beyond the mechanics of language and requires students to learn about cultural knowledge and practices in order to improve the learning of interculture, improve intercultural communicating skills, and adopt an interculturalist identity (Sercu, 2010).

In addition, recent developments in critical pedagogy have led some researchers to suggest that helping students develop into culturally aware, sensitive international citizens should be one goal of language education, necessitating a cultural component and activities to raise students' intercultural sensitivity within the language classroom (see Byram, 2008). This focus on

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 238-252. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A06/Hilliard

developing students' intercultural communicative competence and on helping students develop into international citizens represents a shift in the role of language education. Rather than focusing solely on teaching the mechanics of language, it is now being suggested that language teaching should incorporate more activities for cultural awareness and individual development (Gray, 2010).

Previous Research

Since textbooks both implicitly and explicitly present students with representations of other cultures and values, it is critical that textbooks be evaluated from a pedagogical standpoint. Previous studies have generally focused on representations of gender, race, nationality, and culture in both curricular and language textbooks to reveal hidden ideologies, stereotypes, and assumptions within the textbooks themselves (see Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991; Eriksson & Aronsson, 2005; Gray, 2002, 2010; Heinrich, 2005; Lee & Collins, 2010; Shin, Eslami, & Chen, 2011; Sleeter & Grant, 1991). In general, these studies have revealed a trend in recent years towards more equal representation of women and increasingly multicultural content. However, they have also revealed hidden ideologies of individualism and materialism as well as a tendency to present a superficial and overly positive view of the target culture.

While earlier language books were shown to present women unfairly in terms of proportional representation, stereotypes of women's roles, and other gender stereotypes, recently, textbook publishers appear to be making an effort to eradicate this problem (Gray, 2002). Gray's 2010 survey of language textbooks dating from 1984 to 2003 upheld this trend towards the "feminizing of content," as the earlier textbooks tended to be more sexist and later textbooks tended to represent women more fairly (p. 109). Even so, Sleeter and Grant (1991) suggested that modern curricular textbooks largely tend to avoid discussing issues of gender by simply eliminating sexist language, and a more recent study by Lee and Collins (2010) suggested that there may be differences in the representation of women in textbooks used in different countries.

Other studies have suggested that minority groups are generally under-represented, stereotyped, or otherwise portrayed inaccurately in language and curricular textbooks (Gray, 2002; Sleeter & Grant, 1991; Taylor-Mendes, 2009). Sleeter and Grant conclude that "the curriculum focuses on the White male and downplays or simply ignores the accomplishments and concerns of Americans who are of color, female, poor, and/or disabled" (1991, p. 98). Furthermore, a 2009 study by Taylor-Mendes on images in English language textbooks suggested that pictures in textbooks condone racial biases, solidify entrenched racial stereotypes in the culture portrayed, and "reinforce a made-in-Hollywood version of culture that does not exist" (p. 77).

Finally, a number of studies have suggested that general cultural representations in language textbooks may be unrealistic, superficial, or idealistic (Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991; Gray, 2002, 2010; Gulliver, 2010; Heinrich, 2005; Kubota, 2002; Shin et al., 2011). For example, in a 1991 study of French language coursebooks, Byram and Esarte-Sarries found that representations of French people and culture were generally urban, positive, and unrealistic. Similar studies by Kubota (2002) and Heinrich (2005) both found that Japanese language textbooks tend to present an idealized, positive version of Japanese culture and language, which may hinder language learning by "alienating learners from discovering how to function effectively in real social contexts" (Kubota, 2002, p. 26). Moreover, a number of researchers have expressed concerns about hidden cultural and political ideologies represented in English language textbooks, such as the cultural values of individualism, egalitarianism, and materialism (Canagarajah, 1999; Dunnet, Dubin, & Lezberg, 1986; Gray, 2010; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson, 1992).

English as an International Language

Recently, what it means to teach English as an International Language (EIL) has become a widely developed issue in the ELT community. Recognizing that there are more non-native speakers than native speakers, that English is spoken in a wide variety of contexts throughout the world, and that a number of varieties of English are used globally influences conceptualizations of teachers' roles, linguistic content to be taught, and expectations for students to be communicatively competent (Naji Meidani & Pishghadam, 2013; Sharifian, 2013; Shin et al., 2011; Yuen, 2011). Researchers examining English language textbooks from an EIL perspective have found them to be limited in variety and depth of cultural content (Shin et al., 2011; Yuen, 2011) and misleading for students (Forman, 2014).

First, Yuen claims that if English is to be used for intercultural communication, then teaching materials should include information from a variety of cultures, not just the cultures of English-speaking countries (2011, p. 253). Examining two English language textbooks used in Hong Kong, Yuen (2011) found that the cultures of English-speaking countries were over-represented, while Asian or African cultures were under-represented. In addition, products, or Big-C culture were depicted more frequently than perspectives, or little-c culture. Textbook analysis by Shin, Eslami, and Chen (2011) showed similar results, with a disproportionate amount of inner circle cultural information included in the texts and cultural information remaining at the knowledge-oriented level rather than engaging learners in deep reflection.

Researching the way local teachers use English language textbooks in rural Thailand, Forman (2014) found that teachers adhere to the cultural information presented in the texts, even if the information is irrelevant, confusing, or misleading for students. As Forman notes, for these teachers "the textbook is the curriculum," with an authority "beyond criticism," making the cultural information included in textbooks particularly influential in EFL contexts (2014, p. 72-73). Like Yuen (2011), Forman (2014) suggests that the content of textbook materials should include a variety of cultural material, both local and global.

With the rise of Communicative Language Teaching and the need for students to use English to communicate in international and intercultural situations, researchers now emphasize the importance of developing students' intercultural competence (Alptekin, 2002; Schnitzer 1995) and metacultural competence (Sharifian, 2013). This means that culture should play an important role in the foreign language curriculum and that cultural materials for language teaching must be re-examined with the goal of developing intercultural communicative competence in mind.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to uncover hidden ideologies and values within the texts and to evaluate the general effectiveness of cultural information and activities included in the textbooks from a pedagogical perspective. Overall, this study aimed to address three main questions:

1. What kinds of cultural materials are included in English language textbooks today? How are different groups and cultures represented in the textbooks?

2. Are there any hidden values or assumptions in the cultural material included in English language textbooks?

3. What are the pedagogical implications of the cultural information and activities included in the textbooks? Will this information and these activities help students develop their communicative cultural competence?

To address these questions, four series of popular English language textbooks used globally were selected, a form for analysis was created based on previous research, and the analysis was divided into three separate readings.

The Textbooks

This study focused on textbooks widely used around the world to teach general English language skills for adults and avoided books published for specific contexts, specific groups, or specific purposes. An intermediate level textbook was chosen from four popular series produced by major ELT textbook publishers between 2003 and 2011. For the purpose of this paper, the textbooks will be referred to as Textbook A, Textbook B, Textbook C, and Textbook D.

The Analysis

A framework for analysis (see Appendix) was developed for this study after examining frameworks from Risager (1991), Sercu (in Gray, 2010, p. 40), and Gray (2010). The framework used in this study combines the three frameworks to include an emphasis on culture on multiple levels, a concern for the pedagogical implications of the cultural material, and the analysis of accents and varieties of English in the audio material. The framework allows for both quantitative analysis of pictures, topics, and audio material in Sections I and II, and more qualitative analysis of cultural values, perspective, and pedagogical implications in Sections III and IV to provide a holistic overview of each course book.

First Examination

The first reading included Sections I and II of the analysis form (see Appendix) and aimed at achieving a general idea of the overall structure of the textbooks, their main topics, and the types of texts and varieties of accents they contained. During this reading, formal counts were taken of the topics included in each unit of the book, the gender and nationality or ethnicity of the people in the textbook images, and the accent and variety of English used in the audio material of each textbook.

Second Examination

The second reading included Section III of the analysis framework and focused on examining the cultural content of each textbook. Cultural content was examined on four levels: the micro level, the macro level, international and intercultural issues, and the point of view of the authors.

Third Examination

Last, each textbook was examined a third time for pedagogical implications using Sections IV and V of the framework. This included examining the type, educational potential, and objectives of each task in the textbook, determining whether the texts and tasks address students' knowledge, attitudes, and cultural frame of reference, and commenting on the effectiveness of each textbook in developing students' communicative cultural competence.

Data and Findings

Overall, the textbooks were shown to include a limited range of topics, images, and accents and to under-represent a wide variety of minorities, nationalities, and cultures. While all the textbooks include some explicit cultural material, activities, and discussion which may help develop students' cultural knowledge and awareness, there are few, if any, activities included in the textbooks which would further develop students' intercultural communication skills.

Topics

In general, a limited range of topics are included in the four ELT textbooks surveyed in this study, which may be due to what Gray (2002) refers to as "inappropriacy," or the tendency of textbook publishers to avoid certain topics based on customers' cultural sensitivities. By focusing only on positive or neutral aspects of the target culture and excluding negative or sensitive information, the target culture may be misrepresented.

Representations of Ethnicity in Textbook Images

The ethnicity for people within textbook images was determined by examining the clothing, environment, surrounding objects, and person's appearance within the picture, as well as by examining information found in accompanying texts. Any images in which the ethnicity was not clear from the image or surrounding texts were counted as Not Determined (ND). As shown in Figure 1 below, the percentage of Caucasians in the pictures in the textbooks varies from 58.6 to 85 percent, making them the most prominent and heavily represented group in all four textbooks. The percentages of pictures of people of Asian, Spanish, or African descent vary by textbook from as low as 2.4 percent to as high as 18.5 percent. The "Other" category includes people of Native American or Middle Eastern descent. In all the textbooks, the "Other" category has the lowest percentage, meaning that Native Americans, Middle Easterners, and other minority groups in the culture represented appear in images even less frequently than people of Asian, Spanish, or African descent.

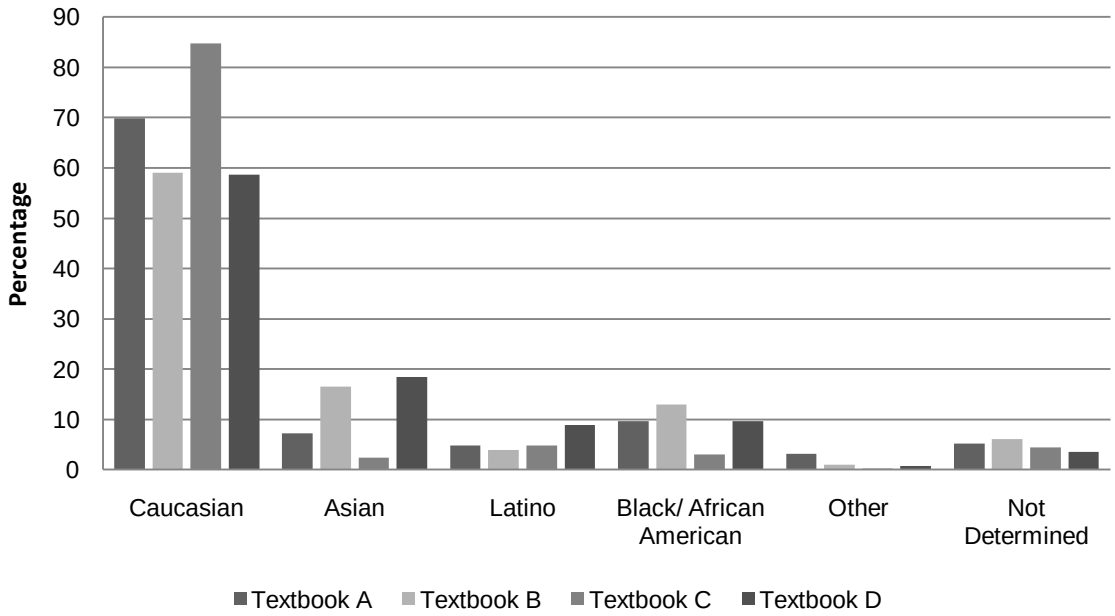

Figure 1. Ethnicity in ELT textbook images

The textbook images include a fairly equal percentage of men and women, which fits with Gray's (2010) observation that more recently produced textbooks show a trend towards

"feminizing of content" and more egalitarian representation of women. However, only one textbook includes any images of people with disabilities, and no textbooks include any clear images of gays or lesbians, leaving out people with other sexual orientations or gender identities.

Audio Material

The percentage of audio tracks that include an accent other than standard native speaker accents ranges from 2.80% to 34.50%. The audio material in the earlier textbooks in particular tend to lump together different nationalities by not including a variety of accents, while the audio tracks in later textbooks distinguish between different varieties of Asian, European, and Middle Eastern accents. Textbook C and Textbook D also include a larger variety of native speaker accents.

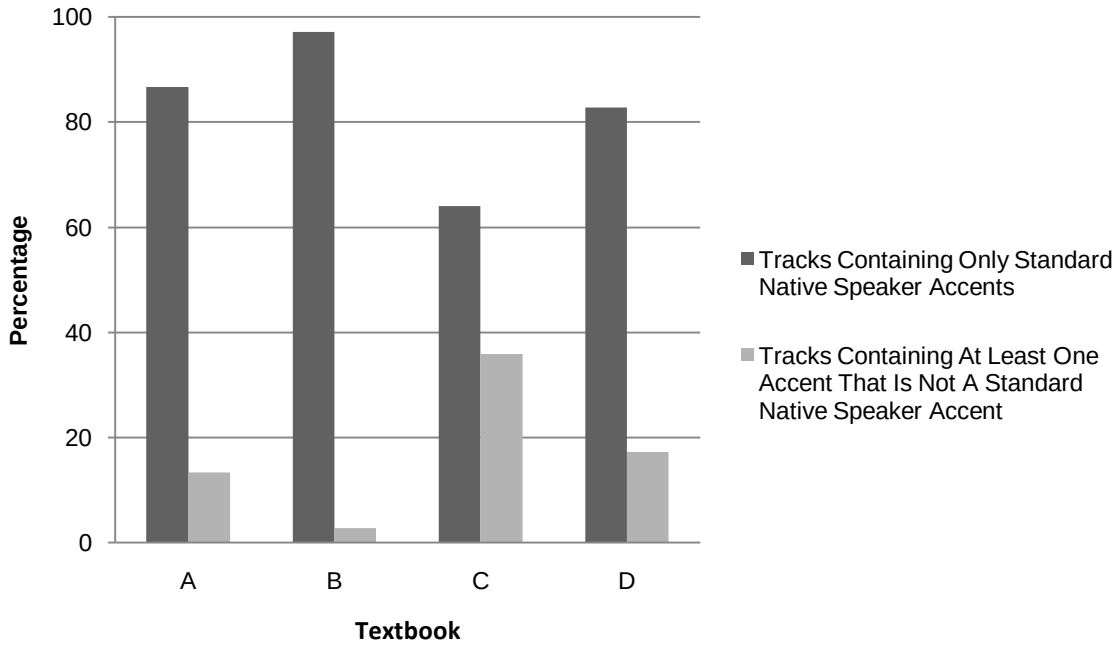

Figure 2. Audio recordings in ELT textbooks

Overall, the audio material in the four textbooks tends to overemphasize the standard native speaker English accent, and international and native speaker accents tend to be mild, standard forms for each country. While two of the textbooks purposely focus on North American accents, they still do not include a variety of regional accents and primarily feature a standard, non-regional dialect. Nonetheless, Textbooks C and D, published in 2008 and 2011 respectively, do include a slightly greater variety of international accents in the audio material than Textbooks A and B, published in 2003 and 2005 respectively. If this trend extends to other recently published English language textbooks, the exposure to different varieties of spoken English could have a positive influence on students.

Underlying Values

Overall, the textbooks in this study emphasize Western values of individualism, egalitarianism, cosmopolitanism, mobility, affluence, and success. Even if the textbook publishers wanted to purposely include a greater focus on American values and culture in their textbooks, America is a multicultural country and values vary from region to region and person to person, so a more nuanced approach to Western cultural values would be best.

Some of the texts surveyed openly question some Western values, the drive toward cosmopolitanism, mobility, affluence, and success in particular. For example, Textbook C includes a song which criticizes the modern obsession with money and an article about a woman who lives with no money and few worldly possessions. Textbook A includes a chapter in which a successful but busy lawyer is contrasted with a more content newspaper delivery person. However, the message to students is not always clear. For instance, Textbook B includes both a chapter which discusses the merits of volunteering and another chapter in which success is defined by the material gains of international companies.

Although the textbook authors seem to have made a conscious effort to allow students to express their own values and ideals through debates and discussions, students are often still guided towards a particular perspective. For example, Textbook C features a section comparing stereotypes of male and female activities, such as going shopping, going to the spa, going to the gym, or doing housework. However, this discussion is preceded by a listening activity in which men positively describe a trip to the spa. Thus, while students are free to give their opinion in the gender discussion, the previous activity encourages them to take a stance in favor of gender equality. While exposing students to new ideas from other cultures is beneficial for developing intercultural communicative competence, they should still be given the opportunity to objectively express their own ideas on the topic.

Tourist Viewpoint

Byram and Esarte-Sarries (1991), Gray (2010), and Shin et al. (2011) found that textbooks often have a tourist viewpoint, meaning that they portray the target culture as exciting, new, and positive from the viewpoint of a tourist visiting the country. In this study, the tourist viewpoint could be seen in the textbooks' emphasis on travel, famous landmarks, and people living abroad. Even when the textbooks include negative information about travel, it is still described as a positive experience. For instance, in both Textbook A and Textbook B, negative feelings of culture shock are easily overcome and portrayed as positive experiences for self development. The hardships people can face while living abroad, prejudices or discrimination against foreigners, and problems that may arise while traveling are never addressed, giving students an overly positive, unrealistic view of other cultures and leaving them unaware and uninformed of deeper issues or problems in other countries.

Cultural Material and Perspective

In all four textbooks, cultural differences are often presented as a set of objective facts, which can lead students to oversimplify cultural issues and can create a dichotomy between the culture of the target language and students' own culture. For example, Textbook B includes a list of eating customs in six countries, and Textbook A includes a reading passage which outlines rules of etiquette in different parts of the world. These kinds of cultural materials present students with a superficial image of culture as a set of uniform rules without reflecting on underlying cultural values or traditions.

In addition, the textbooks tend to present an unbalanced view of culture which overemphasizes Western cultures. Other than the sections on travel, most of the dialogues and activities in the textbooks take place in English-speaking countries, even when the texts feature non-native English speakers. Impressions on other countries are either given from the viewpoint of a Westerner or from the viewpoint of a foreigner describing English-speaking countries, emphasizing the Western perspective. Again, even if the textbook authors want to focus on Western culture, there should still be a variety of viewpoints represented and a more sophisticated view of culture in general.

Cultural Activities

Although all the textbooks include cultural material which can be useful in raising students' cultural awareness, in general, the textbooks do not provide enough in-depth activities to develop students' intercultural communicative competence, which is consistent with the findings of Shin et al. (2011). The most common cultural activities in the textbooks are reading texts, listening to dialogues, and answering short discussion questions in pairs or groups. While these activities are effective at raising students' awareness and cultural knowledge, they do not simulate real intercultural situations.

Byram (2008) believes that intercultural competence involves cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills. This means that students do not just need to develop knowledge and awareness of other cultures, but they also need to develop the skills, attitude, and identity to be able to communicate in intercultural situations. None of the textbooks in this survey provided sufficient opportunities for students to immerse themselves in intercultural activities.

Summary of Results

The results of this study are summarized in Figure 3 below. Overall, the textbooks were shown to include a limited range of topics and under-represent a number of minority groups and cultures in their images and audio material. Furthermore, the cultural material in the textbooks may represent a limited perspective, give students a superficial view of culture as a set of rules or facts, and prove lacking in overall quality of information.

Section	Results
Topics	• Lacking in scope • Avoidance of taboo subjects and issues
Images	• Predominantly feature Caucasian characters • Under-represent minorities, people with disabilities, gay men, and lesbians • Fairly even percentage of men and women
Audio Material	• Mostly feature standard native speaker accents • Trend towards including a greater variety of accents from around the world in the audio material • Few or no tracks with regional American or British accents
Values	• Emphasize Western values of individualism, egalitarianism, cosmopolitanism, mobility, affluence, and success • Guide students towards one perspective
Viewpoint / Perspective	• Overly positive, tourist viewpoint • No mention of hardships, prejudices, or discrimination people may encounter when living or traveling abroad
Cultural Material	• Superficial presentation of culture as a set of facts or rules • Overemphasis of Western cultures and values
Cultural Activities	• May raise students' cultural awareness or knowledge • Not effective enough for developing students' intercultural communicative competence

Figure 3. Summary of findings

Implications

The results of this study suggest that the cultural material in ELT textbooks may be lacking in scope and that the cultural activities included in the textbooks are insufficient for effectively developing students' intercultural communicative competence. The under-representation of different groups of people and cultures, the hidden ideologies and values represented in the texts, the general lack of in-depth cultural materials, and the ineffectiveness of the cultural activities in the textbooks may pose challenges for teachers who are required to use these textbooks for their language classes and may not have the time, knowledge, or skills to create effective supplementary cultural materials for their classes. The findings of this survey raise issues for both textbook publishers and the entire ELT community.

Stereotypes and Under-Representation

Sleeter and Grant claim that "textbooks continue to legitimize the status of White males" (1991, p. 99). The textbooks in this study certainly present a skewed version of reality, with an overemphasis on Western images, values, and cultures. Caucasians are the most prominent group in all the textbook images, standard native speaker accents are heavily featured in all the audio material, and Western values are present throughout all four textbooks. Even if the goal is to focus on Western culture, these textbooks present students with unrealistic and inaccurate ideas about other cultures and peoples, and gloss over or ignore discrimination through their omission.

Textbooks should include credible and rounded characters from a variety of different backgrounds and cultures rather than continue to focus solely on the experiences of white Westerners. In recent years, publishers have made an attempt to portray women more fairly and positively, avoid gender stereotypes, and include a percentage of female characters and images which reflects the percentage of women in the population worldwide (see Gray, 2002, 2010). It is time that textbook publishers create similar policies for other groups of peoples, including minorities, people with disabilities, and the gay and lesbian community.

Oversimplification of Culture

The cultural materials included in all four series frequently present simplistic conceptualizations of different cultures. Textbook publishers should include more in-depth cultural materials which include some explanation of cultural practices and traditions and also present several different viewpoints so that students do not assume that culture is a monolithic institution applicable to all members of a society.

Monoperspective, Tourist Viewpoint

In general, the textbooks represent a Western viewpoint and Western values from the overly positive perspective of a tourist. Since this kind of perspective can give students a false and superficial impression of the target language's culture, textbook publishers need to include more balanced perspectives and viewpoints which include both positive and negative information about other countries and cultures so that students are presented with a genuine view of other cultures. They should also analyze the types of values and perspectives the textbooks portray and avoid including only Western values and perspectives in textbook materials.

Lack of Activities for Developing Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence

To improve their intercultural communicative competence, students need activities which place them in intercultural situations or enable them to actively participate in a new culture, such as participating in intercultural role-plays, researching other cultures, or actively engaging in another culture's customs and traditions. Textbooks should go beyond merely presenting

cultural information to including more in-depth cultural activities and discussions that treat culture as a complex, multifaceted set of beliefs, traditions, and customs rather than as a rigid set of rules applicable to entire populations.

Limitations of the Study

Due to the scope of this study, supplemental material, teacher's editions, workbooks, and websites for each series were not included in the analysis. While the four textbook series were selected to serve as models for ELT textbooks in general and largely corroborate the results of previous studies on curricular and language textbooks, the results of this study are specific to these four textbooks and may not be applicable to other series or other levels of the series selected. More research must be carried out on other series and levels of textbooks and on the supplemental material, teacher's editions, workbooks, and web material accompanying each textbook to determine if the results and trends found in this study are applicable to other series and levels of textbooks.

Conclusion

This study aimed to expand on previous studies which examined images, stereotypes, representations, ideologies, and culture in language and curricular textbooks by examining four ELT textbooks from a teaching perspective. Overall, the textbooks were shown to under-represent a number of different peoples, present students with unrealistic and superficial views of other cultures, and fail to provide adequate activities for effectively developing students' intercultural awareness and communication skills.

Teachers should be aware of the values and ideologies included in textbooks and the effect they may have on students' perspectives and personal development. In addition, publishers and authors should be more cautious about representations of other peoples and cultures, hidden values and ideologies within their texts, and the range of perspectives and viewpoints they include in their cultural materials. They should make an effort to include more interactive cultural activities in their textbooks, such as role-plays, cultural research and presentations, active participation in cultural practices and traditions, and opportunities for students to communicate directly with people from other cultural backgrounds. In the meantime, teachers should develop supplemental materials to compensate for the lack of appropriate, in-depth cultural activities include in their textbooks.

As English is considered to be the international language of communication, it is critical that students be given opportunities to develop intercultural awareness and intercultural communicative competence. Thus, it is necessary that publishers make the inclusion of unbiased and effective cultural information and activities in their English language textbooks a priority in order to meet the needs of students in today's global society.

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Appendix
Framework for Analyzing Cultural Content in English Language Textbooks

I. General Information

Topics (combined from Hall [2002] and Sercu's [2000] framework for cultural content [in Gray, 2010, p. 40])

Personal Life, Identity	Family, Family Life	Community	Sports	Health, Welfare	Travel
Education	The Workplace, Occupations	Current Events	Religion	Arts, Humanities	Politics, Charities, World Organizations
Environment	Leisure, Hobbies	Geography	Transportation	Commerce, Economy	Media, Communication
Culture	Science, Animals	Food, Drink	Body, Fashion	History	Other

Images

	Caucasian	Asian	Hispanic	African American	Other	Not Determined	Total
Women							
Men							
Girls							
Boys							

Other Comments:

II. Audio

Accents Represented				
Standard North American	Standard British / Australian	Regional American Accent	Regional British / Australian	Non-Native Accent

Other Comments:

III. Cultural Dimensions (from Risager, 1991)

Micro Level				
Cultures and Countries Addressed	Characters (age, gender, background)	Material Environment	Situations of Interaction	Interaction and Subjectivity of the Characters (feelings, attitudes, values, perceived problems)
Macro Level				
Broad Social Facts about Contemporary Society (geographical, economic, political, etc.)		Broad Socio-Political Problems		Historical Background
International and Intercultural Issues				
Comparisons between Cultures		Intercultural Situations		Images, Stereotypes, Etc.
Point of View of Authors				
Multi-Perspectivity			Mono-Perspectivity	

IV. Educational Aspects

Task Types	Visuals	Educational Potential of Tasks	Main Objective of Tasks	Level of Cooperation Required	Other Task Characteristics

V. General Questions

1. Do the texts / activities address pupils' prior knowledge about the foreign culture?
2. Do the texts / activities address pupils' attitudes to the foreign culture?
3. Do the texts / activities address pupils' own cultural frame of reference?
4. Do the texts / activities focus on aspects of Big C or little c culture?
5. Would the texts / activities be helpful in developing pupils' communicative cultural competence?
6. How could the texts / activities be improved?

The Relationships Among Writing Self-Efficacy, Writing Goal Orientation, and Writing Achievement

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This study examined writing self-efficacy, writing goal orientation, and writing achievement among (*N* = 244) Cambodian university students studying English as a foreign language. Most studies of the relationships among these motivational constructs have been conducted in western contexts, and the findings of those studies might not be generalizable to Asian students. The study first examined whether writing self-efficacy and writing goal orientation were structured similarly by Cambodian students and western students. Factor analyses and Cronbach's alpha provided evidence of the unidimensionality of writing self-efficacy and of a tripartite structure for writing goal orientation. Second, the study investigated the relationships between writing self-efficacy, writing goal orientation, and writing achievement. Pearson Product-Moment Correlations showed that writing self-efficacy was related to writing mastery and performance-avoidance goal orientations. All writing goal orientation measures were related positively. Both writing self-efficacy and writing mastery goal orientation were shown to have positive correlations with writing achievement.

Self-efficacy is among the most notable motivational constructs educational psychologists have been examining (Lane, Lane, & Kyprianou, 2004; Pajares & Valiante, 1999; Shell, Colvin, & Bruning, 1995). Recently, researchers have investigated how self-efficacy is related to goal orientation, another notable motivational construct (Liem, Lau, & Nie, 2007; Phan, 2009, 2010). Most research on these constructs has been conducted in western and / or developed countries. This study was conducted in a developing nation, Cambodia. Participants were university students studying English as a foreign language (EFL); few studies regarding the concepts of self-efficacy and goal orientation have been conducted in this context.

This study had two main purposes. The first was to investigate whether writing self-efficacy and writing goal orientation were structured similarly by Cambodian EFL students and the more widely-studied western students. The second purpose was to test the relationship among writing self-efficacy, writing goal orientation, and writing achievement to ascertain whether the relationships found in western contexts are also observed among Cambodian students.

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 253-269. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A07/Chea_Shumow

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (Bandura, 1997, p. 2). The current study examined self-efficacy in the specific subject of writing; thus, writing self-efficacy is defined as students' ability to perform in writing tasks, and specifically in the context of this study, students' ability to write paragraphs in English. Bandura posited that self-efficacy affects a person's behavior, which further causes him / her to achieve a particular outcome. Self-efficacy affects behavior such that a person with high self-efficacy tends to expend considerable effort when performing tasks and perseveres despite difficulty, thereby achieving good results. On the other hand, according to Bandura (1997), a person with low self-efficacy tends to expend less effort and give up easily when facing difficulty, and consequently achieves less. Self-efficacy also influences the activities an individual chooses to do. A person who believes in his / her ability will choose to do challenging tasks, while a person who doubts his / her ability will avoid situations which seem to exceed his / her ability.

Bandura (1977) also stressed that any study of efficacy should take into account three main dimensions: magnitude, generality, and strength. According to Bandura, magnitude means the difficulty and complexity of the task, generality refers to whether the task is associated with a general or specific sense of efficacy, and strength simply means how weak or strong a person's efficacy is. In his subsequent work, Bandura (1986) posited that students' self-efficacy explained the effect of other factors of academic achievement (i.e., skill or past performance) on later performance / achievement. The current study follows Bandura's advice on the measurement of self-efficacy construct. Therefore, students' writing efficacy was measured using an efficacy measure (which can be seen in Appendix A) that specifically deals with students' ability to write English paragraphs, rather than a general self-efficacy measure.

Goal Orientation

Goal orientation also has been used to frame studies of academic motivation and achievement. Pintrich (2003) described goal orientation as the reason behind students' achievement behavior. Initially, researchers distinguished between learning and performance-goal orientation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Nicholls (1984) used the term *task-involved* in place of learning and *ego-involved* in place of performance, whereas Ames and Archer (1988) used the terms *mastery* and *performance goals*. While there are minor differences in these terms, there is enough similarity among them that they can be conceptualized as the same characteristics (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008). Recently, researchers have further divided performance-goal orientation into performance-approach and performance-avoidance subcategories and have examined the individual influence of each in various studies. Although some researchers also have posited a mastery-avoidance orientation, that construct has not been widely accepted.

In this study, the trichotomous structure of goal orientation (which consists of mastery, performance-approach, and performance-avoidance goals) is used. Students who are high in mastery goal orientation seek to gain understanding and competence in their learning and thus are willing to undertake challenging tasks in order to learn more (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Students who are high in performance-approach goal orientation seek to show off their competence or ability, and hence focus on gaining good grades and outperforming their classmates. Students with a performance-approach orientation are more likely to avoid challenging tasks than those with mastery goal orientation, because they do not want to risk coming behind in competitions. As a result, performance-approach-oriented students have lower persistence in the face of difficulty (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Students high in performance-avoidance goal orientation seek to avoid appearing incompetent in front of others

(Elliot, 1999), avoid tasks which they perceive as challenging, and tend to lose confidence and give up when confronting challenging tasks.

Both mastery- and performance-approach-oriented students are expected to study hard and gain similar achievement in tasks that do not require much effort; however, students with a mastery goal orientation might perform better than those with performance-approach goal orientation in challenging and complicated tasks such as writing, which is the focus of this study. Students who are high in performance-avoidance goal orientation are not expected to perform well in a challenging subject such as writing.

Self-Efficacy, Goal Orientation, and Achievement

Self-efficacy and academic achievement. Bandura (2006) argued that self-efficacy measures should be specific to the subject area studied. In one study, Choi (2005) found that only specific self-efficacy (but not general or academic self-efficacy) predicted the academic achievement of college students in the United States. Other researchers have studied the effect of self-efficacy in specific subject areas such as mathematics at different academic levels. For example, Meece, Wigfield, and Eccles (1990) found that seventh and ninth grade students' general mathematics self-efficacy significantly predicted their mathematics achievement. Studying a similar sample using a task-specific self-efficacy measure, Pajares and Graham (1999) found the same result. The significant influence of mathematics self-efficacy on mathematics achievement is also reported in studies at the university level (Cooper & Robinson, 1991; Hackett & Betz, 1989; Pajares & Miller, 1995).

Writing self-efficacy has been reported as a significant predictor of writing achievement of students at different academic levels. Shell, Murphy, and Bruning (1989) constructed a writing self-efficacy scale which measured students' skills in different writing tasks (e g., writing a letter and writing an essay) and students' skills in writing components (e.g., spelling and parts of speech). They found that writing self-efficacy significantly predicted writing achievement as measured by students' holistically scored essays. They then adapted the writing self-efficacy scale to study the fourth, seventh, and tenth graders and found that students' writing self-efficacy predicted their reading and writing achievement operationalized as mechanical skill and essay writing (Shell et al., 1995). Similar findings have been reported in other studies of writing self-efficacy and writing achievement (McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer, 1985; Pajares & Johnson, 1996; Pajares & Valiante, 1997, 1999). Given the positive impact that writing self-efficacy has on writing achievement stated in the literature, this study used a self-efficacy scale that specifically measures students' confidence in their ability to write English paragraphs (see items in Appendix A).

Self-efficacy and goal orientation. Research has produced consistent results regarding the positive relationship between self-efficacy and mastery goal orientation (Elliot & Church, 1997; Liem et al., 2007; Phan, 2010). However, there have been inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between self-efficacy and performance-approach goal orientation. Some studies showed that self-efficacy had a significant positive relationship with performance-approach goal orientation (e.g., Greene & Miller, 1996), while some others reported a nonsignificant relationship between the two variables (Elliot & Church, 1997; Liem et al., 2007; Phan, 2010; Skaalvik, 1997; Wolters, 2004). Similarly, studies on the relationship of self-efficacy with performance-avoidance goal orientation have found either a null (Hsieh, Sullivan, & Guerra, 2007; Phan, 2010) or a negative relationship between self-efficacy and performance-avoidance goal orientation (Liem et al., 2007).

Goal orientation and academic achievement. Although Dweck and Leggett (1988) posited that goal orientation led students to choose adaptive or maladaptive learning behaviors, thus influencing their academic achievement, subsequent research has produced inconclusive results on the relationship between goal orientation and academic achievement. Some studies showed mastery goal orientation has a positive relationship with academic achievement (Sins, van Joolingen, Savelsbergh, & van Hout-Wolters, 2008), while others show a null relationship (Liem et al., 2007; Phan, 2010). Similarly, studies on the relationship between performance-approach goal orientation and achievement reported either a positive relationship (Church, Elliot, & Gable, 2001; Senko & Miles, 2008; Wolters, 2004) or a null relation (Dupeyrat & Mariné, 2005; Phan, 2010) between these variables. Other studies have found either a negative association (Simons, Dewitte, & Lens, 2004) or a null relation (Phan, 2010; Senko & Miles, 2008) between performance-avoidance goal orientation and achievement.

Although so far there has been considerable research on self-efficacy and its relation to goal orientation and academic achievement, as revealed in the review of the literature, most of the studies were conducted using measures of general self-efficacy and goal orientation. A few studies focused on measures of self-efficacy in specific subjects like writing. Among those studies, none were found that were conducted at an Asian EFL college. Therefore, this current study aimed to address this gap in literature by examining the relation of writing self-efficacy and writing goal orientation with writing achievement in a non-western context. Two research questions were addressed in this study:

1. How are writing self-efficacy and writing goal orientation structured by Cambodian EFL learners?
2. How are writing self-efficacy, writing goal orientation, and writing achievement related to each other?

Method

Context

The study was conducted in the capital of Cambodia at a prestigious semi-private university which provides a four-year bachelor's program in English. Admission to this program is based on high school examination grades and at least intermediate performance on an English proficiency examination. The students who pass the entrance exam must have had quite solid background in English language learning.

The university provides three learning shifts, each of which consists of two 90-minute sessions: morning (7:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.), afternoon (2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m., or evening (5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.). Students study one shift a day, five days a week, throughout each semester. Students choose to study during whichever shift they want. Most of the students who take classes in the evening shift are also engaged in either part-time or full-time employment in various fields.

The students take four required course strands with no electives: Core English, Literature Studies, Global Studies, and Writing Skills. The medium of instruction and communication is supposed to be English in all courses. This present study focuses on Year 2 students in Writing Skills classes, in which students are taught different types of writing in both paragraph and essay formats.

Participants

Approximately 600 Year 2 students are enrolled in the bachelor's program of English at the university. Nine classes were randomly selected to participate. Of the 281 students in those

classes, 87%, or 244 (n =121 males, n = 123 females), returned the questionnaires they were given.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) administered to students consisted of four sections. The first elicited students' self-efficacy with seven items. The second was about students' writing goal orientation and contained 14 items. The third, which contained 12 items, asked students about their learning strategies. The last section, with only two items, asked for students' background information—students' gender and learning shift (morning, afternoon, or evening)—to be used in the study. The questionnaire was administered, with permission from the department head and class lecturers, to students at the beginning of their class. It took them about 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Measures

It is essential to establish measurement accuracy before testing relationships among the key variables. It cannot be assumed that measures developed in western countries will adequately measure motivation in other societies. Below are measures of key variables in this study.

Writing achievement. Students' paragraph scores, ranging from 0 to 50 on their writing final exam, were used to reflect writing achievement. Students were given two or three general topics to write a paragraph about for the exam. Lecturers scored students' paragraphs, following six features of writing skills focused on in the curriculum (i.e., grammar, word use, coherence and cohesion, punctuation, writing planning, and introduction and conclusion writing) and a holistic approach, which "assumes that in a writing assessment students should write, and that error counts alone cannot accurately reflect competency levels" (Myers, 1980, p. 1).

Lecturers used three different versions of the exam, resulting in different versions of paragraphs. Therefore, inter-rater reliability was established to ensure the reliability of the scores obtained as measures of participants' writing achievement. Five to ten copies of participants' paragraphs scored by each teacher in each shift were also scored by another rater. Scores from the rater were compared with the scores from the teachers and an inter-rater reliability index was calculated. Inter-rater reliability was .71.

Writing self-efficacy. This study operationalized students' writing achievement as paragraph-writing achievement. In accordance with Bandura's (2006) suggestions, the writing self-efficacy scales reflected students' paragraph-writing self-efficacy and utilized an 11-point response scale, ranging from 0 (*Totally Disagree*) to 100 (*Totally Agree*) with a 10-unit interval. The writing self-efficacy scale consisted of seven items (see Appendix A), which were based on Prat-Sala and Redford (2010) because the items matched well with the way writing skills were taught at the university in this study.

Writing goal orientation. Scales developed by Kaplan, Lichtinger, and Gorodetsky (2009) were used to measure writing goal orientation. Those writing mastery and performance-approach goal orientation scales each contained five items with average alpha (α) values of .89 and .90, respectively. The writing performance-avoidance goal orientation scale contained four items with an α value of .79. Cronbach's α reflects the interrelation among items supposed to measure the same construct, so a high alpha value indicates high internal consistency among the items of the measure. According to Santos (1999), an acceptable alpha value should be at least .70, although there may be some exceptions. Students used a seven-point Likert response

scale ranging from 1 (*Totally Disagree*) to 7 (*Totally Agree*) to respond to each item (see Appendix A).

Results

Structure of Writing Self-Efficacy and Goal Orientation Measures in the Cambodian EFL Context

Research Question 1 asked whether the measures of writing self-efficacy and writing goal orientation would be structured by Cambodian EFL students in the same way as they were by the western students for whom the measures were developed. To determine this, the principal-component analysis technique (Field, 2009; Kline, 1994) was used, as this technique allows researchers to examine the unidimensionality of a construct through different measurement items.

Structure of writing self-efficacy. To assess unidimensionality of the writing self-efficacy construct, a principal-component analysis with varimax rotation was conducted on the data. Only items with loadings of 0.40, a commonly used cutoff, were retained (Kline, 1994). Results are displayed in Table B1 in Appendix B.

In order to be retained, a scale should have an eigenvalue greater than one and the variance explained by the factor analysis should be greater than 50%. All seven items from the original writing self-efficacy scale produced one component with eigenvalue = 4.7, which accounted for a variance in the items of 66.8 %.

Cronbach's α is the most common index researchers use to determine the internal reliability of a scale (Field, 2009). A high value of Cronbach's α suggests high internal reliability of a scale. The data collected in this study yielded a Cronbach's α of .92, which was commensurate with the reliability found in western samples.

In this study, the scores from the self-efficacy measures yielded $M = 66$, $SD = 11.45$. Taken together, the results of the factor analysis and Cronbach's α suggest that the structure of self-efficacy by the Cambodian EFL university students is similar to that found in western samples.

Writing goal orientation structure. The same procedures were followed with the writing goal orientation measure as with the writing self-efficacy measure. However, while items from the writing self-efficacy measure were expected to form one scale, items from writing goal orientation measures were expected to form three subscales because of the tripartite nature of the expected structure.

A principal-component analysis was conducted (using varimax rotation) on the writing goal orientation measure. Table B2 in Appendix B displays factor loadings for the goal orientation items. Fourteen items of the writing goal orientation measures yielded three components with eigenvalues = 4.53, 2.72, and 1.53, respectively, which accounted for 62.76% of the variance in the items. Two of the total of 14 items (Items 3 and 5 of the measure of the writing performance approach goal orientation [Items 15 and 17, respectively, in the questionnaire]), were discarded because they loaded on two different components. The final 12 items were categorized into three components: mastery (five items), performance approach (three items), and performance avoidance (four items).

The scores from the final writing goal orientation measures yielded $M = 6$, $SD = .68$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .81$ for mastery goal orientation; $M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.23$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$ for performance-approach goal orientation; and $M = 4.44$, $SD = 1.28$, Cronbach's $\alpha = .79$ for

performance-avoidance goal orientation. Thus, Research Question 1 can be answered in the affirmative for both constructs. That is, measures of writing self-efficacy and writing goal-orientation were structured by Cambodian EFL students as they were structured by western students.

Relationships of Writing Self-Efficacy, Goal Orientation, and Achievement

Research Question 2 addressed the relationship between writing self-efficacy, writing goal orientation, and writing achievement. To answer this question, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analyses were used.

The results of these analyses are shown in Table B3 in Appendix B. As expected, writing self-efficacy significantly correlated in a positive manner with writing mastery goal orientation, $r(242) = .40$, $p < .001$, and with writing achievement, $r(242) = .15$, $p < .05$. Unexpectedly, writing self-efficacy also correlated positively with writing avoidance goal orientation, $r(242) = .17$, $p < .01$. Writing self-efficacy did not have a significant correlation with writing performance-approach goal orientation, $r(242) = .04$, $p > .05$.

Writing mastery goal orientation had a positive correlation with writing performance-approach goal orientation, $r(242) = .14$, $p < .05$, and, as expected, with writing achievement, $r(242) = .11$, $p < .05$.

Writing self-efficacy, as expected, was significantly and positively correlated with writing achievement, $r(242) = .15$, $p < .05$, as was writing mastery goal orientation, $r(242) = .11$, $p < .05$. The two writing performance goal orientations did not have a significant relationship with writing achievement.

Discussion

Reliability and Validity of the Scores From Measures

Research Question 1 examined the structures of the constructs of writing self-efficacy and writing goal orientation in the Cambodian context. Each of the measures used in this study was found to have high reliability, as the scores obtained from the measures produced sufficient to high Cronbach's alpha values. Principal-component factor analyses conducted on the measures in this study suggested unidimensionality in each construct, which provides some evidence for the validity of the scores from the measures. These findings regarding the reliability and validity of the scores in this study were important because there have not been any tests conducted to examine these constructs in Cambodia; thus, these measures, presented in English, can be used in future research in Cambodia. Future studies can also examine whether similar structures will be found if the items are translated into Khmer, the Cambodian language.

Relationship Between Writing Self-Efficacy and the Other Variables

Research Question 2 in this study pertained to how writing self-efficacy related to writing goal orientation. Results reveal that, as expected, writing self-efficacy was related to writing mastery goal orientation and to writing achievement. These findings suggest that students who have high self-efficacy in English writing tend to focus more on learning for improvement and understanding when they are learning writing skills. These findings are consistent with those from a number of other studies including Elliot and Church (1997), Liem et al. (2007), and Phan (2010), that also showed a relationship between self-efficacy and mastery goal orientation.

Furthermore, writing self-efficacy was not significantly related to writing performance-approach orientation. Research has produced varied results ranging from positive to null relationships between writing self-efficacy and writing performance-approach goal orientation. The current study examined the relationship between the two constructs in a specific subject matter of writing skills and a new setting in which the population is learners of EFL. The population of this study typically finds writing in English a difficult subject because, to write, they have to articulate their ideas in a second language in addition to deciding what ideas to incorporate in their writing. They need to use correct grammar and vocabulary in a second language, which naturally adds burdens to their effort to write. In such a difficult subject, students with high writing performance-approach goal orientation may lose confidence and give up as predicted by Dweck and Leggett (1988).

The only unexpected result was the observed positive relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing performance-avoidance orientation. This result is inconsistent with previous studies (Liem et al., 2007), which might suggest that while the population in this study possesses belief in their own ability to write well, they also feel fear of embarrassment from failing the subject.

Research Question 2 also addressed the relationship between writing self-efficacy, writing goal orientation, and writing achievement. Results from this study indicate a positive relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing achievement. This result is in agreement with those obtained in myriad studies on the relationship between writing self-efficacy and achievement in general academic subjects as well as in writing as a subject (Dupeyrat & Mariné, 2005; Liem et al., 2007; Pajares & Johnson, 1996; Pajares & Valiante, 1997, 1999; Phan, 2009, 2010) and extends evidence supporting Bandura's theory to a new context.

Results further show that writing mastery goal orientation had a positive correlation with writing achievement, suggesting that students who focus on learning writing for improvement and understanding tend to fare well in their academic writing tasks. This finding is consistent with many studies in western countries conducted in various fields of study (Hsieh et al., 2007; Sins et al., 2008).

Another expected result was the null relationship between writing performance-approach goal orientation and writing achievement. Learning in order to win in competitions might be an adaptive behavior and might lead to success in some academic areas (Church et al., 2001; Senko & Miles, 2008; Wolters, 2004). Nonetheless, in face of difficulty, such as the difficult subject of writing, performance-approach oriented students often will give up easily (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), and thus they will not succeed academically.

Writing performance-avoidance goal orientation was also found to have no significant correlation with writing achievement, a result which was not anticipated but which is consistent with two previous studies (Phan, 2010; Senko & Miles, 2008). Students who are high in writing performance-avoidance goal orientation set out to do writing tasks for the purpose of avoiding looking unwise in front of others and often try to avoid challenging tasks because they will not be able to do well in such tasks.

Limitations

One of the main limitations in this study is the reliability of the writing scores. In this study, writing scores were obtained from different lecturers, and students wrote on different topics. Further studies on the relationship between writing self-efficacy and writing achievement should employ more standardized scores to ensure enhanced reliability of the scores to reflect students' writing achievement.

Another limitation is that this study examined students' writing achievement in only one Cambodian English language teaching (ELT) institute. Therefore, the findings from the study might not be generalizable to college students at other ELT institutes in Cambodia or in Asia as a whole. For a broader generalizability of this topic, further studies that cover a wider population are needed.

Conclusion and Implications

Self-efficacy and goal orientation were conceptualized by scholars to have an influence on academic achievement. Although this study was conducted in a setting in which there had been no previous research on this topic, the structure of the constructs was confirmed. Further, this study found a positive correlation among writing self-efficacy, writing mastery goal orientation, and writing achievement. These are positive results, as they contribute to the existing literature by incorporating goal orientation into the examination of the relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement in the specific subject area of writing within a new context.

One implication of this study is that EFL teachers might promote higher writing achievement by fostering students' writing self-efficacy and writing mastery goal orientation. Teachers can create an environment that is conducive to promoting students' writing self-efficacy while also orienting them toward mastery in writing. For example, EFL teachers can assign writing tasks that are challenging enough to engage students and to allow them to succeed with hard work. Writing self-efficacy develops through having successful experiences, seeing the success of peers, persuasion that success is possible, and feeling positive, not anxious (Bandura, 1977, 1997).

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Appendix A
Questionnaire
(Based on Prat-Sala & Redford, 2010; Kaplan, Lichtinger, & Gorodetsky, 2009)

Instruction: Please circle the options which best describe you and your beliefs and behaviors in learning.

Writing belief

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

I am confident that

1. I can write a grammatically correct paragraph.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Totally Disagree					Moderately	Agree				Totally Agree

2. I can use correct punctuation marks–for example, commas, full stops, semi-colons, etc.– in a paragraph.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Totally Disagree					Moderately	Agree				Totally Agree

3. I can plan my paragraph well.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Totally Disagree					Moderately	Agree				Totally Agree

4. I can write a good introduction which informs the reader of my intention for a paragraph.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Totally Disagree					Moderately	Agree				Totally Agree

5. I can put ideas together in a paragraph in such a way that they are clear to the reader.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Totally Disagree					Moderately	Agree				Totally Agree

6. I can link sentences together to make a well-organized paragraph.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Totally Disagree					Moderately	Agree				Totally Agree

7. I can make a good conclusion to inform the reader of the ending of my paragraph.

0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
Totally Disagree					Moderately	Agree				Totally Agree

Writing goal

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

When I do a writing assignment, writing in-class work, or writing homework,

8. it's important to me that I learn as much as I can.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

9. it's important to me that I improve my skills and knowledge.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

10. one of my goals is to learn as much as I can.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

11. it's important for me to really understand what there is to learn.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

12. one of my goals is to develop deep understanding of what I am learning.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

13. it's important for me to look smart in comparison to the other students in my class.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

14. one of my goals is to look smart compared to others in my class.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

15. one of my goals is to show others that those writing tasks were easy for me.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

16. it's important to me that other students in my class think I am good at it.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

17. one of my goals is to show others that I'm good at this work.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

18. it's important to me that others don't see me as a stupid student.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

19. it's important to me that my teacher doesn't think that I know less than others in class.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

20. one of my goals is to keep others from thinking I'm not smart.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

21. one of my goals is to avoid looking like I have trouble doing the work.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

Learning strategies

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your learning strategies in general, not just in writing?

22. I study a course material by repeating the material over and over different times.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

23. I study a course material by skipping over parts I think the teacher will not ask questions about.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

24. I study a course material by summarizing it.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

25. I study a course material by combining different sources (book, notes, . . .).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

26. I study a course material by memorizing something I do not understand.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

27. I study a course material by repeating the material until I can say it exactly like what appears in that material.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

28. I study a course material by connecting course material from different courses.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

29. I study a course material by distinguishing main points and details.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

30. I study a course material by studying something that is not clear again in order to understand it.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

31. I study a course material by skipping parts I do not understand.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

32. I study a course material by underlining the most important parts.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

33. I study a course material by skipping parts I do not find important.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally Disagree						Totally Agree

Background Information

34. Please indicate your gender.
    1. Male 2. Female

35. Please indicate your learning shift.
    1. Morning 2. Afternoon 3. Evening

This is the end of the questionnaire.
Thank you for your participation.

Appendix B
Principal-Component Factor Analyses on Writing Self-Efficacy and Writing Goal Orientation Scales and the Correlation Matrix Among the Variables

Table B1

Factor Loadings from Principal-Component Factor Analysis of the Writing Self-Efficacy Items

Items	Factor Loadings
5. put ideas together in a paragraph in such a way that they are clear to the reader	.85
6. link sentences together to make a well-organized paragraph	.85
4. write a good introduction which informs the reader of my intention for a paragraph	.84
3. plan my paragraph well	.82
1. write a grammatically correct paragraph	.80
7. make a good conclusion to inform the reader the ending of my paragraph	.78
2. use correct punctuation marks–for example commas, full stops, semi-colons, etc.– in a paragraph	.77

Table B2

Factor Loadings from Principal-Component Factor Analysis of Writing Goal Orientation Items

Item: When I do a writing assignment, writing in-class work, or writing homework,	Factor Loadings		
	PAPG	PAVG	MG
14. one of my goals is to look smart compared to others in my class.	.89		
13. it's important for me to look smart in comparison to the other students in my class.	.86		
16. it's important to me that other students in my class think I am good at it.	.81		
18. it's important to me that others don't see me as a stupid student.		.80	
19. it's important to me that my teachers don't think that I know less than others in class.		.79	
21. one of my goals is to avoid looking like I have trouble doing the work.		.71	
20. one of my goals is to keep others from thinking I'm not smart.		.71	
8. it's important to me that I learn as much as I can.			.83
9. it's important to me that I improve my skills and knowledge.			.77
10. one of my goals is to learn as much as I can.			.75
12. one of my goals is to develop deep understanding of what I am learning.			.71
11. it's important for me to really understand what there is to learn.			.69

Note. PAPG = writing performance-approach goal orientation, PAVG = writing performance-avoidance goal orientation, MG = writing mastery goal orientation. Only loadings higher than .40 on only one component are presented.

Table B3

Matrix of Correlation Among Dependent Variable, Predictor Variables, and Background Variables

	Ach	Pr_Ach	SE	MG	PAPG
Pr_Ach	.435***				
SE	.149*	.145*			
MG	.112*	.017	.404***		
PAPG	-.045	-.025	.035	.143*	
PAVG	-.021	-.079	.168**	.137*	.390***

Note. Ach = writing achievement, Pr_Ach = previous writing achievement, SE = writing self-efficacy, MG = writing mastery goal orientation, PAPG = writing performance-approach goal orientation, PAVG = writing performance-avoidance goal orientation; *** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Teaching Practice

A Content-Based Model for Developing Critical Thinking and Language Skills in EAP

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As the number of English for academic purposes (EAP) programs in East and Southeast Asia has increased, so too has discussion about the importance of critical thinking (CT) skills for students enrolled on these courses. To become critical thinkers, students require sustained thematic input in addition to explanation and demonstration of relevant skills, thereby making content-based instruction an ideal approach to prepare students for both the linguistic and cognitive demands of English-medium higher education. Based on this principle and a specific framework of CT skills, the instructional model described here was delivered to 46 students enrolled on a pre-master's program. Results of a post-term questionnaire revealed that students responded positively to the curriculum and thought that it facilitated improvement of their English and CT skills and prepared them for future academic study. Implications for practitioners currently teaching or considering teaching a content-based or CT-focused EAP course are also discussed.

Global education trends are bringing about a shift in the English for academic purposes (EAP) profession away from its traditional centers in the USA, the UK, and Australia, and towards newly developing ones, such as those in East and Southeast Asia (Knight, 2014). Meanwhile, the topic of critical thinking (CT) has become increasingly prominent in the workshops and papers presented at regional TESOL conferences, a trend that comes as no surprise given that CT is viewed by university faculty as a key requirement for academic success (Mandernach, 2006). But despite being the focus of curriculum reform initiatives in many countries throughout the region (Mok, 2009; Shaila & Trudell, 2010), evidence suggests that Asian classrooms are still characterized by teaching styles not conducive to CT development (Mok, 2009) and learning strategies reliant on rote memorization and formulaic writing (Meyer, 2012; Punyaratabandhu, Rush, Kleindl, & Wadden, 2013). In fact, few students report having ever received CT instruction (Yang & Gamble, 2013), and it therefore seems that lack of opportunity bears at least partial responsibility for stereotypes about Asian students' poor CT skills (Melles, 2009). Culturally biased as they may be (Kumaravadivelu, 2003), these opinions can and do negatively influence instruction as teachers may avoid pushing students beyond their mechanical comfort zone towards more cognitively engaging tasks. The result is that even though they *want* to build CT skills (Cai, 2013), many EAP students rarely have the opportunity to do so.

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 270-282. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A08/Brown

This is important because with the profession's gravitation towards non-native English-speaking (NNES) areas will come a corresponding shift in the responsibility for EAP teacher training and program management (Knight, 2014), resulting in an increase in the already large number of NNES EAP teachers (Hamp-Lyons, 2011). These teachers certainly have their own unique advantages, but in many cases they may have a lack of familiarity with classroom-based CT activities as well. The purpose of this paper is to address this dilemma by putting forward a content-based EAP module. This module is based on a concrete conceptualization of CT skills and sustained thematic input, without which students cannot achieve the results they desire and require in both language development and CT ability.

The Role of Meaningful Input

Hamp-Lyons (2011) argues that many general English teachers are underqualified or undertrained to teach EAP, resulting in ad hoc approaches to curriculum planning and materials development. If input materials are presented without adequate context or are unrelated from class to class, even when presented with ostensibly CT-related activities, students will lack sufficient background information for thinking deeply about academic topics. Absent this knowledge base, students are being asked to do something they are not equipped to do.

In contrast, content-based instruction, which relies on authentic input materials, provides the stimulus necessary for students to produce critical output while simultaneously improving their language skills. This claim is based on the belief that learners' reliance on knowledge gained via authentic, contextualized input just beyond their current proficiency level facilitates language acquisition (Krashen, 1985). When presented in a consistent and thematic way, such materials can also allow EAP students to develop the schemata necessary for critical discussion or writing on given topics (Pally, 1997). Furthermore, students in content-based classrooms have demonstrated increased overall language ability (Burger & Chrétien, 2001; Valeo, 2013), acquisition of disciplinary content on par with or even better than non-ESL students (Winter, 2004), and positive affective responses (Song, 2006).

Conceptualizing Critical Thinking

Providing input well suited to both linguistic and CT development is only part of the process. Teachers and students also need a clear conceptualization of this otherwise abstract construct. Given that one-sentence descriptions of CT like those found in the literature are not very helpful to teachers or students, the framework adopted for this project was a set of cognitive skills with various associated sub-skills originating from the American Philosophical Association's Delphi Project (Facione, 1990; see Figure 1). This framework provides a foundation for designing instructional activities and allows teachers to explicitly model the skills they want their students to learn, thus leading to more efficient CT development (Reed, 1998). In the curriculum that follows, a three-stage model consisting of content-based input, critical-processing tutorials, and alternative assessment tasks placed an emphasis on the Delphi Project's skills at each stage.

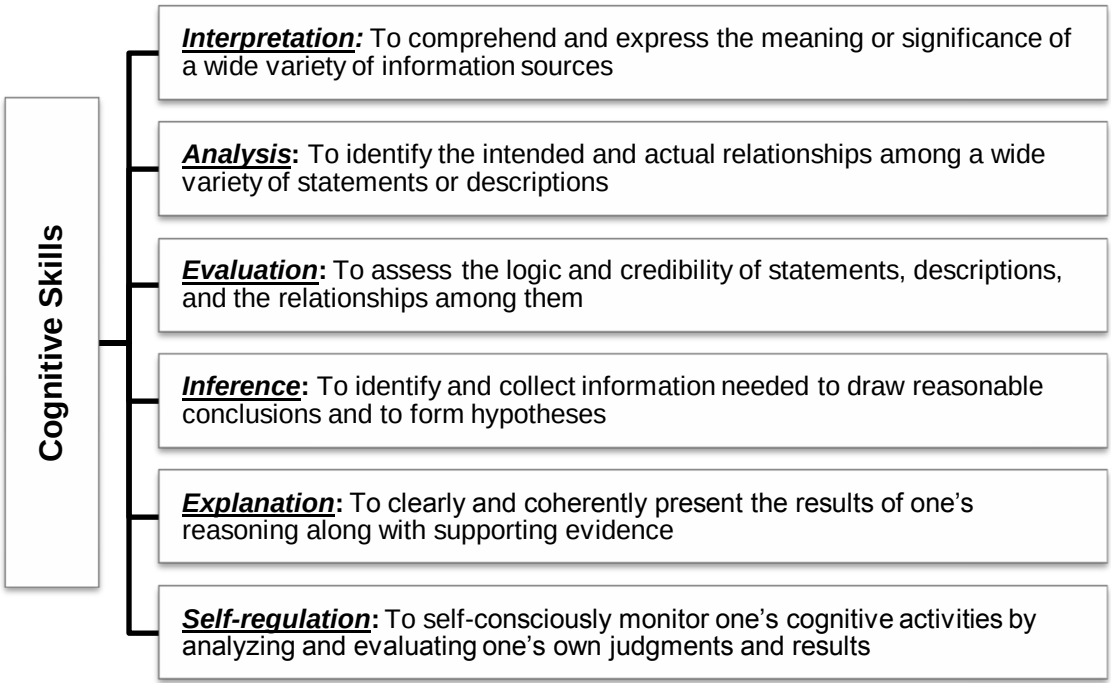

Figure 1. The Delphi Project's core CT skills (adapted from Facione, 1990).

Curriculum Design

Course Overview

The course was delivered to 46 students enrolled on a pre-master's program at a Project 211 university in Chengdu, China. The approximately 100 project-member universities are government-designated research institutions widely considered to be China's most elite. The 30-week program provides intensive EAP and research methods instruction designed to prepare students for graduate-level studies at cooperating UK-partner universities. Most participants were fourth-year university students who came from a variety of majors and had a mean IELTS or IELTS-equivalency score of 5.3. Based on the UK partners' syllabus guidelines, the module described below for three sections consisting of 15-16 students each consisted of 6 instructional hours per week: 3 lecture hours and 3 tutorial hours.

Instructional Model

Figure 2 illustrates the content-based input model adopted in this course. Instructional materials took the form of a university-level textbook, short case studies, and academic lectures from the Internet (i.e., from www.ted.com) and from the course instructor himself. The second stage, critical processing, occurred during content-based tutorials designed to facilitate meaningful discussion, analysis, and application of the reading and lecture materials. The sum of these parts was meaningful output, which came in the form of alternative assessment assignments requiring students to synthesize their own ideas with those from the various input sources.

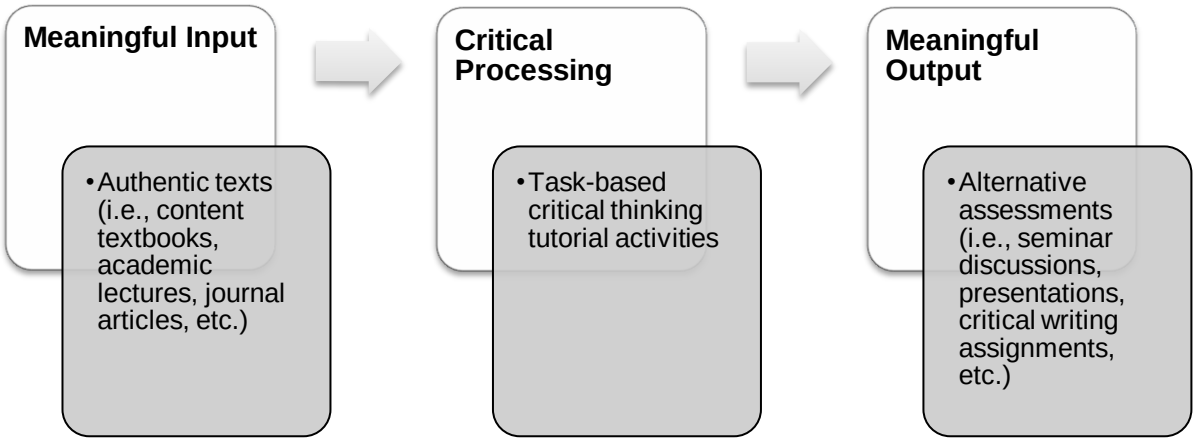

Figure 2. A content-based input model for EAP instruction.

Course Contents

The theme was an introduction to organizational behavior (OB). OB is a good choice for content-based instruction courses because it offers a combination of topics from several different social science disciplines (i.e., psychology, sociology, political science, and economics), many of which students and teachers alike may have encountered in their previous studies. Despite not all students intending to study in management- or business-related post-graduate programs—though many were—organizational behavior was suitable given that most will in fact work in organizations throughout their careers.

The primary textbook was *Essentials of Organizational Behavior* (11th Edition) (Robbins & Judge, 2012). Analysis of sample passages revealed Flesch-Kincaid Reading Ease scores between 42.2 and 48.4, indicating a grade level between 11 and 12. While many students found this text quite demanding, it is intended for a diverse international audience and its style and content are typical of the texts required on many UK undergraduate courses.

The Delphi Project's CT skills framework was explicitly taught during Week 1 to establish a point of reference for all subsequent integrated activities. This was also intended to raise students' awareness of the ubiquity of CT and to aid in their future transfer of learning to content areas beyond the focus of the course (Reed, 1998). The course sequence then progressed through three units, each covering a range of OB topics related to individuals (Weeks 1-4), groups (Weeks 6-8), and organizations (Weeks 9-10). Academic journal articles were covered during Week 5 in conjunction with a literature review assignment.

Integrating Critical Thinking Skills Into the Instructional Model

At each point in the course, specific Delphi Project skills were described, demonstrated, and practiced (see Figure 3). In the meaningful input stage, focus was given to, among other things, the development of students' interpretation abilities. They were taught to distinguish main ideas and identify authors' and speakers' purposes. Analysis activities at this stage included sketching relationships between sentences and paragraphs, and skills of inference and self-regulation were also crucial as students were taught to construct meaning from the various parts of the readings and lectures and to monitor their own comprehension.

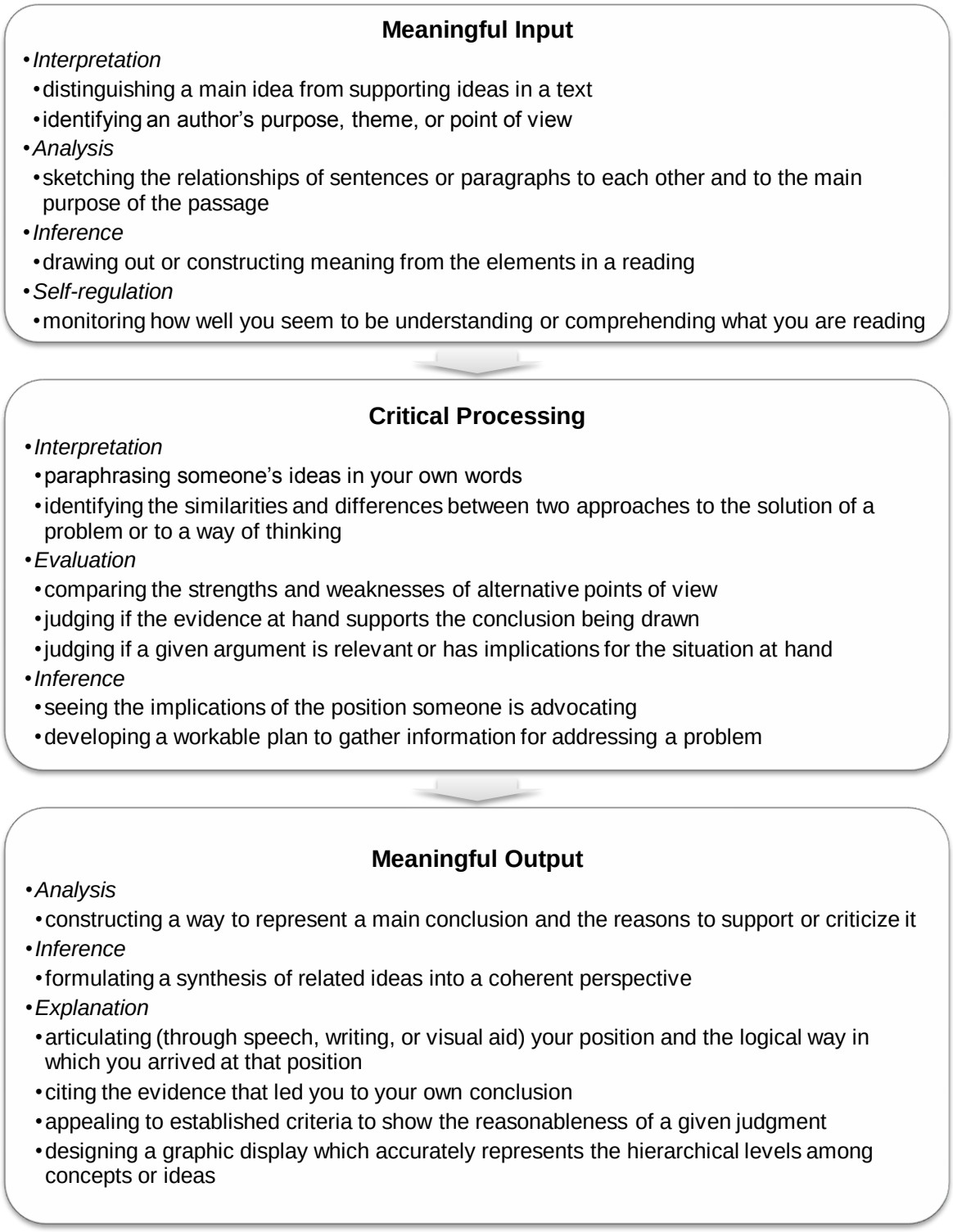

Figure 3. Integrating the Delphi Project's core CT skills into a content-based input model (adapted from Facione, 1990).

Because discipline-specific EAP activities provide a suitable setting for encouraging and developing students' CT competencies (Melles, 2009), the content-based tutorials formed the basis of the critical-processing stage. The activities required students to integrate a variety of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills and were varied week by week in order to bring into play a wide range of cognitive abilities (see Figure 4). Equipped with thematic input from the lectures and reading materials, the students were able to engage in CT tasks with specific emphasis placed on interpretation, evaluation, and inference along with sub-skills associated with each of these.

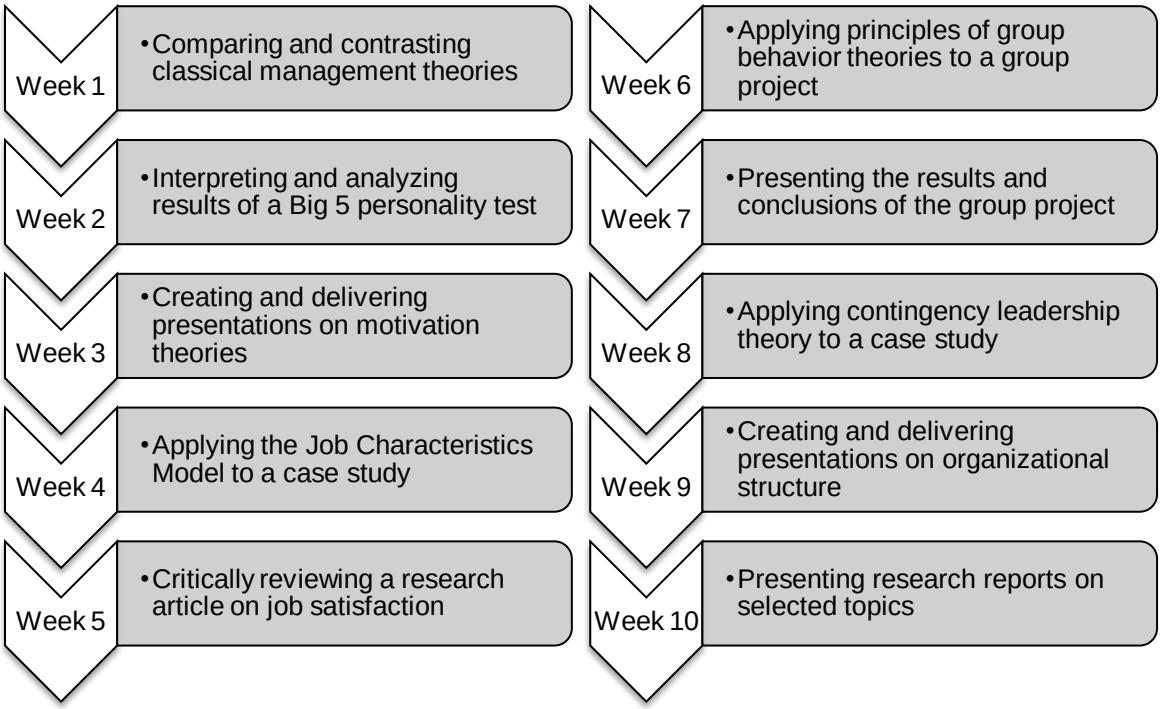

Figure 4. Tutorial activities.

The course's assessment structure was integrated into the instructional model too. Alternative assessment assignments provided opportunities for practicing the types of academic output that will prepare students for advanced studies in an English-language medium. Specifically, they completed a written review of academic literature related to selected OB topics; an intensive reading of an authentic textbook chapter; a listening assignment requiring pre-lecture reading and vocabulary preparation, along with a written summary and critical appraisal of the lecture's contents; and two speaking tasks: a group seminar presentation and an individual presentation.

Post-Course Questionnaire

A post-course questionnaire, adapted from Yang and Gamble (2013) (see Appendix) and consisting of 15 Likert-scale questions, a ranking question, and three open-ended questions, was administered to gather feedback about the curriculum. The resulting data were analyzed for emergent themes in order to establish a detailed description of students' reactions.

Discussion

Studying with Content-Based Instruction

Quantitative analysis showed that a majority of students felt the course had contributed to their overall English improvement, with reading and writing skills enjoying the most positive reactions; 82% of respondents agreed that both had improved. Many of the open-ended comments related to reading in particular. Though the authentic texts were difficult at first, with time, many students, such as the one quoted here, found them more manageable and developed strategies for dealing with new vocabulary: "After three months, things have improved. I can identify the most important words and focus on reading quickly." This is an important observation given that in their future studies these students are likely to face English-language reading assignments larger than any they have ever encountered.

Another category of comments recognized content-based instruction's potential for developing CT skills. One typical response made note of the thematic approach that characterizes this model: "When every activity is a new topic, it's difficult for us to think deeply. But if the content of the material is familiar with [*sic*] us, we will have capacity to critically analyze the text." The rationale for thematic sequencing was similarly supported by the quantitative data that showed a large number of students (82%) agreed that their CT skills had improved.

Students were also asked about what aspects of content-based instruction they found challenging. Some wrote that they struggled to "memorize" or "remember" the content:

> How to quickly remember the content is the biggest challenge for me. If I cannot remember it before class, other activities will be hard to proceed [*sic*], and I can't repeat it and express my ideas in my own words.

While teachers could ideally shift students' attention away from "memorizing" and towards "acquiring," it is also necessary to monitor the amount of content being presented. Striking a balance between providing sufficient meaningful input and overloading students with texts perceived as too demanding is an important consideration in planning a content-based course.

Nonetheless, such sentiments were the exception rather than the norm. Many suggested that the organizational behavior content was "interesting," "motivating," "useful," and even "fun." Analysis of Likert-scale questions reinforced this view and showed that while a large group (80%) thought the content was more difficult than that of previous English courses, an even larger number (84%) found it more interesting too, revealing that most students appreciated the challenge presented by authentic input and recognized its pedagogical benefits as well.

Participating in Tutorial Activities

Students were also asked about their opinions of the tutorial activities. The quantitative data indicated that the case study activities were seen as most beneficial to CT development by the largest percentage of students (37%), as the following comment reflects: "During the case studies, we used some theories we have learnt to analyze the cases. This not only needs us to understand the theories, but also requires us to apply them." In addition to application, problem solving and source integration were also considered important:

> In the case study, we learn to use theories we've studied to analyze related articles and solve problems. Linking information needs us to learn how to integrate all the information and lead [*sic*] us to a higher level of thinking.

Absent the background knowledge acquired from the content-based input, students would have been ill prepared to fully engage in these tasks.

Similarly notable were the general benefits obtained from the cumulative effect of 10 weeks of tutorials. Chief among these were students' beliefs that this mode of instruction would pay dividends when they went abroad to study on post-graduate courses:

> The tutorial activities inspire us to think about what we've studied and coming [*sic*] up with our own opinions. . . . Analyzing critically helps us look at problems more comprehensively, deeply, and objectively, which is important for graduate students' study.

Students also found themselves adapting to western university teaching methods:

> In tutorials, I should present my ideas to other members and discuss all the opinions with them. It is an excellent method to practice speaking and critical thinking skills. It also can help me fit [*sic*] to foreign teaching methods.

In the context of these comments, it is worth noting that only a small minority of students agreed that CT was more suitable for western students (18%). Similar to the results presented in the previous section, these findings indicate that students embraced thinking critically and found themselves improving their ability to do so, thus providing more evidence to refute previously held stereotypes about Asian students.

Implications for Teachers

Based on the analysis of student feedback along with the instructor's own reflections, three implications for practitioners can be put forward. First, teachers should select a suitable amount of authentic material that leads itself to critical processing rather than memorization. When the amount of material is too great or complex, a point of diminishing returns is reached, and students are consequently unable to take part in CT activities. However, since the theoretical foundations supporting content-based instruction state that students benefit from authentic and thematic input (Pally, 1997), this does not mean that materials should be overly modified in a way that diminishes their authenticity and thereby negates their positive benefits. Rather, when appropriate, teachers should preview key vocabulary and design activities aimed at helping students develop the reading skills necessary to (a) interpret meaning from context and (b) discern when it is and is not necessary to look up unknown words in a dictionary. An Internet-based readability index (e.g., www.readability-score.com) can also help teachers ensure that the meaningful input materials they have chosen will not be more than *just* above their students' current proficiency levels.

When designing CT tasks, teachers should also keep in mind the specific skills they want their students to develop. The Delphi Project's framework breaks down a variety of skills into specific examples and is therefore conducive to application, but it is by no means the only suitable choice. For example, Richard Paul's model for CT (Foundation for Critical Thinking, 1996, as cited in Reed, 1998) places emphasis on elements of reasoning and may also be suitable for EAP settings. Whichever framework teachers choose to use, they should begin with explicit instruction on the framework itself, train students to use the framework, conduct classroom activities based on the concepts included in the framework, and give students assignments requiring them to put to use the skills that have been modeled and practiced in class (Reed, 1998). This process of building students' own awareness of CT is crucial if they are

to be expected to transfer the skills they have learned in EAP classrooms to the English-language contexts that will be encountered in their further studies.

Finally, teachers need to be aware of some students' concerns that content-based activities do not provide enough of the direct language instruction they are accustomed to and therefore regard as necessary (Melles, 2009). One way of addressing these concerns is by integrating focus-on-form (FonF) activities into content-based lessons. FonF instruction is based on the premise that for second language acquisition (SLA) to occur in formal instructional settings, learners' attention should be drawn to linguistic features as they are naturally demanded by the communicative context (Doughty & Williams, 1998). Examples of suitable FonF methods include slightly and purposefully modifying authentic input materials to highlight a specific form and the meaning attached to it, designing noticing activities requiring learners to identify a given form and its associated meaning, and providing corrective feedback aimed not only on students' language output but at their content output as well (Valeo, 2013). In contrast to instruction which focuses *only* on language forms, FonF pedagogy regards form and meaning as inseparable and provides students the attention to accuracy they desire in addition to authentic content-based input.

Conclusion

Anticipating future opportunities and challenges in the EAP field, the purpose of this project was to present a rationale for a content-based EAP course with a focus on the development of specific CT skills. A plan for implementing such a course and students' affective reactions to it were also provided. While the project did not attempt to measure students' linguistic or CT development in an objective way, previous SLA research has provided evidence of content-based instruction's capacity to build students' linguistic skills; future practitioners may look to a number of existing instruments designed to measure CT ability (for details see Reed, 1998). Practically speaking, however, the best measurement of EAP students' CT ability and of their preparedness for higher-level education is the quality of their work on assignments similar to those they will meet during university studies. Providing a program of authentic and sustained thematic input will offer students the topical knowledge necessary to meaningfully complete such tasks and the opportunity for them to improve their linguistic ability at the same time.

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A previous paper about this curriculum project was presented at the 10th Annual CamTESOL Conference in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, February 22, 2014, under the title "Learning critical thinking and academic discourse via content-based instruction: Students' reactions and reflections."

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Appendix
Post-Term Questionnaire
(Adapted from Yang & Gamble, 2013)

This questionnaire has two purposes: 1) to help your teacher better plan this course for next term and for next year, and 2) to provide useful data for a research project about content-based instruction and critical thinking. Please answer the questions openly and honestly. Your responses will not affect your grades. Please answer these questions based only on this organizational behavior course.

	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
English skills						
1	My English **reading** skills have improved in this course.	5	4	3	2	1
2	My English **writing** skills have improved in this course.	5	4	3	2	1
3	My English **listening** skills have improved in this course.	5	4	3	2	1
4	My English **speaking** skills have improved in this course.	5	4	3	2	1
5	I am more confident about using my English in an academic setting now.	5	4	3	2	1
Critical thinking						
6	My critical thinking has improved in this course.	5	4	3	2	1
7	I better understand what critical thinking is now.	5	4	3	2	1
8	I am more confident in my ability to use theories and evidence to support my ideas.	5	4	3	2	1
9	Critical thinking skills will help me in my master's degree studies.	5	4	3	2	1
10	Critical thinking is more suitable for western students than for Chinese students.	5	4	3	2	1
Satisfaction						
11	I am happy with my performance in this course.	5	4	3	2	1
12	I am satisfied with the development of my academic skills in this course.	5	4	3	2	1
13	This content was more interesting than English courses at my university or high school.	5	4	3	2	1
14	This class was more difficult than English courses at my university or high school.	5	4	3	2	1
15	The amount of work in this course was too much.	5	4	3	2	1

16	Please rank the following tutorial activities based how much you believe they contributed to the development of your critical thinking skills. Please rank up to 5 activities. For example, rank the tutorial that most developed your critical thinking skills as "1", etc. Week 1_____ • Comparing and contrasting classical management theories Week 2_____ • Interpreting and analyzing results of a Big 5 personality test Week 3_____ • Creating and delivering presentations on motivation theories Week 4_____ • Applying the Job Characteristics Model to a case study Week 5_____ • Critically reviewing a research article on job satisfaction Week 6_____ • Applying principles of group behavior theories to a group project Week 7_____ • Presenting the results and conclusions of the group project Week 8_____ • Applying contingency leadership theory to a case study Week 9_____ • Creating and delivering presentations on organizational structure Week 10_____ • Presenting research reports on selected topics
17	Please explain the reason(s) for your answer to Question 16.
18	Please describe any benefits that you perceived from studying with content-based materials.
19	Please describe any challenges you perceived from studying with content-based materials.

I, _____(Student name)_____, agree to allow my responses to appear in a conference presentation or published research report about content-based instruction and critical thinking. No names or other identifying information will be released. This data is for planning and research purposes only.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Assessment of ELLs' Critical Thinking Using the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric

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A significant proportion of students entering international colleges in Thailand lack both the English language skills and critical thinking skills necessary for them to succeed in higher education. The ability to think critically has been correlated with successful reading comprehension and grade point average (GPA); however, many high schools in Thailand fail to develop this ability. This paper is part of an ongoing investigation into the use of Facione's Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric to assess the critical thinking skills of students enrolled in an intensive English program for students entering a Thai university. Students' critical thinking was assessed at the beginning and end of a 10-week term, during which students received explicit instruction on critical thinking. Some students evidenced measurable improvements over the term, and the rubric seems appropriate for future use. As critical thinking has been linked with academic success, this topic is relevant in diverse contexts.

More than a decade ago, Pennington (1999) noted that the expansion of educational access in Thailand meant that more Thais were exposed to the "pedagogy of the worksheet" (p. 2). Although numerous reform efforts have been attempted, the Thai educational system remains firmly teacher-centered (Hallinger & Lee, 2011). Thai students, like all students, have the capacity to learn critical thinking skills; however, the current state of the Thai educational system does not foster the development of these skills. Rote memorization is stressed at the expense of more open dialogue. In this educational atmosphere, critical thinking remains underdeveloped. The lack of critical thinking is detrimental to students in several ways. For example, critical thinking skills have been correlated with academic achievement as measured by grade point average (GPA) as well as with reading comprehension skills (Facione, 1998). Students who hope to enter liberal arts programs at university face an additional challenge. Meaningful interaction among students and between faculty and students is an essential component of liberal arts education (Blaich, Bost, Chan, & Lynch, 2004), and this interaction requires critical thinking.

This paper documents a preliminary attempt to assess students' critical thinking skills using Facione's (2010, p. 12) Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric (available at http://www.insightassessment.com/Products/Products-Summary/Rubrics-Rating-Forms-and-Other-Tools). This study involved 14 students enrolled in an intensive language class at a Thai

Language Education in Asia, 2014, *5*(2), 283-291. http://dx.doi.org/10.5746/LEiA/14/V5/I2/A09/Nanni_Wilkinson

university which was designed to provide the language skills necessary for success in an English-medium liberal arts program. The students' critical thinking skills, as demonstrated by their participation in structured small-group discussions, were assessed pre- and post-intervention using the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric. This paper will first review relevant literature on critical thinking, focusing on trends in the assessment of critical thinking. Next, it will outline the methods and results of the pilot study. The paper will conclude with a discussion of the implications for further research in this area.

A Review of Critical Thinking

Much of the debate over critical thinking has involved different attempts to best define the processes and skills that comprise it (Mulnix, 2012; Petress, 2004). As a result, one of the largest problems in critical thinking research is that this term is not used consistently (Lewis & Smith, 1993; Petress, 2004). Ennis proposed one of the most cited, and indeed, earliest definitions, stating that "critical thinking is the correct assessing of statements" (1963, p. 20). However even Ennis himself later lamented that this early attempt did not recognize the "creative aspects of critical thinking" and was entirely too "vague" (1993, p. 179). Determining the exact nature of critical thinking is a task that many researchers from a wide swath of specializations have tried to tackle; however, this has just added to the confusion about critical thinking. As Petress (2004) pointed out, psychologists, philosophers, and educators have engaged with this topic; this has led to striking differences in insight and terminology. Similarly, in a study carried out at two American colleges that had been classified as Research I institutions by the Carnegie Foundation, Nicholas and Raider-Roth (2011) found that faculty members "took a robustly disciplinary approach" when defining, teaching, and assessing critical thinking (p. 24). One of the first challenges for this pilot program, then, was to agree on a definition of critical thinking that is not only accurate but which could also be understood by the participants of this study.

This research uses a definition of critical thinking that was agreed upon by a panel of 46 experts on critical thinking from varied disciplines. As Facione (1990) reported, these experts aimed to settle the disagreements by recognizing that critical thinking is "purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based" (p. 2). Unfortunately, this definition is far too complex to be understood, in terms of its language, by many English language learners. By focusing on the idea that critical thinking is indeed a process and a learned set of skills, the researchers hoped to give students a less abstract conception of critical thinking. As Mulnix (2012) simply stated, "critical thinking has little to do with *what* we are thinking, but everything to do with *how* we think" (italics in original, p. 3). Conceptualizing critical thinking as a series of steps that involve different activities enabled the researchers to provide students with an easily understandable idea of what critical thinking is all about.

Critical Thinking Assessments

Numerous assessment tools have evolved through the years. Ennis (1999) published an annotated list of available critical thinking assessments and listed over 20 published and available assessments. These assessments can be broadly divided into two categories: those that require students to use recognition memory (e.g., multiple choice or ranking assessments) and those that rely on recall memory (e.g., short-answer, essay, and performance-based assessments) (Butler, 2012). Examples of recognition-style assessments include the California Critical Disposition Inventory and the Cornell Critical Thinking Test, while recall assessments include the ICAT Critical Thinking Essay Examination, the Ennis-Weir Cornell Critical Thinking Essay, and the Watson-Glaser II Critical Thinking Appraisal; furthermore, the Halpern Critical

Thinking Assessment incorporates both recognition and recall assessment questions. These are only a few examples of commercially published assessments that are often used for research.

As the number of assessments has grown, researchers have begun to look at the popularity and validity of different assessment tools. In Behar-Horenstein and Niu's (2011) review, the most commonly used assessments in research literature were the Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal, the California Critical Thinking Skills Test, and the Cornell Critical Thinking Tests. The assessments' popularity was a result of having been "established [by experts for] their reliability and validity" (p. 31), yet the authors' evaluation of the three assessments was inconclusive. In addition to those three most used assessments, Behar-Horenstein and Niu (2011) noted that the most common critical thinking assessment format was multiple choice and that only four of the 42 studies that they reviewed used qualitative methods to assess changes in critical thinking. Nevertheless, Behar-Horenstein and Niu (2011) and Ennis (2008) argued against the efficacy of multiple-choice tests as a means for critical thinking assessment. Recently, researchers have advocated for more open-ended assessment (e.g., essays) and multiple-method assessments that allow students to demonstrate the reasoning behind the stances that they take and that also allow them to demonstrate these skills multiple times over various topics. This serves to reduce the anxiety and washback that result from high-stakes testing situations.

Needs Assessment

This study was conducted after a needs assessment by the two researchers. At the time that the study was conducted, there was no systematic teaching of critical thinking in the intensive language courses. The only related topic that was a formal element of the curriculum was common logical fallacies. Students stand to benefit from additional coverage of critical thinking skills; however, these skills must be taught in a way that complements rather than detracts from language learning. Teaching elements of critical thinking through discussion of reading texts or through emphasis on elements of discussions seems to achieve this aim. The researchers chose to implement supplementary online critical thinking resources because they do not take up class time that could otherwise be devoted to cultivating students' language skills. Ideally, these online resources would allow teachers to make more effective use of the in-class time that they do dedicate to critical thinking.

After evaluating many existing materials, none of which were appropriate for their particular context, the researchers chose to create new materials to be used both collaboratively in the classroom and independently online for teaching critical thinking. Many high-quality materials exist, but the majority of these materials were created to meet the needs of students whose first language is English. Some of these materials were created for university-level students, in which case the content is appropriate but is not accessible to many English language learners because of the difficulty of the vocabulary and the complexity of the grammar. Other materials were created for high school students, in which case the language is accessible but the material does not present a sufficient cognitive challenge. To create appropriate materials, the researchers strove to create materials that were cognitively challenging but that were pitched towards students with an upper-intermediate proficiency in English.

The researchers sought assessment that would align with the first five of the seven purposes mentioned by Ennis (1993):

> Diagnosing the levels of students' critical thinking . . . Giving students feedback about their critical thinking prowess . . . Motivating students to be better at critical thinking . . . Informing teachers about the success of their efforts to teach students to think critically . . . Doing research about critical thinking instructional questions and issues . . . Providing help in deciding whether a student should enter an educational program . . . Providing information for holding schools accountable for the critical thinking prowess of their students. (p. 180-181)

The final two purposes were not in line with the spirit of this study because they "typically constitute 'high-stakes' testing" (Ennis, p. 181), meaning that a large value is placed solely on the results obtained from students' scores.

Methods

This pilot study had two main research goals: (1) to test the effectiveness and appropriateness of online supplementary materials for teaching critical thinking and (2) to evaluate the utility of Facione's (2010) Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric in assessing critical thinking skills in this specific context. The participants in this study were 14 members of an upper-intermediate level language class. The class met 8 hours per week for 10 weeks. All of the participants were of Thai ethnicity, and their ages ranged from 17 to 20 years old. Eight of the participants were male, and six were female. The study was conducted during one 10-week term in late 2013. Consent was obtained from the participants.

The pilot study adhered to the following procedure. At the beginning of the term, students were placed into small groups (two groups of five and one group of four) for a 20-minute discussion about a controversial topic, in this case about whether graffiti is a form of art. The participants in the discussion were instructed to begin by defining key terms, move on to discuss the topic, and conclude by summarizing the main arguments for and against as well as any conclusions that the group had reached. The group discussion was recorded using a video camera. One of the researchers observed but did not participate in the discussion. After the discussion had concluded, the two researchers watched the video and gave a score using the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric.

The students then received an intervention in the form of online resources throughout the term (see Appendix B). Four topics were selected for the online resource materials: intellectual standards, question types, the fundamentals of logical thinking, and common logical fallacies.

Intellectual standards describe characteristics of good critical thinking: clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, logic, significance, and fairness (Elder & Paul, 2008). These standards serve two main functions for the students: to introduce them to critical thinking as a whole and to provide them with clear avenues of improvement.

Question types include opinion, fact, and judgment. In the needs assessment, it became apparent that many students struggle to differentiate between fact and opinion. Furthermore, questions of judgment, in which multiple competing systems must be brought to bear, for example, law and ethics, present an even greater challenge. Without an explicit understanding of the depth of these questions, many students engage with them on a superficial level.

An introduction to logical thinking includes the structure of a logical argument and assumptions. Understanding the fundamentals of logic will strengthen the students' writing and small-group discussions, as well as prepare them for their further studies at the university.

Finally, studying common logical fallacies—such as the red herring fallacy, circular reasoning, and argument from authority—will help students to avoid these fallacies in their writing and discussions as well as in their thinking.

Near the end of the term, students participated in another small-group discussion. The same groups were used in order to control for relationships among the students, and the researchers selected media censorship as the topic of the discussion. Again, a teacher observed but did not participate. The discussions were video recorded, and the two researchers independently assessed each student's critical thinking using the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric. The rubric has four bands: 1—weak, 2—unacceptable, 3—acceptable, and 4—strong. The rubric is holistic as opposed to analytic, meaning that it does not explicitly assess students in more than one dimension of their performance. That is, students are only given an overall score rather than separate scores in various dimensions. That being said, each band of the rubric includes parallel descriptors. The researchers conducted a norming session in order to test inter-rater reliability. The norming session involved watching two discussion videos independently and assigning a score to each participant. The two researchers then met to compare scores. After identifying the participants about whom the raters had disagreed, they watched the two discussion videos together. Finally, they discussed each participant's performance until they were able to agree on an appropriate score. After completing the norming, the researchers then used the rubric to assess the students in six areas: how well they interpreted facts, how well they addressed counterarguments, how well they considered alternative points of view, how well they provided warranted conclusions, how well they provided justifications for their decisions, and the degree to which they freed themselves from bias. After the independent scoring had been completed, the two researchers compared scores. In the few cases where a student had been given two different scores, the researchers reviewed the videos and rescored the student. By this method, agreement was reached.

Results

This pilot study produced encouraging results. Of the 14 students, 6 (approximately 43%) improved by at least one band on the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric. The overall average score increased from 1.92 to 2.50 (2 being considered "unacceptable," Facione, 2010, p. 10). While an average score of 2.5 is still not completely in the "acceptable" range, it does represent an improvement over the pre-intervention average score. Before exposure to the online resources, only three students scored above a 2 on the rubric. This can be contrasted with the post-intervention assessment, when seven students scored either a 3 ("acceptable") or 4 ("strong"). Thus, in this case, the rubric proved a reliable measurement tool when used by the two researchers; and the students were assumed, based on their improved scores, to be capable of understanding the different aspects of critical thinking as explained by the rubric. The full results of the pre- and post-intervention assessments are included in Appendix A.

The students indicated that the online materials were appropriate in both language and content. Feedback, both written and oral, was collected from them informally in class by the two researchers. Based on the quality of the in-class discussions, students engaged well with the supplementary materials that they were assigned for homework. The major critique of the supplementary materials was that, although they were suitably paced and suitably challenging, the students found them too dry and thus uninteresting at points. This issue can be dealt with in subsequent iterations of the materials.

Discussion

The results of this pilot study seem to indicate that further use of the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric would be beneficial. In future terms, expanding the use of the rubric to a greater number of students and teachers will test whether it is truly appropriate for the researchers' particular context.

The moderate improvement in critical thinking skills is also encouraging. Critical thinking is not a skill that can be learned quickly; any gains are to be celebrated. If similar gains can be made over subsequent terms, students will be well prepared for their studies at university.

Time was one of the major limitations that researchers had during this pilot program. As mentioned above, there are only a certain number of hours available for teaching critical thinking skills in the intensive English program. Terms only last for 10 weeks, and the performance assessments in this pilot project were taken after about 6 to 7 weeks. Future studies could provide more time between assessments to allow teachers more time for direct interventions and feedback. Ultimately, further research could investigate how well students are able to perform on the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric after two terms (20 weeks).

Another limitation was that the subjects were grouped largely based on their IELTS writing scores. Grouping subjects based on their IELTS speaking scores instead might change the dynamic of the discussion groups. While observing and assessing these discussions, researchers noticed that students with stronger speaking skills might dominate a discussion. At the same time, students with weaker speaking skills might feel intimidated to the point of refusing to interact with the other group members. It was noted that both of these scenarios have the potential to affect the dynamics of a discussion. This is a further area of research in that it is not clear to what extent group dynamics can impact an individual score.

Conclusion

This paper describes the ongoing integration and assessment of critical thinking at one Thai university. Several students' critical thinking skills increased measurably, and the Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric proved valuable both as a teaching tool and as a means of assessment. Critical thinking is notoriously difficult to teach, even more so when students have become accustomed to "the pedagogy of the worksheet" (Pennington, 1999, p. 2); however, this difficulty should not discourage educators from trying. The benefits of enhancing students' critical thinking are well documented, and the investment of time and effort towards that goal can pay off. At present, the lack of materials suitable for English language learners hinders the teaching of this subject in certain contexts. This pilot study provides preliminary justification for the educational community to improve this situation by developing high-quality materials for teaching critical thinking to those who need it most.

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Appendix A
Results of Pre- and Post-Intervention Applications of Holistic Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric

Subject	Pre-Intervention Score	Post-Intervention Score
Subject 1	1	3
Subject 2	1	3
Subject 3	2	3
Subject 4	1	2
Subject 5	2	2
Subject 6	1	1
Subject 7	2	2
Subject 8	2	2
Subject 9	3	3
Subject 10	1	2
Subject 11	2	2
Subject 12	3	3
Subject 13	2	3
Subject 14	4	4
Average	**1.93**	**2.5**

Appendix B
Major Online Teaching Resources Used for Student Intervention

This appendix contains some of the most useful critical thinking resources that were used in this project. Significantly, these resources use accessible language to explain cognitively challenging material.

Resources from the Critical Thinking Foundation

The online resources provided by the Critical Thinking Foundation proved invaluable in cultivating students' critical thinking skills. The foundation has published a wide range of high-quality materials; the pages below represent only a small sample.

- "Becoming a Critic of Your Thinking": http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/becoming-a-critic-of-your-thinking/478
- "Universal Intellectual Standards": http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/universal-intellectual-standards/527
- "Distinguishing Between Inferences and Assumptions": http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/critical-thinking-distinguishing-between-inferences-and-assumptions/484

Videos Created for This Project

The following videos were created by the two authors of this paper. The creators aimed to explain these important critical thinking concepts using language that is accessible to intermediate English language learners.

Intellectual Standards

- Part 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VelRXwqnrJA
- Part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3QQKE_EGfE

Question Types

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v0SL4AnHuAc

Logical Fallacies

- Part 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAuHhLz6zjk
- Part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLTi4f55pK4

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