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Table of Contents:

Great Power Politics in Post-Cold War Period: The Ukraine Crisis of 2014

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Abstract

The Ukraine Crisis of 2014 which led to the annexation of Crimea by Russia has been one of the worst European issues since the end of the Cold War. NATO's relations with Russia have worsened ever since Russian troops invaded and annexed the Crimean peninsula in 2014. This paper examines why Russia intervened and eventually annexed Crimea during the Ukraine crisis through theoretical approaches in IR (international relations). In addition, the paper also discusses the consequences of Russia's actions in Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. This paper argues that Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 because of NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe. The study was conducted using a qualitative and a non-positivist approach to research (interpretivist) which is centered on the humanistic view of the social sciences. On the one hand, the findings of this study support my central thesis; it revealed that NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe was the cause of Russia's actions in Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. On the other hand, the findings of this study revealed that there are alternative factors that also motivated Russia to intervene and annex Crimea from Ukraine such as nationalism, identity, and Russia's quest for great power status. Further, Russia's invasion and eventual annexation of Crimea without the consent of Ukrainian authorities had several consequences. For instance, it caused tension between Russia and NATO, increased military spending, and led to numerous international sanctions.

1.   Introduction

Great Power Politics is a concept commonly used by scholars in the field of international relations (IR). In the IR field, "great power politics" refers to the pursuit of material power by powerful states in the international system to achieve security (Abebe, 2009: 4). John Mearsheimer a political scientist and a leading IR scholar who belongs to the realist school of thought contends that the period of great-power rivalry is not over because major powers still fear each other in the contemporary world (Mearsheimer, 2001). Mearsheimer's view is built on an "offensive realist" theory of world politics which assumes that the deep insecurity generated by the anarchic international system makes great power to act aggressively toward each other preventing rivals from gaining power even if such moves risk war (Mearsheimer, 2001: 36). This paper systematically analyzes the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 between Russia and the West which is one critical incident of contemporary great power politics. By Ukraine crisis, I am referring to Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014.

The paper looks at the background conditions, causes, and consequences of the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. The crisis which led to Russia's annexation of Crimea represents the biggest geopolitical shock to the European security system since the end of the Cold War (Larsen, 2014: 7). Over the years, there have been conflicting debates on the reasons behind Russia's intervention and annexation of the Crimean peninsula during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. For example, on the one hand, some scholars claimed that Russia intervened in Ukraine and annexed the Crimean peninsula to protect its nationals from the chaos in Ukraine following the ousting of Ukraine's pro-Russian president Yanukovych (Balouziyeh, 2014). On the other hand, some scholars argue that Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula because of its geopolitical ambitions (Treisman, 2016: 47). Because of these debates, it is therefore important to find out the true reasons behind Russia's intervention and annexation of Ukraine's Crimean peninsula in 2014. Hence, a central aim of this paper is to analyze the rationale behind Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 through theoretical approaches in IR. John W. Creswell explains that the research questions of a study should be a broad attempt for exploring the central phenomenon of the study (2009: 129). Therefore, the formulated research question of this study is:

- Why did Russia intervene and annex Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014?

I decided to ask the research question above because I thought it would be interesting to know why Russia behave the way it did in Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. Besides, this crisis is an interesting topic because it is one of the most talk-about crises in recent years. Moreover, the crisis is one of the worst post-Cold War security crises that have worsened relations between Russia and the West, thereby threatening international peace and security. This paper argues that Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 because of NAT0's expansion policy in eastern Europe.

2.   Historical Background

Before 2014, the Crimean peninsula was officially part of Ukraine; however, Crimea had its own parliament and government with power over agriculture, tourism, and public infrastructure (Buchanan, 2014). The majority of Crimea's population is made up of ethnic Russians, while Ukrainians and Crimean Tatar make up the minority population. In the "Budapest Memorandum" signed by Russia, Ukraine, the UK, and the United States in 1994, the UK, Russia, and the United States essentially consecrated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine as an independent state (Deutsche Welle, 2014). In other words, Russia and these western countries promised that none of them would ever threaten or use force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine (Ibid). However, Russia decided to violate this accord when it decided to use force to invade and annex Crimea in 2014 without permission from the Ukrainian government.

The events that led to the annexation of Crimea started in November 2013 when Viktor Yanukovych, who was president at the time and pro-Russian, decided to suspend the signing of the Ukraine-European Union Association Agreement. He refused to sign this agreement with the EU because he was pro-Russian and because he came to power in 2010 with the support of ethnic Russian voters in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. He openly stated in the media that he was rejecting the EU agreement because "Ukraine could not afford to sacrifice trade with Russia who opposes the deal" (Ibid), proving his strong allegiance to Russia.

The protest that started against President Viktor Yanukovych in late November 2013 intensified until early 2014 when he was ousted from power by pro-EU protesters in Kiev, Ukraine's capital city. The ousting of Ukraine's pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovych angered Russian President Vladimir Putin and he decided to send Russian armed forces to take over control of Crimea from Ukraine. After taking over control of Crimea from the Ukrainian government, authorities in Crimea with the help of Russia hastily organized an independence referendum on March 16, 2014, for citizens of Crimea to decide if they wanted to become part of Russia. Because the

majority population of Crimea was ethnic Russians, the territory voted overwhelmingly (97%) to become part of Russia (Ibid).

Following the referendum, Russia annexed Crimea in early 2014 and made it part of Russia. The independence referendum, the annexation of Crimea, and its subsequent incorporation into the Russian Federation caused serious tension between Russia and the West. Ukraine and many western countries condemned the referendum and Russia's annexation of Crimea as illegal (Christie, 2015). On the other, Russia and authorities in Crimea argued that the referendum was legal. The discourse of "two Ukraine" has dominated debates in the country since independence and shaped its perception in the West and Russia (Zhurzhenko, 2014: 249). This discourse juxtaposes the Ukrainian-speaking Pro-European west and the Pro-Russian east as two historical and cultural entities, informed by conflicting memories and antagonistic identities that have little chance of coexisting as a united country. The Ukraine Crisis of 2014 has attracted the attention of many scholars around the world and several studies have been conducted on the crisis (for example, Costea, 2016; Sperling and Webber, 2017).

However, most scholars that have conducted studies on the 2014 Ukraine crisis looked at the crisis from different perspectives. For instance, Ana-Maria Costea in 2016 conducted a study on the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. Her study analyzed the degree to which the events from the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 were predictable. She conducted her study using documentary analysis (both primary and secondary sources). She argued that the events from the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 do not pose themselves as a surprise because almost all the elements that were developed or were already present there were predictable (Costea, 2016: 344). Costea explains that in Ukraine, the domestic fragmented situation between the voters created huge discrepancies in terms of political choices and ultimately centrifugal behaviors (Costea, 2016: 345). Another genre of writing on the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 is the work of James Sperling and Mark Webber conducted in 2017. The authors looked at the impact of the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. Their findings revealed that the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 has resulted in Russia being explicitly identified as a source of threat by NATO which has triggered a successful collective re-securitization by the Alliance (2017: 19). In addition, they argued that a framework that demonstrates NATO's standing as a securitizing actor has potential relevance to other regional security organizations (Sperling and Webber, 2017: 22).

3.   Literature Review

This section reviews the existing literature on the independent variable of the research question of this paper (the causes of Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea). It reviews the existing literature under the following

subheadings "causal argument" and "debates in the literature/scholarly contributions."

3.1.   Causal Argument

As aforementioned, few studies have been conducted on the reasons for Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. These studies present competing independent variables on why Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the crisis. For example, a study by Roy Allison in 2014 assessed in detail the reasons for Russia's military intervention in the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 which led to the annexation of Crimea. Allison argued that there are two reasons why Russia intervened in the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 (1) geopolitical competition (2) identity and ideational factors (2014: 1268-1294). Allison explained that these two reasons played a role in Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014. Another study conducted by David Lane in 2016 examines the motivations for Russia's actions in the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. Unlike Allison who argued that Russia intervened in Ukraine because of geopolitical, identity, and ideational factors, Lane argued that Russia intervened in the Ukraine crisis and annexed Crimea from Ukraine because of the expansion of NATO in eastern Europe (Lane, 2016: 502-503).

Mearsheimer 2014; Bebler 2015; Ericson & Zeager 2015 all agree with Lane that NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe near Russia's borders pushed Russia to annex Crimea from Ukraine during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. Similarly, Davis Christopher 2016 and Kamp Karl-Heinz 2014 contend that NATO's expansion policy eastward near Russia's borders pushed Russia to intervened and annexed Crimea from Ukraine during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. On the other hand, (Lindley-French 2014; Kuzio & D'Anieri 2018; Masters 2020) seem to disagree. They do not see NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe as the cause of Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. However, they agree with Allison that Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the crisis because of its geopolitical considerations (Lindley-French 2014; Kuzio & D'Anieri 2018; Masters 2020).

Furthermore, Viacheslav Morozov in 2017 analyzed why the majority of Russian citizens in Russia supported Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. The author argued that the majority of Russians supported Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014 because of the propaganda spread by the Russian government about the West and because of the idea of "Russian identity" (Morozov, 2017: 4). Marozov contends that most Russians view the people of Crimea and Russia as one people which made them to support Putin's move to annex Crimea from Ukraine during the 2014 Ukraine crisis. Teper confirms

Marozov's argument when he argued that the notion of protecting "Russian identity" also motivated Russia to annex the Crimean peninsula from Ukraine because the majority population of Crimea was ethnic Russians and Russia saw these people as Russians (Teper, 2015: 380).

Again Averre (2016) and Zhurzhenko (2014) also agree with Teper and Marozov that Russia was forced to behave the way that it did in Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 because it wanted to protect the "Russian national identity" since it saw the people of Crimea as Russians. Zhurzhenko went further to argue that during the Ukraine Crisis, Russia increased its support for pro-Russian groups and organizations in eastern Ukraine especially those that defended the Russian speakers against "Ukrainization" and opposed the pro-Western course of the Ukrainian government (2014: 258). Finally, another study conducted by Daniel Treisman in 2016 analyzed the reasons why Russian president Vladimir Putin took Crimea from Ukraine during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. The findings of Triesman's study also revealed that Russia intervened in the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 and annexed Crimea because of the threat of NATO's expansion (Triesman, 2016: 47). Triesman argued that by annexing Ukraine's territory by force, Putin overturned in a single stroke the assumptions on which post-Cold War European order had rested (Ibid).

3.2.   Debates in the Literature/Scholarly Contribution

The findings of the aforementioned studies reviewed above have revealed significant debates on the reasons that influenced Russia's intervention and eventual annexation of Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. The literature reviewed shows that work on the reasons why Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the crisis can be divided into three main groups. The first group emphasizes NATO's expansion in eastern Europe as the main reason behind Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea during the 2014 Ukraine crisis (Mearsheimer, 2014; Bebler, 2015; Wolff, 2015; Lane; 2016; Davis, 2016; Kamp, 2014; Triesman, 2016; Ericson & Zeager, 2015). This group portrays Russia as a defender (a passive victim compelled to respond to NATO's expansion). The second group focuses on Russian geopolitical expansion as the cause of Russia's behavior in Crimea (Lindley-French, 2014; Kuzio & D'Anieri, 2018; Allison, 2014; Masters, 2020). The third group of scholars sees Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 as an effort by the Russian government to reassert "Russian national identity" which sees Russia as a civilization that extends beyond Russia's boundaries (Morozov, 2014; Teper, 2015; Allison, 2014; Zhurzhenko, 2014; Averre, 2016).

Of these three groups presented above, I stand on the side of the first group (NATO's expansion). In other words, I believe the argument made by

scholars who argued that NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe motivated Russia to annex Crimea is more persuasive than the arguments made by those from the geopolitical and identity groups. The reason for my stand is because I was looking at the number of evidence presented by scholars from the three groups and I realized that scholars from the NATO expansion group presented more evidence to back up their argument than scholars who argued that geopolitical or identity factors were responsible for Russia's action in Crimea. For instance, scholars from the first group who argued that NATO's expansion caused Russia to intervene and annex Crimea used more statements from Russian state officials as evidence than scholars in the "geopolitical" and "identity" groups. In other words most of the evidence in the literature that I read points to NATO's expansion as the main reason for Russia's actions in Crimea than the geopolitical and identity arguments. There is a lack of sufficient evidence in the literature that I read to justify that identity and geopolitical factors caused Russia to intervene and annex Crimea in 2014.

Moreover, another reason why the first group (NATO's expansion) is more persuasive than the geopolitical and identity group is that scholars from NATO's expansion group present more valid arguments than scholars from the geopolitical and identity groups. For instance, scholars from the NATO expansion group argued that even before the Ukraine Crisis of 2014, Russia had always seen NATO as an opponent to its military might. Thus, Russia's views about NATO made it annex Crimea to prevent its opponent from establishing near its borders. This argument is valid because Russia has indeed seen NATO as a rivalry force long before the Ukraine crisis. Russia and NATO had clashed on several occasions long before the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 like in the Cold War, which makes both sides view each other as a rival.

Furthermore, it is insufficient to think simply in terms of geopolitical competition between Russia and the West with Crimea as the proving ground. In other words, Russia would have annexed more territories in eastern Europe if it was really out for geopolitical expansion in the region and not just Crimea. Besides, the identity argument is less convincing because Russia's choice to identify with ethnic Russians, Russian-speakers, and Russian 'compatriots' in the crisis was useful in generating domestic support for coercive action in Crimea. The scholars who argued that Russia's annexation of Crimea was to protect Russian citizens and the Russian ethnic identity present insufficient evidence to show that ethnic Russians in Crimea were under real threat from the Ukrainian government at the time. Thus, the identity argument does not offer significant explanatory value for such extreme Russian behavior at the specific time it occurred. Likewise, the argument made by the Russian government on the media that it intervened and annexed Crimea to protect ethnic Russians in Crimea seems more like justification as opposed to true intention.

The literature reviewed above revealed that the academic literature has seen a tendency for scholars to resurrect previous debates rather than offering an in-depth analysis of the implications of Russia's actions in Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. In other words, most of the literature that I read does not explore the consequences of Russia's actions in Crimea during the Ukraine crisis. I will address this gap by discussing the consequences of Russia's action in Crimea. As earlier mentioned, the literature reviewed shows that only a limited number of studies have been conducted on the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 using the English language. This study will add to the limited number of studies that have been conducted on the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 in English.

4.   Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This section defines and operationalizes three relevant concepts used in this study: "defensive realism", "offensive realism" and "national interest."

4.1.   Defensive Realism

Defensive realism is part of structural realism theory also known as neorealism, which is a subset of the realist school of thought in international relations (IR). Realism is considered as the most dominant paradigm in IR theory since World War II (Antunes & Camisao, 2018: 1). Other mainstream IR theories are liberalism, constructivism, and the English School. Defensive realism theory was developed by Kenneth Waltz; Waltz's defensive realism offers a systemic and state-centric theory of international politics (Pashakhanlou, 2018: 4). The structural components of Waltz's defensive realism consist of "anarchy" defined as the absence of government and the distribution of capabilities across the international system (Waltz, 1979: 88). Waltz argues that the anarchic nature of the international system encourages states to undertake defensive and moderate policies to attain security. Similarly, Waltz contends that states do everything for their survival in a world where their security is not assured (Waltz, 1979: 92). Waltz makes two explicit assumptions regarding states in his defensive realism theory. First, he assumes that states are unitary actors that only differ in their capabilities (Ibid). Second, he assumes that states pursue policies to ensure their own survival (Waltz, 1979: 118). Waltz believes that the balance of power is an "iron law" that states can use to assure their survival by making sure that none of their rivals grow too powerful. According to Waltz, great powers possess the greatest capabilities to shape the character of the international system (1979, 129: 130). Waltz contends that a bipolar system where the balance is maintained by two great powers is more stable than a multipolar system in which the anarchic system is inhabited by three or more great powers (1979: 161). His defensive realism theory asserts that aggressive expansion as promoted by offensive

realists upsets to conform to the balance of power theory, thereby decreasing the primary objectives of states which is to ensure their security. Defensive realism assumes that states are not intrinsically aggressive and that the main concern of states is not to maximize power but to maintain their positions in the international system.

4.2.   Offensive Realism

On the other hand, offensive realism is a structural theory developed by John J. Mearsheimer, a mainstream scholar in the neorealist camp (Steinsson, 2014: 2). Neorealist, Mearsheimer developed his offensive realism theory in response to Kenneth Waltz's defensive realism theory. Mearsheimer's offensive realism theory employs a system-centric approach to study states' behavior at the international level. The theory departs from classical realism and employs positivism as a philosophy of science. Offensive realism holds that the international system is anarchic and the anarchic nature of the international system drive states to pursue aggressive behavior in international politics. Mearsheimer's offensive realism theory mainly focuses on how powerful countries (great powers) such as the U.S, Russia, France, and the UK pursue power in international politics (Mearsheimer, 2010: 72).

Mearsheimer bases his theory of offensive realism on five assumptions. The five assumptions explain why states maximize their relative power, think, and act offensively toward each other at the international level. The five assumptions or basic tenets of offensive realism theory are as follows: (1) Powerful countries or great powers are the main actors in world politics and the international system is anarchic, which means that there is no hierarchy or superior power that can control the behavior of states (Mearsheimer 2001: 30). (2) States inherently possess some offensive military capabilities which they are capable of using against other states (Mearsheimer, 2001: 31). (3) No state can be certain about other states' intentions. States always want to know whether other states are determined to use force (Ibid). (4) The most basic motive driving state is survival. In other words, states seek to maintain their survival (their territorial integrity and domestic autonomy) above other goals (Ibid). (5) States are rational actors and they think strategically to maximize their prospects for survival (Mearsheimer, 2001: 31). Mearsheimer noted that other than these five assumptions, realist scholars like him share the belief that power is the currency of international politics (Mearsheimer, 2010: 74). Likewise, Mearsheimer explained that these five conditions or assumptions of offensive realism have created a situation where states fear each other. They fear each other and view each other as a potential enemy which has led to the belief that the best way to guarantee their security is to achieve hegemony, not the balance of power (Ibid).

Mearsheimer's Offensive realism theory assumes that powerful states do everything to maximize their relative power, not absolute power until hegemony is achieved. His offensive realism theory portrays the international system as a jungle where each state relies on self-help for its survival. Also, Mearsheimer's offensive realism theory starts with similar assumptions as Kenneth Waltz's defensive realism theory but reaches dissimilar conclusions. For example, both theories start with similar assumptions for anarchy, the capabilities assumption, and the survival assumption. However, as can be seen from above, a central conclusion reach by Waltz is that of the balance of power. Waltz argues that a recurrent pattern of balancing occurs where states ally with weaker states to balance stronger states (Waltz, 1979: 117). Contrarily, Mearsheimer rejects Waltz's conclusion and argues that states can never truly be secure and that states can only ensure their survival through power maximization (Mearsheimer, 2001: 61). In other words, Mearsheimer concludes that the best way for states to guarantee their security is to achieve hegemony, not the balance of power.

4.3.   National Interest

Another IR concept used in this paper is Weldes' concept of "national interest." Weldes Jutta is a critical scholar from the critical constructivist camp in IR theory. Other critical approaches to IR are feminist, critical theorist, neo-Marxist, neo-Gramscian, and post-structuralist. Weldes criticize the conventional realist notion of "national interest." Drawing from Alexander Wendt, Weldes provides a constructivist reconceptualization of national interest (Weldes, 1996: 280). Her concept of national interest employs a critical constructivist approach to study states' behavior at the international level. In addition, her concept of national interest employs post-positivism as a philosophy of science. Weldes argues that "national interest" is an important concept to study international politics and states' actions because it is the language that states use to justify their actions at the international level and to create their foreign policy (Weldes, 1996: 276). Moreover, Weldes contends that the concept of national interest is important in world politics for two reasons: (1) it is through the concept of national interest that policymakers understand the goals to be followed by a state's foreign policy. (2) The concept of national interest acts as a rhetorical device through which the legitimacy and political support for state action are generated (Ibid). Thus, the concept of national interest helps to create and legitimize the actions taken by states at the international level. From a critical constructivist standpoint, Weldes explains that the concept of national interest should be understood as a social construction. She argues that before state officials can act on behalf of a state, they must engage in a process of interpretation to understand the situation that they face and how they should respond to it (Weldes, 1996: 276-277).

According to Weldes, the process of interpretation requires a shared language from state officials who are responsible to decide for the state and the audience for whom the state action must be legitimate. Weldes maintains that the shared language is that of "national interest" (Ibid). Moreover, Weldes explains that the content of national interest is produced in a process of representation through which state officials and others understand their international context. She assumes that national interest is constructed and that the national interest is created as a meaningful object, out of share meaning through which states' action in the international system is understood (Weldes, 1996: 277). I used Weldes' concept of national interest, Waltz's defensive realism theory, and Mearsheimer's offensive realism theory in my analysis to explain why Russia intervened and eventually annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014.

5   Methodology
5.1.   Methods and Scope of Research

To start with, this study was conducted using a qualitative and a non-positivist approach to research (interpretivist) which is centered on the humanistic view of the social sciences. I used the process-tracing method for this study because of the need to establish a causal mechanism and explain why Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. The process-tracing method is where the researcher seeks to find observable implications of hypothesized claims (Bennet, 2010). In this study, I hypothesize that NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe is the underlying cause of Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea. Hence, I traced the cause which is my independent variable (NATO's expansion) to the effect, my dependent variable (the intervention and annexation of Crimea). As Bennet explains, process tracing is useful in this regard because it allows for a forward and backward trace of the cause to the effect under investigation.

In terms of case selection techniques, I employ a "typical case selection technique."

Gerring explained that a typical case selection technique intends to explore a typical case of some phenomena (2017: 22). The topic of this paper (the Ukraine Crisis of 2014) is an example of a typical case. I decided to use this technique rather than other techniques such as the extreme case or the deviant case technique because I wanted to study the casual process in-depth. As Gerring explained, with the typical case selection technique, the researcher selects to study the causal process in depth (Ibid). Furthermore, this study was conducted using qualitative secondary data collected from publicly available documents (articles). Qualitative data are very useful in a study like this one that focuses on a single case or event (Gerring, 2017: 20). The documents were collected electronically from the internet.

Although it would have been nice to conduct this study using other sources of data such as primary data from interviews, I decided to use publicly available documents because it saves more time than gathering data from other sources such as surveys and in-depth interviews. Besides, the documentary analysis method that I used in this study is in line with the methods used by other researchers that have conduct research on this topic as can be seen in the literature review section. The data consist of online articles on Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea from 2014 to 2020. This time frame was selected because it covers the period when there were a lot of discussions in the media about the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. I coded my data using *NVivo* to identify major themes used in the articles to explain why Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. I decided to code my data using NVivo because the presence of nodes in NVivo provides "a simple to work with structure" for creating codes and discovering themes (Zamawe, 2015: 5).

As aforementioned, the theories of offensive realism, defensive realism, and national interest guided my analysis of why Russia intervened and annexed Ukraine's Crimean peninsula during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. This study intended to develop explanations direct from the data. As a result, the theories were constructed from the data, hence, an inductive approach. Furthermore, David Silverman recommends that as researchers, we should try to use concepts and theories that are closely related to our discipline (2006: 6). The three concepts/theories used are appropriate for this study because scholars in the IR field often used them to analyze wars and international conflicts. Next, I analyzed my data using qualitative content analysis (QCA). Qualitative content analysis can be defined as a research method for subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (Hsieh & Shannon, 2015: 1278) QCA has been identified by numerous scholars as one of the best methods to study texts or documents. I used QCA to look at how language was used in the articles to explain why Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 and to identify major themes in the articles. The following question guided my analysis: (1) what motivated Russia to intervened and annexed Crimea during the crisis? This question helped me to identify key themes used in the data to talk about the rationale behind Russia's actions in Crimea.

I structured the presentation of my evidence in the result section first by presenting evidence that Russia intervened and annexed Crimea from Ukraine during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 because of the threat of NAT0's expansion near its borders. Next, I present evidence of alternative arguments on why Russia behaved the way it did in Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. The evidence that I present in the results section is sentences from my

data (the articles). I presented the evidence under different themes that emerged from my data. And I employ an interpretive approach to research by using these sentences from the articles to explain why Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. To limit the scope of this study, this study focused mainly on Crimea and the events that occurred there during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. This study is not interested in other aspects of the crisis such as the legality of Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea or the debates on whether the Ukraine crisis was the West's or Russia's fault.

6.   Results and Analysis

This section of this paper presents the results and analysis to answer the research question: Why did Russia intervene and annex Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014?

It presents and discusses the results of the text analysis of the articles that I examined in this study. As aforementioned, I got the findings of this study by using qualitative content analysis to look at how language was used in my data to explain the rationale behind Russia's actions in Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. My findings revealed that Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 because of NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe. This finding is in line with the central thesis/argument of this paper. However, my findings also revealed that they are alternative arguments on the rationale behind Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014. The results will be presented and analyzed under the following themes that emerged from my data: "NATO's expansion", "great power status", "Nationalism and Russian national identity."

6.1   Why Russia Intervened and Annexed Crimea in 2014
6.1.1. NATO's Expansion

After coding my data with NVivo "NATO's expansion" emerged as a central theme to explain the rationale behind Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea. For instance, one article by Charles Ziegler stated that "Russia intervened and annexed Crimea in 2014 because NATO's expansion in eastern Europe threatened Russia's security" (2020: 14). Similarly, another article stated that "Russian President Vladimir Putin admitted in a televised interview in Spring 2014 that Russia's annexation of Crimea, home to its Black Sea Fleet, was partly influenced by NATO's expansion into eastern Europe" (Reuters, 2014). Again, another article stated that "Russia was forced to act in Crimea because of the expansion of western institutions such as NATO near Russia's borders" (Walker, 2014). The above statements from my data show that Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 because of NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe. This

finding is similar to the findings of Lane 2006; Mearsheirmer 2014; Triesman 2016; Bebler; 2015 and others discussed in the literature review section of this paper. Russia's decision to intervene and annex Crimea from Ukraine because of NATO's expansion policy can be analyzed using both Kenneth Waltz's defensive realism and John Mearsheimer's offensive realism as can be seen below.

To start with, The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was founded in 1949 by the United States, Canada, and other western European countries to oppose and contained the Soviet Union. Before the Ukraine crisis and the annexation of Crimea in 2014, Russia had always seen NATO as an opponent and a threat to its security (Brent, 2018). In addition, Russia has been against NATO''s expansion policies in eastern Europe since the collapse of the Soviet Union (Ibid). However, the alliance has been ignoring Russia's opposition to its expansion policy in eastern Europe over the years by admitting eastern European states as new members into the alliance. The first round of NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe occurred in 1999 when Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland joined the alliance. The second enlargement took place in 2004 when Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia joined NATO (Mearsheimer, 2014: 78).

The move by these countries to join NATO antagonized Russia because these countries belonged to the former Soviet Union. The situation became worse in 2008 when NATO announced that it would accept Georgia and Ukraine as new members of its alliance. The move further antagonized Russia because these two countries share a border with Russia. Russia saw the possibility of its closest neighbor to the south (Ukraine) joining NATO as a direct threat to its security. Russian President Vladimir Putin echoed these sentiments when he openly told the West that admitting Ukraine and Georgia as NATO members would be "a direct threat to Russia" (Mearshiemer, 2014:79). Russia understood that Ukraine joining NATO would mean that Russia's Black Sea Fleet will be evicted from its long-standing base in the Crimean city of Sevastopol and NATO's navy will be station in this city. Russia understood that if this happened, it would create a real threat to the whole of southern Russia.

To prevent Russia from losing the Crimean city of Sevastopol as a result of Ukraine joining NATO and to halt NATO's expansion near its borders, Russia decided to intervene in eastern Ukraine and annex the strategic Crimean peninsula. Russia's decision to intervened and annexed Crimea because of NATO's expansion near its borders was motivated by legitimate security concerns. In this scenario NATO can be seen as an aggressor provoking Russia while Russia can be seen as a defender, defending its territory from the perceived security threat pose by NATO's expansion near its borders. In other words, Russia can be seen as a defensive realist as

explained by Waltz in his defensive realism theory (Waltz, 1979). Likewise, Russia's action is an example of defensive state behavior in international politics as Waltz explains in his defensive realism theory. The defensive action taken by Russia to annex Crimea because of the threat pose by NATO's expansion near its borders confirms waltz's argument that the anarchic nature of the international system encourages states to use defensive and moderate measures to attain security (1979: 92).

Furthermore, Russian military intervention and annexation of Crimea demonstrate the West's miscalculation of the length that Russia would go to protect its strategic objectives and its security. It was unacceptable for Russia to have a neighbor and a strategic territory such as Crimea fall into the hands of the West. Moreover, Russia's actions to annex Crimea because of NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe show that Russia was trying to balance power with NATO in the region. This is because several states in eastern Europe had already joined NATO and Ukraine Russia's neighbor was also making plans to become a NATO member. Russia understood that doing nothing in Ukraine means allowing NATO to gain more influence and power in the region. To prevent this from happening, Russia decided to invade Ukraine and annex Crimea. Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 shows its willingness to balance power with NATO in eastern Europe and to prevent NATO from becoming too powerful in the region. This action taken by Russia to balance power in the region validates the argument made by Waltz in his defensive realism theory that the balance of power is an "iron law" that states can use to assure their survival by making sure that their rivals do not grow too powerful (1979: 188).

On the other hand, though the actions taken by the Russian government to annex Crimea because of NATO's expansion can be seen as defensive, how Russia carried out the actions is offensive. In other words, how Russia intervened and annexed Crimea from Ukraine during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 is an example of an aggressive/offensive state behavior in international politics as explain by John Mearsheimer in his offensive realism theory. This is because reports from the Ukrainian government indicated that there was a significant influx of Russian troops in eastern Ukraine before the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014 (Becker, Cohen, Kushi & McManus 2016: 120). Ukraine was a sovereign state before this conflict; however, Russia turned a blind eye to Ukraine's sovereignty and intervened militarily by sending its military into Crimea to take control over key installations such as airports and state buildings. The fact that Russia acts rationally, albeit aggressively by sending its military into Ukraine and illegally annexing Crimea without Ukraine's permission to achieve its security goals makes Russia looks like an aggressor. In other words, Russia's actions in Crimea during the Ukraine crisis make Russia look like an offensive realist as describe by Mearsheimer (2001).

Further, Mearsheimer explains in his offensive realism theory that States are rational actors, and they think strategically to maximize their prospects for survival (Mearsheimer, 2001: 31). Russia's decision to intervene and annex Crimea because of NATO's expansion policy is a rational action taken by Russia to maximize its prospects for survival in an international system that is anarchy. Likewise, the aggressive manner in which Russia took to intervene and eventually annex Crimea in 2014 validates the assumption of offensive realism that states use aggressive/offensive measures to ensure their survival. However, it contradicts the assumption of Waltz's defensive realism that states are not intrinsically aggressive (1979: 161).

Next, the third assumption of Mearsheimer's offensive realism theory assumes that powerful states are never certain about other states' intentions, which makes them use offensive actions to guarantee their security (Mearsheimer, 2010: 73-74). Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 validates this third assumption of offensive realism on the perception of threat and survival because Russia is an example of the powerful states that Mearsheimer describes in his offensive realism theory. And as a powerful state, Russia was not certain about NATO's intentions near its borders; it perceived NATO's expansion on its borders as a threat that is why it acted aggressively by sending its military into Crimea to seize control of the territory. As Mearsheimer explains, great powers like Russia are always sensitive to potential threats near their home territory (2014: 18). Thus, Russia would rather destroy Ukraine as a functional state than allow it to become a Western stronghold on Russia's doorsteps.

Moreover, Russia's annexation of Crimea to prevent NATO's enlargement policy in eastern Europe validates the assumption of both offensive realism and defensive realism that great powers are the main actors in international politics and that the international system is anarchy (Waltz, 1979: Mearsheimer, 2001). A smaller or a weaker country such as Sudan or Luxemburg would not have had the effrontery to march into Crimea and forcefully annexed it from Ukraine. Russia dared to carry out this aggressive action because it is one of the offensive great powers that Mearsheimer describes in his offensive realism theory. Besides, Russia's military might and its military capabilities that were stationed in the Crimean port of Sevastopol made it possible for it to annex Crimea easily from Ukraine. This validates the assumption of both offensive and defensive realism that great powers possess the greatest military capabilities to shape the character of the international system (Waltz 1979; Mearsheimer, 2001).

6.2   Other Findings
6.2.1. Great Power Status

On the other hand, several themes also emerged from my data to show that there are alternative arguments on the rationale behind Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014. As an example "great power status" is one of the central themes that emerged from my data to support these alternative arguments. For instance, one article by Steven Ward stated that "Russia intervened and annexed Crimea because of Putin's desire to restore Russia's great power status" (2014). Another article stated that "Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 because it wanted to show the world that despite the collapse of the Soviet Union; Russia is still a great power" (Gigitashvili, 2016). These statements from my data reveal that Russia also intervened and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 because it wanted to restore its status as a great power. The question is why Russia was trying to restore its status as a great power?

The reason why Russia wanted to restore its status as a great power is that during the Post Cold War era, the US and its Western allies no longer treated Russia as a "great power." The most important manifestation of Russian demotion from the ranks of great power was the new willingness by the West to encroach upon what had been understood during the Cold War as Russia's sphere of influence. The expansion of NATO in eastern Europe and the growing Western ties with Ukraine and other former member states of the Soviet Union in eastern Europe is evidence that the West had failed to accord Russia with the status of great power that it had before the collapse of the Soviet Union. However, Russia has always considered itself as a "great power" (Nixey, 2015), and Russian state officials understood that great power status means that Russia must have hegemony and exercise some form of leadership including domination over its region (eastern Europe). They understood that having hegemony and dominance in eastern Europe would also ensure Russia's security in the region. As Mearsheimer explains in his offensive realism theory the best way for great powers like Russia to ensure their security is to achieve hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2001: 61).

Mearsheimer believes that achieving hegemony would eliminate any possibility of a challenge by another great power (Ibid). Russia intervened and annexed Crimea because it felt that its dominance in the region was threatened by the expansion of NATO since many countries in eastern Europe that were former members of the Soviet Union were joining the Alliance. Russian state officials understood that intervening and annexing Crimea will show Russia's dominance in the region and will eliminate any challenge from the West. Additionally, Russia's decision to intervene and annex Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 was a rational and strategic move made by Russia to ensure its survival. This move by Russia validates the fifth assumption of

offensive realism that states are rational actors and they think strategically to maximize their prospects for survival (Mearsheimer, 2001: 31).

6.2.2. Nationalism and National Identity

Another major theme that emerged from my data to show the rationale behind Russia's intervention and eventual annexation of Crimea is "Nationalism and National identity."

For example, one article by Eleanor Knott stated that "Russia annexed the Crimean peninsula in March 2014 because it sees the people of Crimean as Russians" (2015). Another article stated that "Russia did what it did in Crimea during the Ukraine crisis of 2014 because of its nationalist worldview that sees Crimea as part of greater Russia and a victim of ever-encroaching Western hostilities" (Fisher, 2014). The statements above obtained from my data show that Russia decided to intervene in Ukraine and annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 because it wanted to protect the "Russian civilization" or "Russian national identity" since it sees the people of Crimea and Russia as one. This finding is similar to the findings of other scholars discussed in the literature review section of this paper which revealed that Russia intervened and annexed Crimea in 2014 to protect the Russian identity (Morozov, 2014; Teper, 2015; Allison, 2014; Zhurzhenko, 2014; Averre, 2016).

Russian President Vladimir Putin made Russian citizens in Russia believe that the "Russian civilization" or identity which extends beyond Russia's borders was under threat from the West and that Russia's actions in Crimea were to protect the Russian civilization or identity from the western culture. This is because senior state officials in Russia view the people of Russia and Crimea as one. The reason why Russian officials see the people of Crimea and Russia as one is because the majority of the Crimean population is ethnically Russian (Knott, 2015). Putin interpreted and understood that Crimea and Russia have a special historical link and that the majority of the Crimean population is ethnic Russians. This is the reason why he decided to act by sending Russia's military into Crimea to annex the territory from Ukraine under the guise of protecting the majority ethnic Russian population in Crimea whom he identified as Russians. Putin's interpretation and subsequent reaction validate the argument made by Weldes in his national interest concept that before states officials can act on behalf of a state, they must first engage in a process of interpretation to understand the situation that the state face and how they should respond to it (1996: 276).

Similarly, Russian state officials used nationalist rhetoric to describe the people of Russia and Crimea as one, and this rhetoric paid particularly well by increasing public support for Putin's action in Crimea and increasing Putin's popularity rating in Russia (Kolsto, 2016: 702). Russian state officials

use this rhetoric to gain the support of the majority of Russian citizens in Russia especially Russian nationalists and to make them believe that protecting the Russian identity in Crimea was good for Russia's national interest. This nationalistic rhetoric used by senior Russian state officials to win the support of Russian citizens in Russia confirms Weldes' argument that the concept of national interest can act as a rhetoric device through which the legitimacy and political support for state action are generated (1996: 276). Putin and other senior Russian state officials used the nationalistic rhetoric as a device to generate support for Russia's action in Crimea from ordinary Russian citizens in Russia.

7.   Consequences of Russia's Action in Crimea
7.1   Tension between NATO and Russia

Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 have led to several consequences. One of the consequences is that it has caused serious tension between NATO and Russia (Monaghan, 2014). In other words, Russia's intervention and eventual annexation of Crimea in 2014 have made NATO's relationship with Russia to be more difficult than it has been any time since the end of the Cold War. The NATO-Russia relations have been central in the evolution of Russia's relationship with the West since the collapse of the Soviet Union (Sharyl, 2015: 153). However, the relationship has gotten worse in recent years as a result of Russia's forceful intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014. On the one hand, NATO accuses Russia of aggression for intervening and illegally annexing Crimea from Ukraine. On the other hand, Russia rejects NATO's accusation and argues that its actions in Crimea were taken to secure its interest against NATO's expansion and as a response to a crisis provoked by the US and the EU (Monaghan, 2014).

These arguments made by both sides emphasize tension and the lack of trust between them. The tensions between NATO and Russia created by the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 threatens not only to devastate our society but also unravel all progress made in building peace and security in the world since the end of the Cold War. Anthony Ian contends that there is little prospect for lasting improvements in the NATO–Russia relations (2012: 119). Nevertheless, efforts must be made by Western policymakers and Russia to repair the damages that the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 created to the NATO-Russian relations. This is necessary for the world to enjoy international peace and stability.

7.2   Increase Military Spending

Russia's intervention and eventual annexation of Crimea in 2014 have forced many European countries to increase their military spending. Many of

these European countries see Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea as a threat to their own security. For instance, after Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, the government of Ukraine decided to increase its military spending significantly (Beswick, 2019). President Petro Poroshenko announced that Ukraine would increase its military spending to almost 3 billion US dollars (Ibid). Several central and north European countries bordering Russia also announced increases in their military spending as a direct response to Russia's actions in Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. Most European countries of the former Soviet Union such as Latvia and Lithuania were among the top 10 countries which increase their military spending in 2018 due to the perception of threat from Russia with totals of 24% and 18% respectively (Ibid). Similarly, Finland which shares a land border with Russia and Sweden a sea neighbor both increased their military spending between 2017 and 2018 as a result of Russia's behavior in Crimea in 2014. Further, in the wake of the Ukraine crisis which led to Russia's annexation of Crimea, the United States NATO's dominant power seized on the crisis to drive home its argument that allies must spend more on their own defense. It called on NATO member states to recommit to a long-standing target that NATO members should spend 2% of their economic output on defense. However, while NATO countries made 'pledges' to increase their military spending to 2% this is all most have done to meet the target.

7.3   International Sanctions

In response to Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014, international sanctions were imposed on Russia by foreign countries. The sanctions were imposed by the EU, USA, Canada, and several other countries against individuals, businesses, and officials from Russia and Ukraine who played roles in the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 (Davis, 2016: 184-185). Other measures taken by the EU and the USA against Russia include trade embargoes and restrictions on finance (Ibid). Additionally, the Ukrainian government also carried out several sanctions against Russia for intervening and annexing Crimea in 2014. For instance, the Ukrainian government banned Russian planes from flying through Ukrainian airspace. The international sanctions had several negative effects on Russia. As an example, the sanctions lowered Russia's dollar earnings from energy exports, which weakened the financial positions of its banks, businesses, and government (Davis, 2016: 185).

Moreover, the sanctions also contributed to the collapse of the Russian ruble. Russia responded to the international sanctions by adopting numerous countermeasures such as imposing a total ban on food imports from the EU, USA, Norway, Canada, and Australia. Concerning Ukraine, Russia imposed restrictions on the export of industrial and agricultural goods to Russia, cut

energy subsidies, and demanded pre-payment of gas supplies (Gardner, 2014). In March 2015, Russia also prohibited Western IT firms that were operating in Russia from bidding for state contracts. The Western sanctions imposed on Russia because of its actions in Crimea in 2014 are regularly extended every year. The international sanctions have caused economic damages to both Russia and Western states. In June 2019, President Putin confirmed that since 2014 Russia has lost about $ 50 billion due to international sanctions imposed against Russia because of its actions in Crimea (CSFI, 2021). At the same time, the EU lost $240 billion and the USA lost $ 17 billion (Ibid). These figures show that the international sanctions that resulted from Russia's intervention and eventual annexation of Crimea are having a negative effect not just on Russia but also on Ukraine and several Western countries.

Conclusion

   This paper has examined why Russia intervened and eventually annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. The paper argued that Russia intervened and annexed Crimea during the crisis because of NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe. The results of this study support the central thesis/argument stated above. However, the results of this study also revealed that there are alternative arguments on the rationale behind Russia's intervention and eventual annexation of Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. As can be seen from the findings of this study, the implication of focusing on NATO's expansion policy as the main motive behind Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea is that people might ignore the role that other factors such as nationalism, identity, and Russia's quest for great power status played in influencing Russia's behavior.

   As this paper suggests, it is possible to argue that NATO's expansion policy in eastern Europe and other factors pushed Russia to intervened and eventually annexed Crimea during the Ukraine Crisis of 2014. I acknowledge the limitations of this study. Another kind of evidence could be used in place of the statements from the articles. However, this evidence is the best source I could go after due to time constraints. Also, this study being a case study research provide little basis for generalization of its findings. This paper was not able to address other dimensions of the Ukraine Crisis of 2014 such as the legality of Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea in 2014; it would be interesting to study this area. Thus, future research on this topic can focus on the legality of Russia's intervention and annexation of Crimea under international law (the UN Charter). This will contribute to a greater understanding of the contemporary debate on Russia's behavior in Crimea during the crisis. Likewise, future research on this topic can look at the political, economical, and social changes that have taken place in the Crimean peninsula after it was annexed by Russia seven years ago. As indicated in this

paper, Russia's actions in Crimea during the Ukraine crisis have worsened the NATO-Russian relations, and this has caused global security challenges. To resolve this problem, I would suggest more collaboration between the government of Russia and NATO member countries.

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The US State-Building Failure in Afghanistan

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Abstract
The almost nineteen years of international troops' presence and their support and donations to strengthen a democratic state in Afghanistan were in vain. The state-building process began with the toppling of a retrogressive regime, which was considered the base of al-Qaeda leaders who masterminded the 9/11 attacks in the United States. Within 20 years, the Afghan government could not use the opportunities made available by the international community and the US presence in the country. Although most criticisms are leveled at the United States for this state-building failure, on the contrary, its roots in Afghanistan can be precisely traced back to the central government. In other words, the state-building failure in Afghanistan has inner flaws. The blame is not attributable to its international allies regarding the fragility of the state and decay of democracy. This article illustrates how state-building at the pivotal centre of democracy failed in Afghanistan. The main hurdles of state-building are also scrutinised.

Keywords: State-building, NATO, fundamentalism, peace

Introduction
After the toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan by the United States, state-building, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and ensuring peace began. Throughout a long period of war, the country was savagely ruined by civil war and the Taliban's retrogressive tyrannical regime. State-building was considered the country's key element, as most Afghan refugees returned home from neighboring countries and pinned their hopes on a secure and prosperous

Afghanistan. However, step by step, all the hopes for peace and prosperity changed to despair. Somehow, one way or another, the Taliban re-emerged and developed a new approach including suicide attacks, bomb attacks in public places, terrorization of key political figures, the elimination of schools, clinics, and entire basic projects. Afghanistan is still a fragile country with no stable government to overcome challenges such as poverty and war against terrorism. Thus, a vicious phenomenon,fundamentalism, and the Taliban are still significant challenges in the country. Furthermore, poverty in Afghanistan has been the outcome of the continual war that has hampered the development process and economy for several decades. Fundamentalism is not the outcome of a weak economy. As Basil Siddique quotes Fukuyama: "Poverty is not the proximate cause of terrorism: The organizers of the 9/11 terror plot came from relatively well-off backgrounds and became recruits of violent Islamism" (Siddique, 2012).

Except for the purposes of US intervention in Afghanistan, the aid for strengthening a united democratic state was a crucial opportunity for building a state with democratic values in the country.Thus, it is believed that the main factor that the US state-building failed in Afghanistan was the weakness and disability of the central government to make peace and build stability in the country. One of the hurdles that led the state-building process to fail is fundamentalism. The hegemonic sources of the Taliban and ISIS religious institutions have actively striven to change minds through institutions, none of which, in reality, have Islamic bases in society. These institutions (Darul Hefaz, Darul Madrassa, Darul Ulum, School of Haqnia, and Masques) are considered the hegemonic resources of fundamentalism and Talibanism in Afghanistan, and they are also actively defaming democracy, democratic values, and government. Although corruption has had a serious influence and has been a big hurdle for state-building development, religious institutions ideologically changed people's mindsets concerning government and democracy. The issue of concern of the article is finding out that despite the enormous amount of donations, how did the state remained fragile and how did the hegemonic resource of fundamentalism influence the failure of state-building?

Methodology

The September 9/11 attack in the United States and US intervention in Afghanistan and its efforts for state-building are broad topics. Abundant literature such as books, articles, films, reports, and documentaries exist regarding US state-building and the International Security Assistance Forces' functions in Afghanistan. This research has been conducted based on the qualitative method. However, most of the literature concerning the US intervention and state-building in Afghanistan was researched in a journalistic

way. Therefore, to illustrate the hypothesis clearly, credible news reports and documentaries were used to a very minor degree in this article too. In addition, most of the data focuses on the state-building process by the United States in Iraq and Afghanistan, and also NATO's interventions with peacekeeping intentions. The US state-building failure and fundamentalism as the primary cause in Afghanistan were rarely discussed. However, the article's main argument is the failure of state-building and its significant elements. Based on secondary data, the authors' analysis concerning the fragility of the state after 2001 was corruption. On the contrary, fundamentalism as the main factor of state fragility in Afghanistan did not seem the focal point of the author's work. Thus, this article focuses on two dimensions: first, on the hypothesis of state-building failure, religion as the vital element of Afghan society and its influence. Second, on modern pattern incompatibility with Islam that disrupted state-building, and democracy institutionalization in the country.

The United States Intervention in Afghanistan

On September 11, 2001, a series of suicide attacks was carried out by members of al-Qaeda in the United States, most notably the destruction of the twin towers World Trade Center. Two thousand nine hundred seventy-seven people lost their lives during the attacks (Masud, 2008). The terrorist operation took place on US soil with various political, economic, security, and military consequences for the country and the international community. Later on, the nationalities of the hijackers who participated in the attacks became known: fifteen Saudi Arabian nationals, two United Arab Emirates nationals, an Egyptian citizen, and a Lebanese citizen (The 9/11 commission, n.d.).

After the attack, President George W. Bush decided to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The United States and its allies supported and initiated the Taliban regime's destruction in Afghanistan for harboring and supporting al-Qaeda's leader, Osama Bin Laden, who masterminded the 9/11 event. At the same time, the people of Afghanistan were also sick and tired of the tyrannical, repressive Taliban Emirate system. President Bush emphasizes that "true peace will only be achieved when we give the Afghan people the means to achieve their own aspirations. Peace will be achieved by helping Afghanistan develop its stable government" (Watson, 2012, p.171). Thus, the state-building by the United States in Afghanistan was part of the US mission that today shows that Afghanistan has at least a fledgling democracy.

The *War on Terror* operation by the United States in Afghanistan was aimed precisely at al-Qaeda's center and the Taliban, as the like-minded regime. Thus, Bush announced a global war on terrorism, chased al-Qaeda's top leaders, and had bombed their nest by December 2001. Eventually, by May 2011, Osama, the al-Qaeda leader, was found and killed by a US Navy SEAL team in Abbottabad, a city near Peshawar, Pakistan (Asthappan, 2016).

All efforts by the world community focused on counter insurgency and peacekeeping in Afghanistan. Furthermore, the Karzai regime passively functioned to prevent the re-emergence of the Taliban. On the other hand, Karzai did not have experience in building institutions and governance. However, he had experience working with the Taliban and had ethnic ties with them. Therefore, the Karzai administration did not agree with the shift to counter insurgency (Tellis, 2009). The Taliban, as a result of the Karzai regime's weak policies, re-emerged in Afghanistan. The government did not recognize them as terrorists but instead called them "Dissatisfied Brothers." This strategy continued for more than a decade and ended with the sacrifice that took civilians lives that none of the leaders paid, but innocent people paid with their dear lives. Considering this, the United States eloquently, in January 2013, was told by the Afghan delegation in Washington that the Taliban, after 2014, would no longer be the enemy of the US, even if the US attacked Kabul. Unfortunately, it seems Washington and the rest of the world community realized that a massive amount of money had been spent on the military sector in Afghanistan, and yet there was no commitment to stability in the country (Neumann, 2015). Thus, what was still considered a big hurdle against state-building in Afghanistan, fundamentalism, ethnic sympathy with the Taliban, and rampant corruption that paralyzed the state institutionally, continued to exist.

Based on Brown University's findings, the cost of the war in Afghanistan from October 2001 to April 2021 has been estimated at 1.7 trillion or nearly two trillion US dollars. Of course, portions of this money were dedicated to strengthening and stabilizing Afghanistan. (Petersmann, 2021).

ISAF and NATO in Afghanistan

ISAF is the UN-mandated decision proposed in December 2001 in the Bonn agreement by the UN security council. The goal was to deploy international forces to support and assist the newly established Afghan government transitional authority, and pave the way for a secure environment (Stollenwerk, 2018). In August 2003, NATO undertook the command of ISAF and launched the International Security Assistance Forces. First, the assumption was to strengthen institutions in the capital focusing on five crucial key pillars: "Military Reform, Police Reform, Government Reform, Economic Reform, and Drug Growth Eradication." (Beljan, 2013).

The focal point of the ISAF's military reform was to educate and train the Afghan National Army and Police, while counter insurgency and peacekeeping were its main goals. Training, advising the Afghan National Army and aiding them in counter insurgency, and neutralizing insurgent networks went in tandem with the other fundamental projects in the country. Its definition of war was so evident - according to US Army General David

McKiernan "The fact is that we are at war in Afghanistan. It's not peacekeeping. It's not stability operations. It's not humanitarian assistance, it's war."(Tuck, 2014).

In this war, NATO roughly lost its 3,500 soldiers in establishing a state ruled centrally, under elected leadership whose purpose was to encompass democratic values, and emphasize the state's role as being responsible for human rights. However, the ideal democracy of the United States and its allies did not materialize as they had predicted. They had invested nearly 1 trillion US dollars, and they had lost 2,500 soldiers in supporting and paving the way for democracy in Afghanistan (Witter, 2016). The reality of war for the United States and its allies in Afghanistan was quite clear. Also, the supported government in Afghanistan had a vague sympathy for the Taliban. There was no definition of 'war' or 'enemy' in the country, even though Hamed Karzai called the Taliban 'brothers'. In general, one of the phenomena that the Taliban did not annihilate in Afghanistan was the weak approach of the government concerning the enemy (Sorkin, 2014).

Resolute Support Mission

After a dozen years of international military combat forces' presence in Afghanistan, considered as the United States' longest war in its history, the Afghan National Security Assistance forces in late 2015 took on the entire responsibility for the security of Afghanistan. The Resolute Support Mission in January 2015 replaced the International Security Assistance Forces Mission to continue its cooperation and role as counterpart with the Afghan National Armed forces. The Resolute Support Mission was trained to high standards, and the Afghan National forces were trained to combat terrorism professionally. The financial contribution to the Afghan National Security Forces and military institutions testified that it was NATO's profound commitment to the Afghan government (Salman, Tezel, Bayramog, et al., 2016). The RSM challenge was to handle the local irregular militias called the local Afghan police. The government wanted to control areas through the ALP who were not trained in military tactics and principles, but had the extraordinary duty of supporting the regular Afghan troops (Schreer & Waldman, 2019). Although neither the Ghani nor the Karzai administrations had an offensive policy against the Taliban, *Arbaki* (ALP), however, as a support armed group, strongly sided with the Afghan National Army and Police. A force such as the ALP, which the Americans had already experienced in Iraq, was a grassroots initiative against al-Qaeda that they armed locals in Iraq and named them Sons of Iraq. They were para-military and are familiar with the geography of conflict in Iraq. Remarkably, they resolved the complexity of fighting for American troops (Abed & Jensen, 2010).

Why did State-Building Fail in Afghanistan?

There are abundant writings dealing explicitly and implicitly with the concept of state-building, which is genuinely an inter-disciplinary topic that encompasses social science, international relations, political studies, economics, security studies, and developmental studies. Most of the time, state-building is considered an interventionist strategy that strengthens or restores institutions, in general, to activate the apparatus of a state bureaucratically, as the United States did in Iraq (Zoe, 2007). However, the tangible outcome of state-building in Afghanistan by the Western world was the formation of a centralized system that in a multi-ethnic society such as Afghanistan is still a problematic issue. From the governance perspective, the centralized system is not conducive to fostering development and paving its way. On the contrary, a centralized State edifice and a rentier economy always allow capacities to rise, though the state has a massive dependency on foreign aid (Murtazashvili, 2019).

To illustrate the state-building challenges in Afghanistan, the three crucial inner factors that disrupted and hindered this process in the country should be explained. First, non-control over religious institutions changed into the hegemonic resource of terrorism and the Taliban. The second was the lack of transparency in foreign aid and the state as the only pebble on the beach, meaning that the leadership could not ensure trust between the state and the people (Edwards, 2011).

Religious Institutions as the Hegemonic Sources of Fundamentalism

The hegemonic sources of terrorism have always been active and have manipulated Afghan society preaching through the *Madrasa* and religious institutions under the government's patrimony, but against the government. These institutions were launched in Pakistan during the *Jihad in* 1979 against the Soviet Union, and more predominantly during the Taliban regime between 1994-2001 (Aljezeera, 2014). Thus, a lack of strategy in the government and absence of control of religious institutions, such as the *Darul Hefaz,* and *Darul Madras[1]* mosques which preach Islamic fundamentalism for the people, plunged the state into the quagmire of instability. Many pupils are given religious lessons in these institutions, and are easily manipulated and controlled by terrorist agendas. There is abundant evidence that most pupils either come from Pakistan or graduate from these institutions to be hired by the Taliban (Fuller, 1991).

Fundamentalism in Afghanistan has its roots during the war against the Soviet Union, predominantly because the Taliban regime only allowed the *Madrasa* to legally open during their administration (Roy, 2002). As a result,

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[1]Religious institutions where pupils' study basic religious lessons.

these institutions became hegemonic resources of terrorism and fundamentalism in Afghanistan, and they were underestimated by the regimes that had been supported by the United States since 2001.

Over the past two decades since 2001, efforts towards democracy and its institutionalization have not succeeded in Afghanistan. Indeed, the roots of its failure revive people's apprehension about democratic phenomena after their defamation by the Imam's (clerics) group in the *Madrasa* and other religious institutions that constantly preached against democracy to change people's minds. According to them, democracy would cause Islamic values to fade in society, whereas terrorism, using the same narrative and the same arguments, slaughters people in certain Islamic countries (Larson, 2011).

Supremacy of Law: Governance with the soft strategy of manipulation and its aspirations to the rule of law in the nation has not been seen in Afghan government bodies since 2001, and authorities have only been constituted through military force. Afghan society has been governed ideologically by religious proxies such as clerics who are inclined to have retrogressive mentalities and preach to the people through the mosque, thus controlling people's mind. However, physically the society is being governed by the government through military force. First, it is imperative to remove and eradicate economic hurdles, terrorism, and fundamentalism. The eradication of fundamentalism in Afghanistan would signify structuring of the practice of religion and controlling religious institutions. As mentioned above, for one to become a spiritual leader or *Imam,* one must meet specific academic criteria and competencies. One way or another, mosques and *Imams* have been at the disposal of terrorism and fundamentalism. The plan ought to have come into force at the beginning of state-building in 2004. Such a scheme could have ridden the society of the clergy who do not know about Islam of Peace, but rather about fundamentalism to regress centuries to solve the problems of today. In modern governance, institutions have a crucial role to play, and this is how muslim reformist scholars found compatibility between Islam and modernity regarding social issues and institutions. They also believe in social progress and institutionalization of liberal elements such as democracy, social justice, equality, human rights, freedom of thought, expression, education, science and technology to guarantee development in Islamic countries. Ali Abd al Razig, concerning politics and governance, argues that "Islam is not against democracy and democratic institutions, and the values of Islam as brought and preached by the Prophet Muhammad were not concerned with the issues of politics and governance. He holds that Islam is a message and a religion and not a government or a state" (Yusuf & Ali, 2012). Democracy is an available principle in Islam, though they are mutually compatible in the concept of collective decisions being taken by the masses for their political

destiny, which in Islamic literature means *Shura*[2]. Muslim scholars clarified and solved the puzzle of a wrong belief from Islam that created a phobia by fundamentalist and terrorist groups in Afghanistan and some Islamic countries (Hofmann, 2004). The compatibility of today's phenomena in the name of modernity has its rationality in Islamic principles. However, this article aims not to find the compatibility of Islam with modernity.The most prevalent efforts to state-building in a failed state involved in a war against terrorism need to strengthen military capabilities, hard power, and ways of manipulation and the establishment of a broad hegemony. In other words, the government ought to have an interdependent relationship with the nation (Sadek, 1998).

The second challenge that blunted the state-building process in Afghanistan is corruption, which has been a crucial challenge from the very beginning of the new phase of state-building after 2001. In the last two decades, corruption has penetrated institutions in all parts of the state. Although numerous funds were allocated for corruption eradication by the USAID and devolved from some countries' anti-corruption efforts, the population was affected by unemployment and the lack of an economic sector and entrepreneurship to create jobs (Singh, 2016). The only option that people want to make a living is to work in the government. To achieve a governmental post, bribery became an inevitable custom in a society where there is no other lucrative organization to work for except the government. Consequently, clientelism dramatically erupts in governmental institutions with appointments in the government often happening either based on political relations or family affiliations. The vicious corrupt notion rooted in society is that one should know someone in the government body in order to be hired. In other words, we can say that this is a new version of nepotism (Dharmavarapu, 2015).

In 2015, the World Bank rated Afghanistan the fifth most impoverished country globally, reflecting the fact that unemployment and corruption adversely affected the country and entrepreneurs. Lack of bureaucracy and technology also paved the way for corruption. Afghanistan has a significant dependence on foreign aid, and this inflow of aid has contributed to widespread corruption (Mark & Brick, 2010). Since 2001, during state-building, reconstructions, development and democratization, tremendous amounts of money have been donated for Afghanistan. All such donations have been somewhat looted by external and internal sectors in the country (Spenta, 2017).

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[2]Shura or consultation is an instrument for reconstruction and reform, mentioned in the Qur'an and suggested in the practices of the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions (PBUH). Generally, it is a tool used by Muslim scholars and rulers or caliphs in arriving at a decision or ruling on particular matters or issues relating to the affairs of Muslims.

From the period of state-building, multicultural states for well-being and good governance must first create mutual trust between the government and ethnics, and they should also strive for nationalism to encompass and observe the values of all minorities in the country. Equalities and justice among ethnic groups strengthen the political culture and pave the way for peaceful integration. State-building in the liberal context in a crippled, war-torn Islamic country is a challenging process. To know these hurdles, there needs to be a sociological outlook on society to recognize and understand precisely the acceptance of modern phenomena. Traditional society is a regressive society sunk in rough religious beliefs incompatible with new patterns (Zammin, 2018). According to Ibn Khaldun, the rural people's and urban dwellers' sentiments differ. Rural communities are united against unknown patterns, but urban communities are not. Except for religious patterns, traditional society does not readily accept modern ways such as democracy, freedom, and civil rights. Introducing these patterns into traditional societies needs strong relationships with people fostered by providing welfare and economic growth.

The third problem is the method of governance that caused the failure of democracy and state-building in Afghanistan. The failed rule of law, economic injustice, lack of reform, the pressure of unemployment, and most importantly, non-transparent elections are all contributing factors. However, criticism was leveled at the United States for imposing democracy in Afghanistan, affirming that people did not know democratic practices and ways at the outset (Enterline & Greig, 2008). Since 2001, Afghan society has been governed by two powers: visible power (the government, the regular Army) and invisible power (religion) (Murtazashivili, 2016). The visible power ought to be government, but demonizing the Taliban or sanctifying them in the society was one of the causes why terrorism remained in the country. Admittedly, force or hard power are not the only way of governing to expand sovereignty in a state. Hard power instead is a threat of unlawfulness as well as the promise of maintaining independence, but developing authority only with military options is a false deliberation. Priorities of governance today are different and softer than before, and statesmanship is based on a democratic approach and sociological recognition. In Afghanistan, the primary hegemonic source of the government is purely the military institutions. Cultural, social, and political hegemonic source references in the society are absent. People are militarily under the control of the government, but ideally under the control of Islamic fundamentalism, whereas, in retarded communities, religion is a supportive phenomenon for helping people manage their lives (Forouzan & Alishahi, 2018).

With Whom did the US Reconcile in Afghanistan?

The Taliban formed in 1997 under the leadership of Mullah Mohammed Omar against the (*Mujahideen)* freedom fighters who withstood the Soviet invasion in 1979 (Weigand, 2017). The Taliban is a fundamentalist group whose school of thought is the same as Al Qaeda's and ISIS's (Anna, 2017). In other words, they are sipping from the same cup of fundamentalism and terrorism. Fundamentalism, mainly after the Soviet Union invasion, found its prominent influence under the Jihad aegis in Afghanistan. However, the foreign influence on fundamentalism in Afghanistan made it evident that the regional hegemonies were striving to proceed with the war in the country. Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Egypt have had ties with fundamentalist groups in Afghanistan since the Soviet Invasion. Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood regime did not have a specific political goal in Afghanistan, but they supported the tyrant regime of the Taliban due to the Islamic name of fundamentalism.

With the Afghan conflicts and the need to find a way to pull the country out of its current misery, it is necessary to put forward powers' broad interests and discuss their competitive policies for the region. The withdrawal of the US from Afghanistan is good news for neighboring countries of Afghanistan and regional authorities, specifically Iran and Pakistan. The US-Taliban peace agreement would temporarily diminish the conflict but will not bring stability to the country (Chaudhuri & Shende, 2020). Somehow this deal leaves Afghanistan in the hands of the radical group that does not believe in human rights and freedom but in "Sharia law". Sharia cannot respond to today's quality of life and the priorities of the people. According to Donald Trump, "the Taliban could 'possibly' seize power after a US withdrawal from the analytical perspective. United States officialdom is not concerned if the Taliban seize power in Afghanistan" (Radio Free Europe, 2020).

The United States' longest war in Afghanistan has ended. On February 29, the US Taliban peace negotiations bore fruit, and both sides signed an agreement to end nearly nineteen years of war in Afghanistan. The primary US commitment for the Taliban was to complete their presence in Afghanistan within fourteen months, releasing five thousand Taliban soldiers from prison. Ultimately, 5000 thousand Taliban was released from the dungeon, and Americans are at the final stage of withdrawal from Afghanistan. However, at the same time, the conflict has been exacerbated. Furthermore, the Taliban agreed not to launch any attacks from the Taliban area on the US and to reduce violence against foreign troops (United States Signs Agreement with the Taliban, but Prospects for Its Full Implementation Remain Uncertain, 2020).

'After the announcement of guarantees for a complete withdrawal of foreign forces and timeline in the presence of international witnesses and guarantees, and the announcement in the presence of international witnesses that Afghan soil will not be used against the security of the United States and its allies, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan which is not recognized by the United States as a state and is known as the Taliban will start intra-Afghan negotiations with Afghan sides on March 10, 2020, which corresponds to Rajab 15, 1441 on the *Hijri* Lunar calendar and Hoot 20, 1398 on the *Hijri* Solar calendar". The peace agreement for the Afghan government and people would be conditionally acceptable provided the Taliban renounces violence' (BBC, 2020).

President Trump predicted that the Taliban might try to gain power somehow through violence or after the US withdrawal. This quote shows that the US would not engage in case the Taliban attempts to take power. If the Taliban comes to power, either way, it is a reverse move for Afghanistan, creating an even stronger radicalism putting society in the hands of fundamentalists again. According to the most prevalent international school of thought, realist countries such as the United States never have permanent friends. President Trump said "Countries have to take care of themselves. You can only hold someone's hand for so long" (Kube, Dilanian & Luce, 2020).

Afghanistan and countries such as Syria and Iraq in the Middle East face similar challenges, which are terrorism. The Islamic State (ISIS) was somewhat removed in the Middle East and did not negotiate with the US, but the United States did maintain a truce with a group from the same school of thought as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. In history, ideologies have never been subdued by soft approaches such as negotiations and diplomacy. Peace with an ideological group such as the Taliban, who do not attribute a nominal value to human rights and democratic values, would be a vain effort (Florian, 2017). Negotiations like today's signing of an agreement by the United States with the Taliban for peace in Afghanistan can never be successful. However, intra-Afghan talks in Doha are focusing on peace with the Taliban. The Taliban emphasizes the Islamic Emirate system in the country, but no Afghan would accept such a precondition by the Taliban as a return to a dark period. According to John R. Allen, who led all the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, "the Taliban are untrustworthy; their doctrine is irreconcilable with modernity and the rights of women; and in practice, they're incapable of summoning the necessary internal controls and organizational discipline needed to implement a far-flung agreement like this. The so-called "Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan"will not only not be honored by the Taliban, but will also not bring peace" (Allen, 2020). The intra-Afghan talks would be fruitful if the Taliban accepted two decades of achievements in

human rights, media, and the fledgling democracy in the country. For the Intra-Afghan dialogue, groups from all political parties and members of civilian society were shuffled together to negotiate with the Taliban.

Conclusion

The salient factors of the US state-building failure in Afghanistan comprise of restoring and strengthening a centralized political system in Afghanistan where decision making is the authority of an individual. A centralized system in a multicultural society such as Afghanistan with different minorities is not decent. It has been proven that such a system is not fair for multicultural societies, however weak it may be in tackling challenges in such a society. Still, the nationalistic policy of the government over the Taliban crucially gave them room to reintegrate themselves step by step. Neither Karzai nor Ghani had a vigorous policy for the demolition of fundamentalism and the Taliban in Afghanistan; rather on the contrary, they had sympathy with them. Both boosted the notion that the Taliban had the right to take control of parts of Afghanistan.They played a nationalistic policy over the Taliban to subdue them for the sake of peace. However, such a policy vehemently demoralized the Afghan National Army combating the enemy. Suppression and fighting against the Taliban were not based on an inclusive commitment by the government. The state-building failure in Afghanistan is multi-dimensional which is characterised by widespread corruption institutionally, lacking transparency concerning foreign aid, and overlooking radical institutions by the government. Thus, Afghanistan is still a fragile state, dependent on a rentier economy that since 2001 has created the minimum capacities in the country. However, the state still cannot fund its institutions' expenditure through its domestic income. War and weakness of the state in Afghanistan is the outcome of interfering with regional and global hegemonies' rivalries. It is evident that this aspect of the war in Afghanistan needs broad research and discussion.

Overall, the Taliban peace deal with the US complicated the situation in Afghanistan, even with the premise that if the Taliban gets the power in the country, what will happen with the minor achievements of the nineteen years of fledgling democracy in the country? Most of the assumptions are based on these two questions. That new chapter of war would begin in Afghanistan against the "Islamic State", and the peace negotiations of the Taliban and the Afghan government would still be unrealized.

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L'Écriture du Dieu : Libération de la pensée humaine des banalités telluriques

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Résumé

Dans "L'Écriture du Dieu", Borges nous présente Tzinacan, le dernier prêtre de la pyramide de Qaholom, torturé et emprisonné. Armé de sa persévérance contemplative, il lutte pour se délivrer des entraves matérielles de sa prison et de son corps martyrisé par d'interminables années de captivité. Afin d'atteindre un affranchissement corporel et moral définitif, il entreprend la quête d'une formule fatidique de quatorze mots dont chacun contient toute l'entropie de l'univers. Mais avant d'y parvenir, il doit passer par des épreuves liées à toutes sortes de labyrinthes effrayants : depuis ses propres souvenirs, ses réflexions sur la vie et sur le langage, jusqu'aux rêves du sable, étouffants, emboîtés et infinis. Ces cauchemars le poussent à changer de stratégie dans sa recherche de l'énigmatique formule céleste qui lui donnerait tous les pouvoirs sur les autres humains à condition de la prononcer, mais la survenue de l'union avec le divin lui fit oublier sa propre identité ainsi que toutes ses préoccupations telluriques. Submergé par la béatitude, il s'enfonce définitivement dans l'oubli éternel pour partager avec tous les êtres un monde anonyme et infini.

Mots-clés: Écriture du Dieu, pensée tellurique, prison, souvenir, formule, infini, éternité, labyrinthe, apothéose

The Writing of God: The Liberation of Human Thought from Telluric Banalities

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Abstract

In "The Writing of God", Borges introduces us to Tzinacán who is the last priest of the pyramid of Qaholom. Tortured and imprisoned, yet armed with his contemplative perseverance, he struggles to free himself from the material shackles of his prison and his body was martyred by endless years of confinement. In order to reach a definitive physical and moral emancipation, he embarks on a quest for a fateful formula of fourteen words, each of which contains all the entropy of the universe. Before succeeding, he must go through numerous trials in terrifying labyrinths. This ranges from his own memories, his reflections on life and on language, to the dreams of sand, stifling, interlocking, and infinite. These nightmares pushed him to change his strategy in his quest for the enigmatic celestial formula that would give him ultimate power over other humans, so long as he pronounces it. His union with the divine, however, made him forget his own identity as well as all his telluric worries. Overcome by bliss, he sinks into eternal oblivion thus sharing with all beings an anonymous and infinite world.

Keywords: Writing of God, telluric thought, prison, memories, formula, infinite, eternal, labyrinth, apotheosis

Introduction

Lire un texte de Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986), c'est plonger dans le monde d'une littérature de dimension philosophique et contemplative qui célèbre la vérité cosmique libre et illimitée. Cet écrivain sensible au hasard et amoureux des mathématiques choisit ses thèmes d'après ses voyages fictifs qui transportent le lecteur au-delà des démarcations physiques et culturelles pour toucher l'essence de l'existence humaine.

Il est sûr qu'il existe une sorte d'intimité entre Borges (1953), l'auteur du recueil "L'Aleph", et l'aléatoire comme le dit Brotherston (2011). Ce recueil signifie une totalité vécue par les sens et l'esprit, une épiphanie de tout l'univers et de tous les temps concentrés en un moment, une vision cosmique qui illustre la tradition philosophique de l'Amérique revêtant une dimension universelle. Les héros borgésiens vivent souvent d'intenses aventures de la

mémoire infaillible de toute l'humanité. Submergés par le fantastique, leur imagination est en perpétuel va-et-vient entre les trois instants fondamentaux du temps : le passé, le présent et le futur.

Borges débute "L'Écriture du Dieu" par « La prison est profonde (147) » afin de souligner l'intensité des épreuves de Tzinacan dans son cachot. Ce souterrain en pierre ayant la forme d'une « demi-sphère presque parfaite (147) » que cache-t-il comme énigmes ? Comment se manifeste la souffrance des prisonniers, d'un côté, Tzinacan, et de l'autre, « un jaguar qui mesure à pas égaux et invisibles le temps et l'espace de sa cellule (147) ». Pourquoi ce partage inattendu de ce lieu exigu et contraignant entre le dernier prêtre du peuple maya et cet animal féroce ? Entre ces deux créatures captives, apparaît furtivement un geôlier silencieux qui ouvre la trappe pour leur descendre un morceau de viande et une cruche d'eau chaque jour à midi. Terrassé et broyé par de très longues années de séquestration morbide, l'objectif ultime de Tzinacan était de se libérer à tout prix. Le pelage jaune du jaguar, symbole religieux chez les Mayas, semble renfermer un secret divin transmis à travers les générations.

En effet, Tzinacan est « le mage de la pyramide de Qaholome, qui fut incendiée par Pedro de Alvarado[1] (147) ». Il porte en lui toutes les souffrances du peuple maya. Dans ce temps immémorial, les fameux textes de Chilam Balam constituent un des plus importants témoignages de la littérature maya yucatèque où apparaissent divers dieux qui interviennent dans la conduite des mondes supérieur et inférieur[2]. Imbu de cette culture tournée vers une transcendance bienveillante, le mage emprisonné, torturé et humilié cherche une issue salvatrice de ses supplices.

Dans cette recherche, une méthode d'investigation a été utilisée pour accompagner Tzinacan dans sa quête. En effet, le volet pratique de cette

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[1]**Pedro de Alvarado (1485-1541)**: Un conquistador espagnol qui a participé à la conquête de l'empire aztèque sous les ordres d'Hernando Cortes. Alvarado est également connu pour la cruauté de son traitement des populations autochtones, et les meurtres de masse commis pour assujettir des peuples indigènes du Mexique. Les conquérants n'ont pas seulement détruit hommes, femmes et enfants mais une civilisation humaine d'une richesse inestimable. En 7 Juillet, 1520 il y a eu la Bataille d'Otumba pendant laquelle les féroces guerriers du jaguar et de l'aigle, les hommes de conquistador ont arraché une victoire contre les aztèques. Voir Zinn (2009),
https://bruxelles-panthere.thefreecat.org/,
https://www.matierevolution.fr/spip.php,
https://jugurtha.noblogs.org/files/2018/05/HowardZinn-HistoirepopulairedesEtats-Unis.pdf
[2]Ces livres, qui représentent l'un des plus importants témoignages de la vie des peuples autochtones, tiennent un registre de leur civilisation : histoires, mythes, traditions, dieux, folklores, médecine et astronomie, etc. Chilam (ou Chilan) signifie « l'interprète des dieux » et Balam signifie « jaguar », mais c'est aussi un nom de famille commun dans le Yucatan, situé au sud du Mexique, de sorte que Chilam Balam pourrait bien être traduit comme le Prophète Balam (Shroukh, 2020)

recherche fait appel à une sorte d'analyse d'investigation pour effectuer une enquête dans les constituants du texte. Le comportement imaginatif de Tzinacan l'a rendu comme un enquêteur de la vérité de l'existence cosmique. Des voyages seront effectués dans des labyrinthes étranges et mystérieux inspirés par la vie de la nature : des réseaux de tigres et des rêves emboîtés de sable avec leurs différentes interprétations. Des parcours entre le fini et l'infini seront établis en se servant avec précaution de certaines notions scientifiques adoptées par Borges et citées comme des instruments analytiques scientifiques par les chercheurs.

        Cet article est divisé en deux grandes sections. La première est destinée à analyser les labyrinthes, matériels et immatériels vécus par le mage. La deuxième consiste à explorer l'effort de Tzinacan pour s'affranchir de tous ces labyrinthes pour se confondre avec la divinité et l'univers.

1.   Les labyrinthes vécus par Tzinacan

        Dans son avertissement de "L'Aleph", Caillois évoque que Tzinacan, un mage aztèque « prisonnier dans la pire oubliette, parvient à lire L'Écriture du Dieu et à pénétrer l'énigme de l'univers ». D'abord, la prison profonde en pierre est décrite nettement : elle a la forme « d'une demi-sphère presque parfaite (147) ». Pourquoi cette forme est-elle imaginée par Borges ? En effet, en mathématiques, la sphère est la forme parfaite dans le monde réel de trois dimensions. Elle est omniprésente dans les objets infiniment grands ou même infinitésimaux : les étoiles, les perles, les gouttes d'eau (privées de gravité) et même les atomes ainsi que leurs constituants de protons et d'électrons. Les astres et les planètes voguent selon une orbite dans l'univers dont le vide constitue 90 % de son volume. Pour cela, une sphère représente le symbole de mouvement (Lavarde, 1999).

        Dans ses ouvrages "Histoire de l'éternité", et "Le Temps circulaire", Borges perçoit le temps comme un cercle où chaque point se confond avec lui-même après un tour complet, et par conséquent cela amène l'individu à repasser une infinité de fois par le même point. Il précise aussi que cette concordance entre les points de départ et d'arrivée rend l'histoire universelle comme étant l'histoire d'un seul être humain, et chaque instant représente toute une vie (Borges, 1936, 1971). Dans son recueil de nouvelles « Le livre de sable », Borges (1975) justifie le choix de ce titre en disant « parce que ni ce livre ni le sable n'ont de commencement ni de fin (100) ». Il ajoute « Si l'espace est infini, nous sommes dans n'importe quel point de l'espace. Si le temps est infini, nous sommes dans n'importe quel point du temps (100) ». En effet, la présence d'un cercle évoque plusieurs symboles[3] : « l'unité, l'harmonie, l'infini et le domaine de l'esprit. Il est à la fois début et

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[3]https://www.jepense.org/symbolisme-du-cercle/

fin, fini et infini, tout et rien ». Selon (Nicolas, 1999), le cercle rappelle « la quête sans fin, la limite asymptotique vers une droite ». Le cercle a aussi un sens égalitaire : la table ronde, par exemple, accorde l'égalité des membres qui sont rassemblés autour d'elle.   Dans la mythologie aztèque, le cercle évoque l'Ouroboros : le dieu serpent à plumes des Aztèques, Quetzalcoalt, fréquemment représenté enroulé sur lui-même est le symbole de la Puissance-Divine qui n'a ni commencement ni fin. Selon les Incas, Huira Cocha, le dieu créateur et héros civilisateur (Mathieu-Colas, 2017) est l'Esprit de l'abîme ou de la mer, aussi l'Esprit incommensurable, son symbole était le soleil levant sortant des eaux[4]. Par ailleurs l'Ouroboros est à la fois autodestruction et renouvellement, anéantissement et vie.

Borges revêt sa description de la cellule de Tzinacan d'un aspect géométrique dont la circularité est entravée :

> « La prison est profonde. Elle est en pierre. Sa forme est celle d'une demi-sphère presque parfaite ; le sol, qui est aussi en pierre, l'arrête un peu avant le plus grand cercle, ce qui accentue de quelque manière les sentiments d'oppression de l'espace. Un mur la coupe en son milieu. Il est très haut, mais n'atteint pas la partie supérieure de la coupole (147) ».

Cette architecture pleine de barrières physiques lui causait une angoisse permanente. Le seul « instant de lumière (150) » était quand le geôlier ouvre la trappe à midi pour quelques instants. Assoiffé de la vue du jaguar, son compagnon de prison, le mage profite de ce bref temps pour entrevoir ses mouvements et ses taches noires. En effet, apprendre l'ordre et la disposition de ces taches exigeait de Tzinacan de longues années pour les fixer dans sa mémoire (150).

Des années ont passé et Tzinacan souffre seul dans son cachot, un lieu étroit et figé où les ténèbres se répètent en mouvement cyclique et interminable. En se rappelant à peine de sa jeunesse, le mage assiste à une double perte : sa force et sa civilisation. Affaibli dans son corps et incapable de marcher, son seul espoir était d'attendre un signe des dieux (148).

Tzinacan est condamné à chercher la chose dans son contraire : la liberté dans la prison, l'émancipation dans l'oppression, la lumière dans les ténèbres. Paradoxalement les labyrinthes semblent les seuls moyens pour entrevoir une solution. Les épreuves de Tzinacan n'auraient pas de sens sans ce passage obligatoire dans ses propres labyrinthes infernaux. Ils sont la concrétisation de ses efforts pour atteindre la lumière. Les sans-issues par nature seront le moyen d'accéder à la liberté dans la mesure où la descente aux

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[4]Il semble que ce dieu n'est pas d'origine péruvienne mais il vient d'un pays où le soleil sort des eaux où la mer est à l'orient (Girgois, 2015).

enfers s'avère intérieure avant d'être extérieure. C'est ce qu'affirme Mottet (2010) en écrivant : « Borges s'égare délicieusement dans son labyrinthe, jusqu'à s'y dissoudre au profit des vérités universelles ».

A partir de cette nouvelle, essayons donc de trouver les profils de ces différents labyrinthes dans lesquels Tzinacan devait se perdre avant d'arriver à la lumière.

Le labyrinthe de l'emprisonnement ténébreux

Le premier des labyrinthes est attaché aux circonstances mêmes de son emprisonnement. Les ténèbres imposées à Tzinacan effacent l'écoulement du temps et le détachent de tous les repères spatio-temporels : « Un jour ou une nuit – entre mes jours et mes nuits, quelle différence y a-t-il ? (151) ». Une telle déclaration indique l'écoulement excessif des jours inutiles à compter. La routine infernale des ténèbres est entrecoupée par l'ouverture furtive de la trappe. Ces supplices infinis sont l'incarnation typique du labyrinthe. En effet, la succession des heures était très similaire et pesante où chaque jour est une copie de ce qui le précédait et un présage de ce qui le suivait. Sachant que l'absence d'issue, la répétition et l'aspect identique et inchangeable des choses et des événements est le signe distinctif du labyrinthe. Rappelons l'architecture de la Cité surhumaine dans « L'Immortel » et l'aspect effrayant des Troglodytes qui représentent l'esprit labyrinthique par excellence[5]. Cette succession inexorable des jours et des actes mécaniques du geôlier contrastait profondément avec le sens de la vie humaine qui suppose une évolution et un aboutissement. C'est la suspension du temps réel et l'effacement des repères de l'espace pour maintenir une survivance morbide. Désarmé et enfermé dans son présent et incapable d'entrevoir un avenir, les pistes s'avèrent exclusivement du côté du temps d'avant la captivité, seul domaine où l'entité humaine était encore libre et vivante. Tzinacan veut puiser dans son histoire lumineuse et s'inspirer des idées de sa propre civilisation. Il s'accroche à sa mémoire comme seule ressource contre l'anéantissement et l'effacement. Ainsi la réminiscence apparaît comme un moyen de reconquérir l'énergie créatrice d'une force réelle. Mais sa mémoire se révèle un labyrinthe enchevêtré et ardu. Son combat vise à retrouver l'essence du temps qui n'aura aucune valeur si l'acte de souvenir devient impossible, c'est que confirment (Fontcuberta, Borges, & Bleton, 2000) en mentionnant que Borges « a formulé que le souvenir est aussi prodigieux que la divination, car passé et avenir sont des parcours de temps, or le temps est pure illusion».

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[5]« J'étais passé par un labyrinthe, mais la très nette Cité des Immortels me fit frémir d'épouvante et de dégoût […] Un labyrinthe est une chose faite à dessein pour confondre les hommes ; son architecture, prodigue en symétries, est orientée à cette intention. Dans les palais que j'explorai imparfaitement, l'architecture était privée d'intention ». L'Immortel, P. 23.

En effet, sans la faculté de la mémoire, Tzinacan se perdrait complétement dans l'obscurité de son cachot. Seule la mémoire revigore l'esprit du mage vu la dégradation de son corps : sa vie chargée d'expériences se réveille grâce à sa volonté de se retrouver pour chercher le secret transcendant qui pourrait l'aider à se dépasser. Devant cet objectif, il n'a pas eu recours à l'imagination, à la création nouvelle, mais à la remémoration car il était sûr de la valeur de son passé et de sa mission en tant que dernier prêtre de son peuple. Dans ce contexte va le philosophe français Henri Bergson (1896, 2011, p. 164) en distinguant entre image et souvenir : « Imaginer n'est pas se souvenir. Sans doute un souvenir, à mesure qu'il s'actualise, tend à vivre dans une image ; mais la réciproque n'est pas vraie, et l'image pure et simple ne me reportera au passé que si c'est en effet dans le passé que je suis allé la chercher, suivant ainsi le progrès continu qui l'a amenée de l'obscurité à la lumière ».

Le labyrinthe de la mémoire
Selon (Borges, 1969, p.157) « Nous sommes notre mémoire, nous sommes ce musée chimérique de formes inconstantes, cet ensemble de miroirs cassés ». Tzinacan va vivre les méandres de la mémoire qui multiplient les images et confondent la réalité et son reflet. Voyager dans sa propre mémoire c'est entreprendre un voyage magique, incertain et dynamique. Pour ce mage, essayer de se remémorer, ce n'est pas revisiter des vestiges inanimés, mais replonger dans une eau mouvante et revigorante. Cet acte volontaire est un cheminement intellectuel ciblé et non pas un abandon paresseux.

Pour Tzinacan, le retour au passé prend l'allure d'une quête et d'un itinéraire initiatique : au départ, il cherchait dans les souvenirs un refuge contre l'anéantissement et la dissolution, mais au fur et à mesure de son avancement rétrospectif, il allait vers un but encore plus défini symbolisé par la formule divine qui résume toutes les aspirations pour lui. C'est le Graal spirituel par excellence. En effet, à partir des connaissances élémentaires, Tzinacan tente d'accéder à d'autres plus exhaustives et parfaites qui contiennent le tout et répondent à toutes les questions.

Pour récupérer avec lucidité les images de son passé, Tzinacan a décidé de fouiller dans ses années antérieures et d'y revivre afin de les transformer en une étincelle qui allège l'obscurité imposée par ses geôliers. En rafraichissant sa mémoire, il a réussi à « peupler [son] temps (148) », et de cette manière il a pris « possession de tout ce qui [lui] appartenait (148) ». Avant d'arriver à son précieux souvenir, il devait refaire le trajet de toutes ses connaissances. Mais un souvenir illumine soudain sa mémoire et verse dans son cœur l'espérance : une formule divine inscrite quelque part depuis le premier jour de la création et qui peut sauver tout :

« Une nuit, je sentis que j'approchais d'un souvenir précieux. […] Prévoyant qu'à la fin des temps se produiraient beaucoup de malheurs et de ruines, il écrivit [par référence à Dieu] le premier jour de la création une sentence magique capable de conjurer tous ces maux. Il l'écrivit de telle sorte qu'elle parvienne aux générations les plus éloignées et que le hasard ne puisse l'altérer (148-149) ».

L'émergence de cette idée serait l'issue de ce labyrinthe de la mémoire qui devait déboucher sur un résultat salvateur.

La réponse à la question du présent semble venir du passé et non pas de la divination. C'est le souvenir de Tzinacan qui doit le secourir pour tracer son cheminement vers la liberté, l'universalité et l'éternité car « sur toute l'étendue de la terre, il existe des formes antiques, des formes incorruptibles et éternelles. N'importe laquelle d'entre elles pouvait être le symbole cherché (149) ». La difficulté à trouver ce Graal ne réside pas dans son unicité mais dans son multiplicité à l'infini : il est partout et nulle part. Le défi est dans la capacité de le saisir et de le comprendre. Ainsi, « trouver » devient synonyme de « comprendre » et de « s'approprier » chez Borges, d'où l'aboutissement initiatique par excellence. C'est pourquoi la recherche de cette formule libératrice se révèle un vrai calvaire qui oblige celui qui avait su rester silencieux sous la torture de ses geôliers de crier aux murs car il était incapable de déchiffrer ce qui est tracé sur la peau du jaguar qui aurait renfermé la formule sacrée : « Quelques-unes figuraient des points, d'autres formaient des raies transversales sur la face intérieure des pattes ; d'autres, annulaires, se répétaient. Peut-être était-ce un même son ou un même mot. Beaucoup avaient des bords rouges (150) ». Ainsi, le mage cherchait une issue au labyrinthe de sa pensée. Cette énigme à résoudre le tourmentait « moins que l'énigme générique que constitue une sentence écrite par un dieu (151) ». Mais Tzinacan s'interroge au fond de soi-même sur l'essence même de cette formule divine : « Quelle sorte de sentence, me demandais-je, devait formuler une intelligence absolue ? Je réfléchis que, même dans les langages humains, il n'y a pas de proposition qui ne suppose pas l'univers entier (151) ». Et c'est ce qui l'a rendu si anéanti et désespéré en se trouvant coincé dans un dédale non matérialisé qui était au fond de nature philosophique. La descente aux enfers physique et matérielle représentée par l'emprisonnement s'estompe devant l'acuité des tortures intellectuelles liées à sa recherche.

Le labyrinthe chaotique de la vie naturelle

Chaque pensée de Tzinacan est truffée d'enchevêtrements inextricables telle sa recherche constante de la loi qui gère la manifestation de la vie sur terre. Dans ses réflexions profondes, il imagine un labyrinthe dessiné

par les lois de la nature et des créatures qui se déplacent sur terre et en mer. Sa vision holistique dépasse les limites de l'espace et du temps. Tzinacan enrichi par une vision globalisante selon un "œil circulaire" qui exprime son refus d'être emprisonné par la matérialité des choses. Ce regard holiste lui permettait d'embrasser la totalité de l'existence dans toutes ses manifestations à la fois apparentes et cachées. Le jaguar, compagnon de captivité, va produire tout un réseau d'images liées à la complexité de la vie de la nature. La grandeur des choses et leurs mystères se trouveraient ainsi du côté du visible offert généreusement par le cosmos et c'est à l'homme d'en déchiffrer les symboles et les interpréter. A cet effet, le labyrinthe devient un constituant naturel de la manifestation de la vie cosmique. Une sorte d'auto-défense de la vie contre la mort. Ainsi le labyrinthe sort de la catégorie de la destruction pour rejoindre celle de la protection et se révèle presque une nécessité. Tel est le cas provoqué par l'action des tigres. Pour Tzinacan, un réseau de tigres révèle un « brûlant labyrinthe (150) ». Mais « dire "le tigre", c'est dire les tigres qui l'engendrèrent (151) ». Ces tigres comme d'autres prédateurs répandent « l'horreur dans les prés et les troupeaux (150) ».

Imaginons les pas de cet habile chasseur, un pas après l'autre, une sorte de "marche silencieuse" qui reflète un excès de confiance, d'assurance et de détermination pour attraper sa proie. Un réseau de tigres attaquant un troupeau de cerfs dans une vaste plaine produirait une scène de déplacements chaotiques par excellence : chaque cerf court dans tous les sens, de haut en bas, de gauche à droite, dans des mouvements ondulatoires, dans un seul objectif de se sauver d'une mort hallucinante. En accélérant sa vitesse devant le tigre, le cerf change brutalement sa direction, c'est comme s'il rencontrait brusquement une voie sans issue en faisant l'aller-retour avec toute sa force, une sorte de répétitions en traçant un labyrinthe non matérialisé, cauchemardesque et très complexe. Ainsi, l'essence du labyrinthe réside dans l'aspect chaotique des mouvements en changement perpétuel, ce qui provoque égarement certain. Tout est soupçonné porter la formule divine. Même l'accouplement et l'engendrement de ces jaguars n'auraient pas pour but que la préservation et la transmission de la fameuse écriture. Effectivement, le cheminement de la recherche de Tzinacan est graduel et va en commençant par toute chose existante et qui pourrait, selon sa définition, être porteuse de cette écriture divine. Cependant, l'Écriture du Dieu ne ressemble pas aux écritures des hommes qui nécessitent des signes linguistiques et des moyens techniques pour s'inscrire. L'homme écrit pour enregistrer ses idées et pour qu'il soit capable de les revoir quand il en a besoin ou de les transmettre aux autres. Sans écriture, l'histoire de l'homme resterait dans les ténèbres éternelles de l'inconnu. Mais Tzinacan est conscient des « pauvres mots ambitieux des hommes (151) » qui ne peuvent en aucun cas exprimer l'immensité de l'univers et sa totalité. Il se rend compte que l'écriture du Dieu

ne peut ressembler à aucune autre écriture car elle exprime l'universel et l'éternel qui dépasse tous les repères. Pour y accéder il faut briser les labyrinthes spatio-temporels pour reconstituer l'écoulement de l'histoire non seulement de l'homme mais aussi l'histoire du cosmos lui-même.

Labyrinthe : le rêve de sable

Le rêve de Tzinacan est un moyen de délivrance de cette situation pénible et non pas une échappatoire. Il est aussi précieux que la réalité. En effet, le combat de Tzinacan trouve son apogée dans ses rêves. Les labyrinthes de la mémoire et des interrogations philosophiques sur la nature de la formule supposée de Dieu aboutissent à la vision cauchemardesque des rêves de sable. C'est l'allégorie des angoisses terrestres dont le comble va se concrétiser dans un grain de sable. Dans sa symbolique tellurique et sa consistance matérielle, le sable infini et solide représente la rigidité de la terre : à l'encontre de l'eau et du feu, il est par excellence l'empêchement de toute mobilité et de toute délivrance. Chaque grain de sable est un monde matériel et la prolifération de celui-ci crée l'inextricable. En réalité, la multiplication de l'identique est la première caractéristique du labyrinthe. D'où l'excès de ces rêves de sable emboîtés qui symbolisent l'apogée des supplices intellectuels de Tzinacan. Ce sont l'emblème des dédales telluriques qui ont envahi l'esprit du prisonnier tourmenté par des questions sans réponses. Le réveil impossible dont il est question serait l'aboutissement clair et net de ses interrogations sans fin. Cette confusion mentale signifie l'emprise excessive et atroce de la réalité matérielle.

Il rêvait que sur le sol de la prison, « il y avait un grain de sable[6] (R_1). […], deux grains de sable (R_2) […], les grains de sable étaient trois (R_3). Ils se multiplièrent ainsi jusqu'à emplir la prison (151) », puis une chaine infinie de rêves emboîtées (rêve du rêve) $(R_1 \rightarrow R_2 \rightarrow R_3 \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow R_n \dots)$ se produit, une sorte d'un espace infini formé par des entiers naturels caractérisant le nombre de grains de sable dans chaque rêve. C'est du genre des poupées russes, « c'est comme si, en représentant une réalité irreprésentable dans le rêvé du rêve » comme dit (Civitarese, 2015). Le chiffre trois est utilisé ici comme le dernier chiffre qui informe sur le fini. De plus une information importante pourrait être déduite du volume infini de sable : imaginons le nombre infini des couloirs formés grâce aux interstices résultant des disposions des grains de sable, les uns contre les autres. Dans ce monde

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[6]D'après Éric Chaumillon (2016), la taille d'un grain de sable est comprise entre 63 microns et 2 mm et d'un volume 1mm3 environ. À l'échelle planétaire, le sable représente presque 1/3 du total des sédiments et semble inépuisable car il est estimé à 12×1016 tonnes. Le nombre de grains de sable sur la planète serait ainsi équivalent au nombre d'étoiles dans l'univers.

chaotique, une infinité de labyrinthes fantastiques se produisent et le fait d'y penser provoque un vertige.La prison est devenue un « hémisphère de sable » en faisant allusion à la forme de prison. Quelqu'un lui dit :

> « Tu ne t'es pas réveillé à la veille, mais à un songe antérieur. Ce rêve est à l'intérieur d'un autre, et ainsi de suite à l'infini, qui est le nombre des grains de sable. Le chemin que tu devras rebrousser est interminable ; tu mourras avant de t'être réveillé réellement (152) ».

Quel labyrinthe affreux fait errer Tzinacan dans ses rêves encastrés ? Un hémisphère de sable le presse sans pitié, un microcosme de souffrance l'entoure pour anéantir le dernier souffle vital. En effet, il s'agit de labyrinthes interminables dont les volumes augmentent d'un rêve à l'autre, et par conséquent, le cumul illimité des petits ou infiniment petits conduits à l'infiniment grand, donc parler de volume sera plus signifiant que de nombre. Ces rêves monstrueusement enchâssés sont l'emblème de l'idée emprisonnée à son tour à l'image du rêveur. Comme lui elle n'arrive plus à se libérer de la répétition insensée des contraintes spatio-temporelles. Un clin d'œil au prisonnier d'enfreindre les limites dans sa pensée pour parvenir à la certitude en dépassant tout repère réducteur de la liberté. Tzinacan dit : « le sable m'étouffait (152) », n'est-ce pas une allusion à la matière qui s'incruste dans la pensée en étouffant les rêves et les rêveurs et dont il faut se débarrasser pour atteindre l'immatériel, l'infini et l'éternel ?

2.   La sortie du labyrinthe immatériel : Fruit de patience et de clairvoyance

Nourri par l'amour du divin, Tzinacan a pris l'initiative de raviver sa mémoire chargée de sagesse et d'espoir pour insuffler de la vie dans son existence ténébreuse de prisonnier. Avec sa sagesse fermement ancrée au plus profond de sa propre personnalité, il a pu résister à l'incapacité physique de son corps vieillissant.   Les ailes de sa mémoire et de son imagination le transportent là où il a envie d'être partout dans l'existence. Avec cet effort mnésique et cette détermination invincible   d'atteindre son but sacré qui consiste à retrouver la formule divine salvatrice, Tzinacan a récupéré la force de sa mémoire pour se connecter à des images et des connaissances que les années d'emprisonnement ont brouillées.

Sa recherche soupçonne tout comme porteur de cette transcription magique : tout objet et toute créature terrestre pouvait la porter quelle que soit sa nature. Même le firmament peut apporter des informations à son sujet. Mais ce qui le perturbe et l'attriste davantage, c'est les changements et les mutations qui peuvent toucher tout et fausser toute recherche. Après tant de suppositions et d'investigations lointaines, il revient à lui-même et s'approche de plus en

plus du chemin intérieur qui pourrait le mener à l'objet de sa quête et revient au lieu même de sa prison comme un espace porteur de connaissance. Une façon de s'interroger sur le sens véritable de cet emprisonnement même. Comme s'il voulait donner sens à cette situation atroce dans laquelle il existe. La formule parfaite semble comme incrustée dans la personnalité même du prisonnier :

> « Peut-être la formule était-elle écrite sur mon visage et j'étais moi-même le but de ma recherche. À ce moment, je me souvins que le jaguar était un des attributs du dieu (150) ».

Comme il est constaté dans cette évocation, le jaguar représente un attribut de dieu[7], il désigne aussi un prophète comme mentionne Shroukh (2020) « Balam était surtout le nom d'un célèbre prophète maya […], qui aurait vécu […], peu avant l'arrivée des Espagnols. La renommée de ce prophète-jaguar tient au fait qu'il aurait prédit la venue d'étrangers porteurs d'une religion nouvelle ».

Ainsi, le fait de trancher que le secret de la formule divine se trouve dans les taches du jaguar, Tzinacan fixe un objectif nouveau : pouvoir déchiffrer ce message divin au fur et à mesure que la lumière de midi le permet pour quelques instants. Et encore une fois, c'est le travail de la mémoire qui va opérer pendant des années et des années. Ainsi il se trouve confronté à ce mystère doublement pénible :

> « Je ne dirai pas mes fatigues et ma peine. Plus d'une fois, je criai aux murs qu'il était impossible de déchiffrer un pareil texte. Insensiblement, l'énigme concrète qui m'occupait me tourmenta moins que l'énigme générique que constitue une sentence écrite par un dieu. « Quelle sorte de sentence, me demandais-je, devait formuler une intelligence absolue ? (151) »

Par cet intérêt porté à son voisin de cellule, Tzinacan donne sens à toute forme vivante qui partage avec lui les mêmes circonstances de survie. Il réussit ainsi à faire naître l'espoir du désespoir même. Il ouvre sa pensée à toutes les manifestations de vie ce qui élargit ce lieu d'enfermement atroce et

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[7]Les souverains mayas considèrent le jaguar comme symbole du droit divin des rois. Le dieu Jaguar habitait le Monde d'en bas, la demeure des morts. Tous les matins, il devenait le dieu du Soleil et voyageait à travers le ciel, vers l'ouest, où il retombait dans le Monde d'en bas. Afin de faire perpétuer le cycle des jours et des nuits, les souverains accomplissaient des rites pour apaiser les dieux, dont dépendait le sort de l'humanité. Comme le dieu Jaguar, les rois mayas défiaient la mort en renaissant hors du Monde d'en bas, auquel l'humain moyen ne pouvait échapper. Cette citation est prise du site :
https://www.museedelhistoire.ca/cmc/exhibitions/civil/maya/mmj01fra.html#.

inhumain. Ce qui est spatialement exigu et fini devient infini et les quelques instants de lumière à midi deviennent ce qu'il y a de plus cher. La prison va devenir un lieu de découverte et d'expérience.

Malgré la lourde obscurité des labyrinthes de sable représentés par les rêves infinis et emboités, le destin de Tzinacan annonce implicitement l'existence d'une lumière qui se rapproche petit à petit pour s'établir dans sa pensée. N'ayant plus peur de cette obscurité et sa cruauté, il retourne à sa dure prison mais avec une nouvelle pensée créative et éclatante en disant :

> « Je bénis son humidité, je bénis son tigre, je bénis le soupirail,
> je bénis mon vieux corps douloureux, je bénis[8] l'obscurité de
> la pierre (152-153) ».

En réalité, en sortant de son labyrinthe de sable, Tzinacan est retourné à sa dure prison préférée à ce rêve chaotique, monstrueux et étouffant. Son regard s'est porté sur son microcosme défini par cinq éléments proches de lui. En interagissant avec eux à tout moment, ils sont devenus une partie de son être moral. Grâce à son effort intellectuel persistant, il a pu arriver à saisir le sens de l'Écriture de Dieu et il s'y dissout.

Avec la conscience de Tzinacan de ce qui endure d'atrocité, il a pu minimiser l'impact des divers labyrinthes sur sa psyché, après les avoir attaqués avec sa pensée éclairée et sa mémoire ardente et assoiffée de liberté universelle. Tout cela l'a amené à se libérer après avoir été capable de comprendre ce que signifient les mots de Dieu : uniques et infinis, ils se distinguent par leur impartialité d'une part et leur infinité d'autre part. Dans ce sens, va Tzinacan en disant :

> « Je réfléchis encore que, dans le langage d'un dieu, toute
> parole énoncerait cet enchaînement infini de faits, et non pas
> d'un mode implicite, mais explicite, et non pas une manière
> progressive, mais instantanée (151) ».

En effet, la bénédiction du mage pour les cinq éléments est d'une extrême importance: il a commencé par bénir son entourage direct victime et torturé comme lui. C'était sa victoire sur ses bourreaux, sur sa vieille pensée accablée par un raisonnement tellurique géré par les contraintes d'espace et de temps :

> « Alors arriva ce [qu'il ne peut] oublier ni communiquer. Il
> arriva [son] union avec la divinité, avec l'univers ([Il ne sait
> pas] si ces deux mots diffèrent) (153) ».

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[8]Il répète cinq fois "je bénis", en signalant que pour des alchimistes, le chiffre cinq est un nombre fétiche comme affirme Nicolas (1999), en numérologie, il symbolise « la mobilité, la liberté, le plaisir, l'affection et le dynamisme ».

Une déclaration révélatrice qui consiste à se sauver de tout type de labyrinthes en rentrant dans l'espace divin élu comme demeure éternelle. Borges associe la divinité à l'univers, et par conséquent, pour pouvoir définir l'Écriture de Dieu, il a fallu réussir à déchiffrer l'Écriture de l'univers. Tzinacan a pris conscience que l'univers est le vrai foyer de toute créature et il a compris profondément que l'Écriture du Dieu est cette bibliothèque cosmique infinie. Sortir de son propre labyrinthe, c'est entrer dans l'univers, ce labyrinthe magique, et chaque homme peut y trouver une issue qui informe sur toutes les autres issues de nombre infini. Il dispose ainsi de son propre fil d'Ariane qui lui permettrait de se sauver des langages réducteurs pour pouvoir entrer dans la véritable langue universelle. Et comme le dit Borges dans sa nouvelle L'Aleph « La vérité ne pénètre pas dans un esprit rétif (204) », l'effort intellectuel déployé par Tzinacan est proportionnel avec son désir de liberté. Si certains voient Dieu dans une fleur ou une épine, et d'autres le voient dans un éclat, alors lui, il le voit dans la roue de l'univers, une roue faite d'eau et de feu. C'est arrivé juste au moment de son union avec le divin. L'affranchissement presque cosmique du mage se contraste superbement avec les murs aveugles de son prison. Tzinacan voit la Roue des mystères, des secrets, des destins :

> « J'ai vu une Roue très haute qui n'était pas devant mes yeux, ni derrière moi ni à mes côtés, mais partout à la fois. Cette Roue était faite d'eau et aussi de feu et elle était, bien qu'on en distinguât le bord, infinie. Entremêlées, la constituaient toutes les choses qui seront, qui sont et qui furent. J'étais un fil dans cette trame totale, et Pedro de Alvarado, qui me tortura, en était un autre. Là résidaient les causes et les effets et il me suffisait de voir la Roue pour tout comprendre, sans fin (153) ».

Cette Roue est la roue de l'univers faite de l'énergie cosmique qui est à la base de tout dynamisme. Avec l'eau et le feu, apparemment contradictoires, Tzinacan veut symboliser la vérité matérielle de la création et les deux sources complémentaires de toute vie.

Beaucoup de symboles suggérés par cette roue : monde cocyclique, circulaire, infini, cahier de l'éternité, facteur de l'espace-temps, l'eau et le feu avec leurs riches symboles. Dans ce cheminement nous guide (Brion, 2006) : « Le degré du rassemblement est ici supérieur, puisqu'au rassemblement spatial s'ajoute celui de tous les temps, de toutes les époques; l'on peut parler de " double rassemblement diégétique ».

L'eau est le symbole de la vie, la mère de toutes choses vivantes. Elle occupe soixante-quinze pour cent de la surface de la terre et soixante pour cent

du corps humain. Concernant le symbolisme[9] de l'eau, dans le livre de la Genèse (1,1), l'esprit du Dieu s'est penché «au-dessus des eaux », dans la Bible, « l'eau qui lave les péchés du monde » (psaume 55). Dans la croyance chrétienne « nous naissons dans l'eau et ce n'est qu'en demeurant en elle que nous sommes sauvés » (Baptême I, 3). Dans le Coran, l'eau est l'essence de la vie « A partir de l'eau, nous avons produit toute chose vivante (XXI, 30), et que le trône du Dieu « était sur l'eau » (XI, 7).

Mais l'eau représente aussi la puissance écrasante des tsunamis dévastateurs, la purification, la clarté, la profondeur et le symbole de l'unité. Dans la culture chinoise, l'eau est Yin, et le feu est Yang, ils désignent respectivement la femme, "source intérieure : souple, patiente, capable de porter et de faire naître la vie. Dans le bouddhisme, la fleur de lotus ayant sa tige dans l'eau, symbolise "l'expérience"[10]. L'un des symboles qui révèle a quel degré Tzinacan a été opprimé en cherchant le salut et la liberté, « Pour l'Homme qui se mire et se cherche, l'eau devient un véritable écho visuel»[11].

Concernant le feu, selon Maryse Marsailly[12], « il est lié à l'univers cosmique et solaire ». C'est aussi un symbolisme de la lumière et de la connaissance. Dans la mythologie Aztèque, Xiuhtecuhtli est dieu du feu. Pour eux, « la puissance du feu terrestre et souterrain permet l'union des contraires grâce à l'ascension et à la sublimation de l'eau en nuages. L'eau terrestre purifiée par le feu se transforme ainsi en eau céleste et divine ».

Ayant la forme circulaire, cette roue faite d'eau et de feu pourrait donc tourner à l'infini. C'est l'Univers cherché par Tzinacan, prisonnier en quête de liberté éternelle. La révélation de la roue expose les mots de Dieu devant ses yeux et le rend capable de voir le tracé de l'existence dans sa globalité : ce qui s'est passé et ce qui se produira, le sort de chaque vivant et de chaque objet inanimé. Il a pu discerner les tourmentés comme lui et les bourreaux comme Pedro de Alvarado. Il a saisi le principe de causalité en distinguant à fond entre le causant et le causé, les sens unidirectionnels ou bidirectionnels de cette causalité qui gouverne toute existence réelle.

Cette formule divine avec ses quatorze mots est la condensation symbolique de toutes les possibilités. L'investigation des récits de Borges révèle que l'usage des chiffres est associé généralement aux labyrinthes physiques et moraux où errent les hommes. Par exemple, la bibliothèque de Babel « se compose d'un nombre indéfini de galeries hexagonales » en notant que chaque hexagone possède six côtés. Dans La Demeure d'Astérion, Borges écrit :

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[9]https://jesuschristsonenseignement.wordpress.com/tag/le-symbolisme-de-leau/

[10]Ibid

[11]Ibid.

[12]https://blogostelle.blog/category/histoire-du-sacre/

> « Tu vas voir comme bifurque la cave. […] Toutes les parties
> de celle-ci sont répétées plusieurs fois. Chaque endroit est un
> autre endroit. […] Les mangeoires, les abreuvoirs, les cours,
> les puits sont quatorze [sont en nombre infini]. […], les mers
> et les temples sont aussi quatorze [sont en nombre infini] […]
> Tout est plusieurs fois, quatorze fois ».

Donc il est clair que le nombre quatorze chez Borges représente l'infini.

Se plonger dans la vision de différents êtres a permis à Tzinacan la connaissance de tous les chemins illimités qui mènent à la compréhension de l'écriture unique du Dieu, résumée en un seul mot couvrant toutes les informations infinies de cette existence. Chacun des quatorze mots contient l'information des autres mots, c'est-à-dire que l'information d'un mot est égale à l'information de tous les mots, sinon le mot deviendrait déficient, limité et cela contredirait la puissance infinie de la parole divine. Dans ce sens va Tzinacan avec sa réflexion :

> « Avec le temps, la notion même d'une sentence divine me
> parut puérile et blasphématoire. Un dieu, pensai-je, ne doit dire
> qu'un seul mot et qui renferme la plénitude. Aucune parole
> articulée par lui ne peut être inférieure à l'univers ou moins
> complète que la somme du temps. Les pauvres mots ambitieux
> des hommes, *tout*, *monde*, *univers*, sont des ombres, des
> simulacres de ce vocable qui équivaut à un langage et à tout ce
> que peut contenir un langage (151) ».

Ce raisonnement l'affirme Borges dans une de ses nouvelles où l'Aleph est une sorte de petite sphère contenant tous les savoirs de l'univers. C'est « l'un des points de l'espace qui contient tous les points (203) ». Il ajoute qu'« aucun ne m'étonna autant que le fait que tous occupaient le même point (207) » et que « chaque chose (la glace du miroir par exemple) équivalait à une infinité de choses (208)» aussi que « le tout n'est pas plus grand que l'une des parties (212) ».

Tzinacan qui a réussi à entamer cette communication profonde et illimitée avec le pouvoir divin est équivalant à tout homme qui suit sa démarche pour atteindre la vérité de l'univers, cet espace infini, dans lequel s'égalisent tous les choix « puisque devant l'infini, tous les choix se valent » comme indique Nicolas (1999). Tout dépend de l'homme et non de Dieu, du degré de sa clairvoyance, de son esprit ouvert à l'univers, de sa volonté d'acquérir le maximum du savoir universel dans le court chemin de sa vie, de sa faculté de se connaître. En effet, pour Borges, l'essentiel tend à valoriser sa faculté pensive afin de jouer le rôle d'un interlocuteur capable d'avoir accès à

l'Écriture du Dieu, c'est-ce qu'indique Brion (2006) en disant « pour l'agnostique Borges donc, c'est finalement moins l'existence de Dieu qui est à remettre en cause que la capacité de l'homme à entrer en communication avec lui ; c'est la médiocrité humaine, plutôt que l'absence de Dieu, qui est pointée du doigt ».

Tzinacan est devenu le porte-parole de cette formule divine dont l'humanité a tellement besoin pour vivre en harmonie sur la Terre qui représente tout l'univers.   Avec cette fameuse « formule de quatorze mots fortuits (qui paraissent fortuits) (154) », le mage est prêt à se venger de ses ennemis, de ses labyrinthes monstrueux, de l'obscurité de sa prison, de la férocité de ses bourreaux, de récupérer l'histoire brillante de son peuple, de retrouver sa place comme le Grand prêtre de la pyramide de Qaholom détruite par Pedro de Alvarado. Il lui suffirait de prononcer cette formule « pour anéantir cette prison de pierre, pour que le jour pénètre dans [sa] nuit, pour être jeune, pour être immortel, pour que le tigre déchire Alvarado, pour que le couteau sacré s'enfonce dans les poitrines espagnoles, pour reconstruire la pyramide, pour reconstituer l'empire (154) ».

A cet égard, une grande question s'impose : Tzinacan, en tant qu'humain, est-il capable de prononcer ce mot divin ? Un mot qui fait parler tout l'univers avec ses infinies complexités ? À l'échelle humaine, est-ce que le fini peut-il contenir l'infini ? Forcément la réponse est non. Cette interrogation s'éliminerait seulement si Tzinacan pouvait s'unifier avec la divinité. C'est ce qui lui est arrivé, car son union avec Dieu lui a fait perdre son identité, et il n'est plus le mage prisonnier, mais il est devenu comme une goutte d'eau qui tombe dans la mer et perd sa propre identité pour se fondre dans celle de la mer qui seule peut prononcer ses propres mots. C'est pourquoi il est logique de constater que celui qui est uni avec le divin perd sa propre identité humaine qui est incapable de prononcer la parole éternelle de Dieu.

En effet, pour communiquer entre eux, les hommes sont condamnés à utiliser de divers langages régis par des limitations. Les noms des choses et des notions changent avec chaque langue qui est soumise à son univers physique et mental. Les lettres et les symboles ne peuvent pas transcender une réalité affranchie des facteurs spatio-temporels. Telle la lettre hébraïque "Aleph" qui « demeure toujours un signe abstrait qui ne fait pas vraiment partie du cosmos extérieur. Il ne se situe pas physiquement dans l'espace, ne possède pas de substance propre, ne s'investit jamais dans l'immanence. Nature et histoire lui demeurent étrangères par essence» comme affirme (Vigée, 2006).

Pour cette raison, l'être humain a besoin d'une langue non codée par des lettres pour atteindre la compréhension de l'Écriture du Dieu. Avec cette union avec le divin, Tzinacan n'est plus la même personne d'avant cette fusion et il en est conscient :

« Mais je sais que je ne prononcerai jamais ces mots
parce que je ne me souviens plus de Tzinacan (154) ».

Qu'est donc devenu ce seul héritier des sages aztèques ? Est-il toujours héritier ? Certainement la réponse est négative car si elle était positive alors Tzinacan resterait lui-même et conserverait son propre nom, sa propre personnalité, et selon Claude Vigée « n'ayant plus conscience de sa propre identité, ne se souvenant plus de soi-même, la maîtrise des mots décisifs lui échappe également ». C'est ce qui est confirmé par la nouvelle « Que meure avec moi le mystère qui est écrit sur la peau des tigres (154) ».

L'Écriture du Dieu ne s'est pas couronnée par la joie que Tzinacan a ressentie quand il a découvert la formule sacrée formée de quatorze mots, mais elle s'est conclue par une douleur ultime équivalente à celle du monde tout entier, en révélant les misères des hommes à travers tous les temps et tous les lieux.

Afin de retrouver la paix véritable, l'homme n'a qu'à se confondre avec le grand Tout. Avec cette fin, tous les hommes partagent cet oubli pour entrer dans un monde anonyme et infini sans ne se soucier ni du commencement du monde, ni de ceux qui les ont précédés ou viendront après eux. C'est pourquoi Tzinacan en tant que terrien se libère de tout affrontement inspiré par l'histoire réelle.

Grâce à sa persévérance, Tzinacan est parvenu à comprendre cette formule divine composée de quatorze mots, une sorte de quatorze notes musicales que l'Univers joue constamment. Son rêve mystique s'est transformé en une mélodie musicale magnifique et évocatrice qui résonne dans la solitude et le silence de tous ceux qui sont emprisonnés sans droit, qui aspirent à la liberté, à l'errance dans cet univers infini. Dans ce merveilleux sens va la mélodie[13] intitulée "Le rêve de Tzinacan" composée par Fabien Waksman, (Kobekina, 2018) où le violoncelle d'Anastasia Kobekina incarne la voix du mage Tzinacan. Cette mélodie s'adresse à la profondeur de l'âme humaine afin de la libérer du labyrinthe des aléas de la vie. Cette précieuse pièce musicale « s'ouvre sur une mélodie circulaire s'appuyant sur une harmonie diatonique évoquant l'immuabilité de la situation du prisonnier. Le violoncelle, par ses élans lyriques successifs, amène la musique vers un premier sommet expressif figurant le souvenir de la sentence. Le discours se fait par la suite plus complexe et discontinu, la longue quête de l'écriture du Dieu étant parsemée de brusques moments de joie ou d'excitation comme d'instants de désespoir absolu ».

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[13]https://www.fabienwaksman.com/le-reve-de-tzinacan

Conclusion

Dans cette nouvelle, Borges semble poussé par un désir d'absolu à la recherche d'une vérité pour tous les temps et tous les lieux réels ou fictifs. En faisant abstraction du réel et du présent, Tzinacan se projette vers l'avenir pour se libérer. Paradoxalement, les souvenirs viennent au secours du prisonnier pour le sauver des limites spatio-temporels. Ainsi, le temps vient au secours du prisonnier pour le sauver des limites de l'espace. C'est la victoire de l'immatériel sur le matériel. En effet, le combat du dernier prêtre de Qaholom est livré contre tout ce qui étouffe, tel le trou dans lequel il est jeté. Sa prison est celle de tous les humains prisonniers dans leurs propres labyrinthes naturels ou inventés. L'histoire de sa libération est l'exemple d'un affranchissement intellectuel qui pourrait amener l'être humain à délaisser sa faible Partie pour rejoindre le Tout sans parties.

Le parcours de ce mage incite l'homme à réfléchir, à apprendre, à découvrir en dialoguant avec la langue cosmique pour se libérer des particularités réductrices des langues humaines. En effet, l'une des caractéristiques de l'être humain est sa faculté d'écrire et de lire à travers des mots conventionnels afin de préserver ses patrimoines culturels et d'exprimer ses idées. L'association entre les signes et les valeurs propres à chaque communauté crée l'héritage écrit qui est à la base de toute sacralisation. Se trouver tributaire de ces limites, l'être s'emprisonne sans le savoir en se fermant aux valeurs des autres. A travers la mémoire, Tzinacan a su élargir ses connaissances au lieu de les réduire. En fortifiant cette faculté par la méditation et la réflexion, il a pu transcender les limites du physique, du temps et de l'espace en devenant un être à l'échelle de cet univers infini. Au lieu de périr dans sa finitude matérielle et intellectuelle, il a accédé à la formule philosophique et existentielle qui lui permet de se connecter à ses véritables origines en se confondant avec les fins cosmiques. L'emprisonnement physique n'est que la concrétisation palpable d'un enfermement psychique et intellectuel plus cuisant et plus profond. Par l'adhésion positive sans frontières à la mémoire collective, Tzinacan a choisi de se libérer dans l'infinité de l'univers. En effet, plus on sait, moins on est prisonnier de l'égoïsme.

La quête de Tzinacan est une recherche d'absolu pour vaincre le contingent. Et sa finitude n'est qu'une de ses formes : son corps affaibli et meurtri par la captivité marque le passage du temps. Ainsi, l'approche de la mort intensifie la sensation de la vie et les savoirs qui y sont attachés car son avancement initiatique ne s'est pas produit au début de son emprisonnement mais à la fin. Cela prouve qu'il y a un plus qui s'est produit dans sa douloureuse expérience : le sentiment intense de la finitude. A ce sujet a écrit (Dastur, 2007) : « Le se-savoir et le se-sentir mortel constituent le fondement de l'expérience que l'être humain a de lui-même. C'est donc cet étrange savoir, que chacun a avec certitude de sa propre fin et qui n'est semblable à

aucun autre savoir du fait même de son irréductible dimension « affective », qui rend possible un discours non pas sur « la » mort, mais bien sur le rapport qu'entretient l'être pensant à sa propre mortalité. ». Dans le même sens va Lawrence Durrel (1957, p.200) « La présence de la mort rafraîchit toujours les expériences, c'est sa fonction : nous aider à méditer sur cette chose étrange qu'est le temps ». L'écriture divine recherchée par Tzinacan est l'essence de la pensée absolue car elle n'a ni début, ni fin. Et comme ses mots sont éternels et de dimension infinie, le mortel condamné et limité par nature est incapable de la prononcer comme l'affirme Lao Tseu « Un nom qui peut être prononcé n'est pas le Nom éternel » comme cité par (Watzlawick, 1985, p.354). Aussi, selon sa première proposition (La Pensée est un attribut de Dieu, autrement dit, Dieu est chose pensante), Spinoza[14], explique qu'un étant/être pensant infini », un « étant qui peut penser une infinité de choses d'une infinité de manières ». Mais peut-être ce serait plus logique de dire que cette infinité de manières n'est que la seule manière divine. C'est pourquoi, quand Tzinacan a réussi à percevoir la vérité de "l'Écriture du Dieu", la vérité universelle, il a oublié son nom et tout ce qui est attaché à sa propre personne, y compris le désir de vengeance qui l'habitait. Sorti de son carcan particulier, il a abandonné sa finitude pour rejoindre l'éternité. Rêve ultime selon Borges pour dépasser l'écriture de l'homme prisonnière du temps et de l'espace. Par conséquent, l'humanité doit reconsidérer ses propres écritures, parce que le besoin de l'homme reste dans une écriture qui dépasse non seulement les frontières terrestres mais aussi les limites cosmiques. Borges veut que les hommes fassent de l'univers leur véritable demeure en préservant la planète Terre, qui est l'un des points infinis du cosmos. Cette demeure qui pourrait être périssable à son tour ne peut être magnifiée et débarrassée de ses maux que grâce à l'intelligence humaine qui se perpétue exclusivement à travers la pensée. Leur ambition de retrouver la sentence divine qui pourrait les sauver ne peut être possible qu'à force d'une évolution intrinsèque à leurs esprits qui les délivre de leurs diverses prisons visibles et invisibles.

Tzinacan s'est libéré des contraintes de son identité humaine limitée en la remplaçant par une identité cosmique qui ne connaît qu'elle-même et elle ne s'explique que d'elle-même. Cela ne se réalise qu'à travers l'union divine. C'est pourquoi, Tzinacan s'est séparé complètement de son soi mortel afin de se dissoudre dans l'éternité. Après avoir atteint cette extase divine, les paroles de Tzinacan ne ressemblent plus aux mots humains et par conséquent, il lui est donc devenu impossible de les prononcer. Ainsi, l'écriture divine est prononcée par l'univers avec tous ses phénomènes et toute son infinité dans une harmonie éternelle entre les normes et les grandeurs cosmiques. La formule divine est cette union indescriptible entre les mots et les choses, et

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[14]https://spinoza.fr/lecture-des-propositions-i-a-vii-du-de-mente/#.

donc il est impossible de prononcer l'écriture divine par des mots à l'échelle humaine parce que « la langue, comme performance de tout langage, n'est ni réactionnaire, ni progressiste ; elle est tout simplement : fasciste ; car le fascisme, ce n'est pas d'empêcher de dire, c'est d'obliger à dire » comme enseigne (Barthes, 1977, p.14). Dans cette optique, Borges voit que le seul moyen pour l'homme d'échapper à ces « pauvres mots ambitieux des hommes (151) », à cet égarement perpétuel dans les particularités est d'accepter d'être un constituant parmi d'autres dans la roue suprême constituée par le cosmos.

Ainsi, Tzinacan s'est servi de la mémoire pour se ressaisir et s'appuyer sur un socle pour s'élancer dans sa quête d'absolu, mais quand les données de cette mémoire deviennent une entrave à sa progression il les élimine volontiers. Et comme le dit (Borges, 1970) « L'oubli et la mémoire sont également inventifs ». En suivant le chemin de sa mémoire il a pu conquérir l'amnésie bienfaisante de la fin. Ce n'est pas l'anéantissement, c'est l'anonymat qui est une renaissance véritable. C'est l'oubli victorieux. En effet, Tzinacan accède à l'état de l'anonymat comme destination ultime, incontournable et naturelle de tout être. Il se libère ainsi de toutes les définitions temporelles : gloire, triomphe et puissance n'ont plus les mêmes significations. La dignité de sa défaite se transforme en une victoire éclatante sur les dimensions spatiales et temporelles autrement sur la finitude terrestre. Les expériences anciennes doivent être dépassées pour atteindre des stades supérieurs et les affres des labyrinthes vécues par Tzinacan sont les marques d'une existence souffrante et enchaînée par les signes, les symboles, les détails labyrinthiques qui ne peuvent aboutir qu'à de nouveaux supplices toujours renaissants. Le passé et le présent doivent servir un cheminement initiatique profond semé d'épreuves symbolisées par les images de labyrinthes que le vainqueur a enrayées en définitif.

L'oubli ultime auquel accède le héros avec bonheur est un état extatique réservé aux initiés. Cette sublimation hors mesure ne peut être révélée que dans des expériences mystiques. Dans ce sens va (Spychiger, 2014) dans la conclusion de sa thèse en soulignant que l'attitude générale de Borges consiste à placer « ses personnages, dans des états de conscience particuliers (l'extase, la méditation, la contemplation, le rêve, le dédoublement…), afin de les faire accéder à un au-delà de la représentation, ce qui les conduit à des révélations, jusque-là demeurées secrètes et inaccessibles».

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Screencast Video Feedback and its Implication on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Writing

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Abstract
Providing feedback to students' written work has always been a challenging experience for English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers and learners. High-quality feedback promotes students' engagement in learning processes and enhances writing performance. Traditional written corrective feedback has often been criticized for not being able to achieve its purpose. 21st-century technological development brought the necessity to provide audio and video feedback through screencast technology. The letter enables EFL teachers to provide multimodal feedback by recording the teacher's screen while commenting on a student's written work. Although there have been some studies conducted in the field of oral feedback via screencast, video feedback is still relatively new in many educational settings. For this reason, the paper aims to provide a brief overview of screencast video feedback, potential affordances and challenges faced by EFL teachers and learners. For this article, recent research studies have been collected to review the use of screencast feedback in EFL class and discuss its implications on EFL students' writing. Furthermore, the paper provides an overview of the most widely-used screencast software in educational settings and concludes with some practical guidelines for the effective implementation of screencast technology.

Introduction

Feedback is an inseparable component of the English as a foreign language (EFL) writing classroom. It guides learners towards their learning goals by providing valuable information on their strengths and weaknesses (Cheng & Li, 2020). Timely and appropriate feedback enables learners to achieve more and promotes a self-directed learning environment (Mahoney, Macfarlane & Ajjawi, 2019). Feedback is particularly essential in the early stages of learners' writing courses since they encounter a 'threshold' in their writing (Adler-Kassner & Wardle 2015). This can help learners become socialized and familiar with academic practices (Cavaleri, Kawaguchi, Di Biase, & Power, 2019). Feedback can positively affect students' learning processes and maximize their effort. Feedback can make a big difference to students' writing that can be detected in their future work (ibid).

The traditional approach to feedback allows the teacher to provide a written commentary on students' work. This is teacher-written feedback that is often summative and is perceived as a focus-on-form approach (Yu, Jiang, & Zhou, 2020). This type of feedback is referred to as written corrective feedback (WCF) and is seen as the teacher's comments on students' written work. Written commentary can include praise, suggestion and criticism; it is often seen in the margins of students' assignments. Teachers mostly focus on the identification of students' linguistic errors and correcting them. WCF is one of the forms of asynchronous feedback. It is argued that such type of feedback is beneficial for students to realize their errors and correct their own mistakes (Arrad, Vinkler, Aharonov, & Retzker, 2014). It is also believed that corrective feedback, as one of the crucial pedagogical practices, enhances students' writing skills. It can increase students' lexical range and grammatical accuracy (DeKeyser, 2007; Kang & Han, 2016; Russell & Spada, 2006). What is more, written feedback is perceived as thoughtful as students can easily read and realize teachers' feedback on their assignments (Parkin et al, 2012).

However, providing effective feedback has been a subject of research for decades because many research studies show that written feedback does not always achieve the purpose (Bush, 2020; Cunningham, 2019; Cunningham & Link, 2021). Students often fail to understand and internalize the teacher's written feedback. They often perceive the teacher's feedback as impersonal, ambiguous and not focused on improvement (Crook et al. 2012; Douglas et al. 2016; Han & Hyland 2019). Researchers argue that corrective feedback can have a negative effect on students' writing and may lead to questioning its effectiveness (Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019; Shintani & Ellis, 2013). What is more, many researchers' advocate abolishing WCF based on Truscott's (1996) argument according to which error correction does not result in the improvement of students' academic accuracy (Gad et al, 2016). It has been argued that the process of error correction is harmful and requires a huge

amount of time and energy. Paradoxically, some studies reveal that corrective feedback often lacks details and explanation of errors identified by the teacher (McGrath & Atkinson-Leadbeater, 2016). Corrective feedback is particularly disadvantageous for lower-level students since they may feel overwhelmed by the amount of written feedback (Mathieson, 2012; Lee 2014). Moreover, written feedback may be misunderstood or it rarely conveys the meaning the writer is trying to communicate (Cavaleri et al., 2019). Scattered comments in MS are also difficult to decipher and understand, for this reason, written feedback is often ignored.

Many scholars advocate using an alternative approach to written feedback in the form of audio and video recording (Anson, 2015, Cavaleri, Di Biase & Kawaguchi, 2014). With the advances of technology, multimodal feedback has become the research area of many scholars in the EFL writing context. Deficiencies in written feedback encouraged educators to think of using different modes offered by technology in providing feedback. Expanding the pervasiveness of video and audio modes of technology increased access to screencast technology in education (Cunningham, 2019). Although limited research was done, the potential of the technology-mediated tool has been highlighted in motivating and engaging students in the feedback process (Stannard, 2008). Scholars argue that screencast technology is a promising approach to feedback offering a combination of aural and visual modes in which students can see their written work as well as listen to the teacher explaining it (Bush, 2020). Since the development of technology brought the necessity of electronic submission of students' work, teachers should also respond appropriately and provide feedback in the same way.

Screencast video feedback

Audio-visual feedback using screen-capture technology has widely become an alternative to traditional written corrective feedback. It is also referred to as screencasting. Screencasting is capturing one's actions performed on a computer screen through digital video recording (Cranny, 2016; Séror, 2013). The video is accompanied by a narration that can be recorded in the process of video creation. Recorded videos can then be shared as a web link or via email. The instructor can record his/her comments and guide students for revision (Russell, 2008). Video creation has become easier since it is accompanied by voice-over (Bakla, 2017). The technology has the potential of providing video feedback by combining two major modes: audio and visual. The purpose of screencast video feedback is to provide EFL writers clear and specific feedback on their assignments, indicate students' specific needs and discuss the approaches for revisions. The instructor may display the rubric and mark criteria that have or haven't been met (Whitehurst, 2021). Through this mode of feedback, students can see their written work and listen

to the teacher's feedback; they can access the video feedback at any time and space (Cranny, 2016).

Scholars argue that screencast video feedback has conceptualized a new approach and contributed to the promotion of a self-directed, student-centred environment (Cranny, 2016; Stannard, 2008, Cunningham & Link, 2021). Recent studies have examined the effectiveness of using screencast video feedback in EFL writing. Research conducted by Cheng and Li (2020) compared feedback through screencast technology to text-only feedback in MS word. The findings of the study reveal that although there was no significant difference in the quantity of the teacher comments in each category, screencast video feedback focused more on content, whereas text-only feedback concentrated on grammar and language usage. A similar study was conducted by Ali (2016) who compared screencast video feedback with written feedback. The results showed that screencast video feedback was much liked and rated as multimodal and supportive by the participants. What is essential, the experimental group participants who received video feedback outperformed their counterparts in the control group at macro-level writing components. Screencast video feedback was also preferred by the participants in Cunningham's (2019) research that explored the efficiency of both types of feedback in L2 writing class. The participants found video feedback easily understandable and helpful for revising. It was also reported that video feedback had been efficient in terms of time.

Cunningham's (2019) research also suggests that screencast technology helps provide multimodal feedback since video feedback provides the teacher's spoken comments along with students' work on the screen. The instructor in his/her talk can gesture, highlight or show areas of work that she/he is commenting on. Due to it being multimodal, feedback is easy to follow and process information better (Anson 2015; Cavaleri et al. 2014; Stannard, 2008). This concept is theorized by Mayer's (2009) multimedia learning theory according to which the human brain is considered as a system of dual-channel and limited capacity. When information is presented in visual and audio mode, it minimizes the cognitive load and assists information processing better. In other words, the student can process feedback while it is delivered in dual-mode better than in a single mode only.

Affordances of screencast video feedback

One of the affordances of screencast video feedback can be seen through students' increased engagement in the feedback process. Bush (2020) argues that using screencast video feedback demonstrated higher student engagement in the writing process than written corrective feedback. The participants in the study seemed to have concentrated on video feedback and did not skip the video. Increased engagement in the feedback process was also

reported in Ali's (2016) and Cranny's (2016) research studies. The scholars argue that increased engagement can partly be attributed to screencast technology due to being novel. Apart from novelty, students' engagement was determined by multimodal way of feedback given by the teacher (Bush, 2020). Through screencast video feedback, the instructor can underline, bold or apply highlighting strategies to provide clearer feedback (Bakla, 2017). Such strategies make it easier for the teacher to engage in a kind of dialogue with students, thus, promoting engagement and enhancing comprehension (Cranny, 2016). Gormely and McDermott (2011) also found screencast video feedback engaging and motivating. Since written feedback is often limited, screencast video enables the teacher to provide comprehensive audio feedback with the support of visual mode. Video feedback is also seen as more elaborated and detailed in Elola & Oskoz's (2016) study that revealed students' increased engagement in a dialogue through feedback with the teacher.

The interpersonal relationship has also been noted as a benefit of screencast video feedback. Since video feedback is very conversational, students perceive it as personal and less formal (Anson, Dannels, Laboy & Carneiro, 2016). Researchers argue that such a conversational style of feedback allows students to establish an interpersonal connection with the teacher (Ali, 2016; Anson et al., 2016). Students also reported screencast feedback to be encouraging, supportive and caring (ibid). Elola and Oskoz (2016) in their study of screencast video feedback found that the interpersonal nature of the feedback process increased instructors' awareness of video feedback as the form of interpersonal relations. Heightened awareness can contribute to the way feedback is formed and lead to differences in feedback perceived by students. Such differences can evoke greater respect and guidance compared to the written feedback (Cunningham & Link, 2021). The study carried out by Cunningham (2017) explored key interpersonal differences between screencast video feedback and written comments provided in MS word. The findings of the study reveal that the comments given in MS word perceived the instructor as more authoritative whereas video feedback focused more on suggestions and advice that enabled students to preserve their autonomy. Cunningham and Link (2021) argue that the teacher-student interpersonal relationship is essential since a large amount of language is learnt in the online environment. Asynchronous form of feedback is imperative in establishing an interpersonal relationship with students.

The use of video feedback can provide students with more flexibility than written feedback. Students can access feedback at any time and place; they can watch as many times as they wish, pause and rewind if needed (Cranny, 2016; Lee, 2017). Martinez (2016) argues that being flexible is functional especially for non-native speakers since comprehension may be an issue. They might pause a video, take down some notes or transfer feedback

to their written work. This feature of screencast video feedback makes it a practical and essential tool to be applied in EFL writing. It can be efficient and improve the quality of communication. Video feedback is also easy to access from various devices (Cranny, 2016). Ducate and Arnold (2012) also report that the participants in their study watched the video several times while revising.

Apart from being communicative, screencast video feedback is thought to be time-saving (Yang and Carless, 2013). A 2-minute video feedback recording can accommodate about 400 written words or a whole sheet of A4 paper (Russel, 2008). Audio feedback can save the teacher's time in the circumstances when the teacher is familiar with the technology when she types or writes slowly or has to give a substantial amount of feedback (ibid).

Challenges of using screencast video feedback

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned affordances of video feedback, there are some challenges and pedagogical concerns associated with using screencast technology. One of the challenges can be students' emotional responses to video feedback. Listening to critical comments might be more painful than reading written commentary (Voelkel and Mello's study, 2014). Frustration may be noticeable in a tutor's voice that may lead to demotivating students (King, McGugan & Bunyan, 2008). Students may feel nervous while watching the screencast, however, Bush (2020) believes it is fairly normal. The feeling of nervousness and uneasiness will be reduced when students become familiar with video feedback. The researcher argues that sometimes the teacher comments are not well-received by students, they may become annoyed while hearing negative comments, therefore, it is essential to hold "a pleasant demeanour" and give accurate feedback (Bush, 2020, p. 10).

Video feedback may also not be accessible to all types of learners. Depending on students' learning styles, audio-visual feedback may not be preferable for all types of learning styles. What is more, screencast video feedback may not be accessed by those students who have visual or learning impairments (Chalmers, MacCallum, Mowat & Fulton, 2014; Johnson & Cooke, 2015).

Screencast video feedback may also be challenging for teachers since they need to find appropriate time and space to record. Considering the teacher has to allocate some time to upload a video file, screencast video feedback practice cannot be viewed as time-saving (Ali, 2016). Although recording does not require much time, uploading or sharing may be time-consuming. Moreover, providing video feedback often happens outside working hours that may also pose another difficulty. Additionally, screencast video feedback does

not allow editing; the concern of appearing a video file publicly is also expressed (King et al. 2008).

There might be some technical problems in creating and viewing screencast videos. A video format can be one of the issues; a video recorded by the teacher may not open on some devices, therefore, posing a challenge for learners (Bakla, 2017). The scholar argues that teachers should use common formats and share the video through email or cloud storage. Another problem may be a low sound quality that can impact video feedback quality. Background sound can also distract learners and lead them to dislike video feedback (Lee, 2017). In-built microphones and up-to-date computer systems might be available to offer better quality recording.

Implications of screencast video feedback on EFL writing

The above-described affordances and research studies reveal that screencast video feedback can greatly impact EFL writers. Screencast video feedback is less overwhelming for students with many grammatical errors because the teacher comments through screencast tend to focus on content, structure and organization of students' written work (Elola & Oskoz, 2016). This type of feedback is particularly useful to improve high order thinking skills (Ali, 2016; Ducate & Arnold, 2012) and is beneficial for dyslexic learners (Harper, Green, & Fernandez-Toro, 2015). Moreover, screencast video feedback appeals to visual and auditory learners and provides an opportunity to practise listening along with writing skills (Ali, 2016; Harper et al., 2015).

Cunningham (2017) argues that due to fact that screencast video feedback is clear, specific, engaging and motivating (Ali, 2016; Elola & Oskoz, 2016; Harper, Green, & Fernandez-Toro, 2015), many feedback-related issues could be overcome. Video feedback leads instructors to give more explanations on students' written work thus encouraging revision. Successful revising in return can lead to writing skill improvement (Ali, 2016). Although written feedback offers quicker and more precise error correction, Elola & Oskoz (2016) argue that with video feedback students have a higher rate of success in local revision. The findings of the study conducted by Elola & Oskoz (2016) reveal that video feedback can be effective for revision and successful at addressing linguistic errors.

Despite being personal and conversational, screencast video feedback makes EFL writers more comfortable than face-to-face situations since the letter creates a social presence of the teacher (Vincelette & Bostic, 2013). The fact that instructors are not facing students eliminates social pressure and makes feedback more accurate and adept at commenting. In other words, screencast video enables social interaction without the strong social pressure of the teacher. This one-way delivery is thought to invite shared discussion

since students can respond to feedback or make a list of follow-up conversations with the teacher. Vincelette and Bostic (2013) argue that screencast feedback initiates a dialogue and leads to more articulated writing; it establishes an alternative assessment that allows for optimal growth in EFL writing. Ice et al. (2007) also claim that audio feedback is personalized that has an impact on students' writing practices.

Many research studies explored EFL writers' perception of the effectiveness of screencast video feedback (Elola & Oskoz, 2016; Vincelette, 2013; Ice et al, 2010). Scholars claim that students' perception is positive stemming from the desire for multi-sensory feedback. In other words, students prefer multimodal feedback and perceive them as more valid and accurate than written comments. Whitehurst (2021) claims that screencast videos can receive an overwhelming amount of positive feedback from students. It enables students to realize how specific errors can impact their writing scores. Screencast video feedback can provide more explanation on specific errors, however, it is also thought that it may not necessarily address the problem (Vincelette & Bostic, 2013).

Overview of screencast software

There are several free and low-cost screencast software that can be used in providing video feedback on students' written work. When choosing the software, it is essential to be user-friendly and easy to use. There are a few alternatives that have recently gained popularity in education.

Camtasia is one of the top-rated screen recorders and video editors; it is quick and easy to use with no video editing skills required. It can create high quality, interactive videos that can catch the listener's attention. Camtasia is ideal for video lessons, meetings or webinar recordings. The instructor can record screen- websites, video calls or PowerPoint presentations. The built-in video editor allows the teacher to add effects such as arrows or texts. The recorded video can easily be uploaded on YouTube, Video or Screencast. Teachers can add a personal touch to their screencast by adding video from their webcam. Camtasia is not free, but once paid, it gives lifetime access. It offers a 30-day free trial (TechSmith.com).

Screencast-O-Matic is another alternative that can easily record and edit videos. It is widely used in education for flipped/blended learning; it is popular for easy and quick communication. As of July 2021, Screencast-O-Matic is used in 190 countries with more than 60 000 000 captured screens already (Screencast-o-matic.com). Screencast-O-Matic is a free tool that can easily capture the screen, add a webcam or narration. The video editor allows personalizing videos, such as adding texts, shapes or images. The instructor can also use automated captions and many more features. Video editing is not included in the free package; it comes with deluxe or premier paid accounts.

Snagit is one of TechSmith's low-cost screen capture software. It is widely used in education and employment; it allows quick screencasts with additional contexts and easy share of the recorded video. Built-in library with lifetime access enables to keep all videos and images sorted. Snagit allows capturing full screen or a scrolling screenshot. It can simply grab vertical and horizontal scrolls and long chat messages or anything that comes in between. As with other tools described above, Snagit also allows toggling between webcam and screen capture. Recorded videos can be trimmed or annotated with professional mark-up tools. Snagit is not free but it is one of the low-cost screencast tools (TechSmith.com)

TechSmith Capture (formally known as Jing) is a free screen capture software, and it enables the teacher to create basic screen recordings. It offers many features such as longer video and audio recording, full screen or cropped image capture, simple annotation tools and easy upload to TechSmith account. The software is easy to use and is ideal for teachers who would like to start making screencast video feedback.

Implementing screencast video In EFL classroom

As screencast feedback requires a huge amount of time, it is advisable to use the tool for high-stakes process assignments, e.g., essays (Whitehurst, 2021). To manage the teacher workload, it is advisable to provide video feedback for those assignments that weigh more in the overall class grade. The goal of the teacher should be to allow students to revise and succeed in their writing. Whitehurst (2021) enumerates a few steps to follow to provide video feedback. Firstly, it is essential to familiarize with the student's paper and make notes that the instructor would like to highlight in the video. The teacher can open and minimize the assignment rubric, the assignment itself or any relevant resources that can be referred to in the video. During recording, the teacher needs to start with positive reinforcement such as greeting and identification of skills that were executed well in the assignment. Next, the teacher can identify the areas that need to be improved. It is essential to focus on the error pattern rather than all errors and demonstrate how to correct them. The teacher can show specific examples or locate the student's errors on the assignment rubric. On the rubric, the teacher can indicate the criteria that have or haven't been met. As a recommendation, the teacher can provide the student with resources or websites to help improve those identified skills. Lastly, the teacher can give the concluding remarks and finish the recording with a positive note by showing gratitude. Figure 1 illustrates the suggested framework on how to record screencast video feedback.

Figure 1: The process of screencast video recording
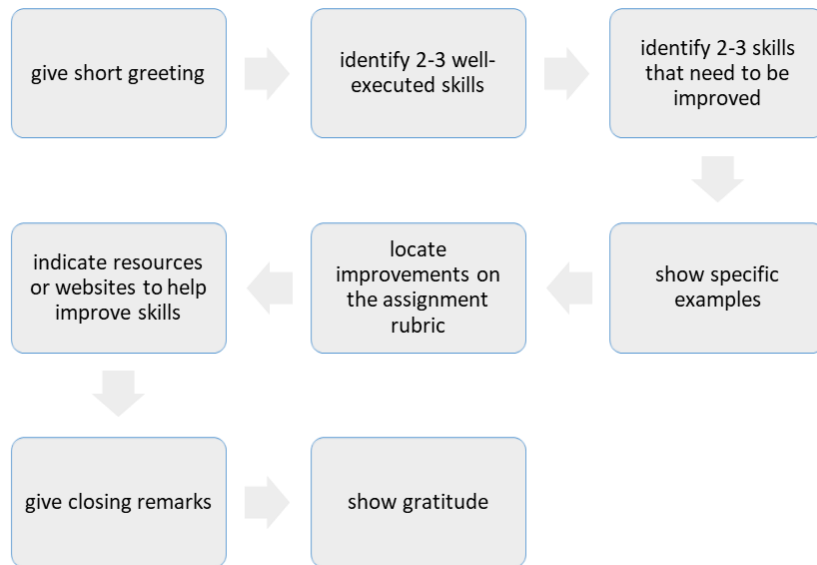
Source: adapted from Whitehurst (2021).

After the completion of the recording, the video can be saved as an MP4 or uploaded on the screencast website. The teacher can send an email to students or share the link through the learning management system with the screencast video attached. The video can easily be opened on all devices and in case the student experiences a problem of viewing, the teacher can further assist them. The video can also be shared through internet cloud services. It is also possible to upload the file on YouTube with private access which allows only selected users to view the video (Whitehurst, 2021).

Conclusion

The above-given overview of screencast video feedback has demonstrated that notwithstanding some drawbacks, oral feedback presents educators with a new, 21st-century, multimodal opportunity of feedback provision. Since technology-mediated learning has dominated all educational settings, it is impossible to ignore its implication on learning. Screencast video technology offers a two-dimensional video communication between the teacher and the student. The teacher-student interpersonal relationship enhances language learning (Cunningham and Link, 2021). What is more, with screencast video feedback the absence of the social pressure of the teacher allows students to feel more comfortable with their writing (Vincelette & Bostic, 2013). The above-described research studies have also demonstrated that screencast video feedback is accessible and more flexible since students can watch it at any time (Cranny, 2016; Lee, 2017). More importantly,

screencast video feedback encourages students to revise their writing assignments and improve on their mistakes (Cunningham, 2017). It can successfully address linguistic errors and enable students to succeed in local revision (Elola & Oskoz, 2016). Since some studies show that written feedback offers quicker and more precise error correction, a combination of screencast video feedback and written feedback is suggested. However, it seems that screencast technology will more actively be incorporated in teaching and learning practices. It has so far proved to be one of the effective tools for giving feedback in EFL writing classes.

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Perception of Parents and Children on Parenting in Mala, Kerala, India

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Abstract
          Parenting styles impact the character, fate, and future of children in the family. This study on parenting styles is a reflection of the perception and views of parents and how they parent their children. The study is explorative in design. Parents are an extremely powerful force in the lives of children. The study is descriptive in nature and uses the qualitative approach. The research studies parenting styles in Mala, Kerala and more specifically the views of parents and their children on the roles of parents. The data was collected directly from the parents and their children through an interview schedule. The researchers used an interview schedule to collect information on the bio-psycho-social, environmental factors that lead to the parenting styles of the subjects. The study revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between parental permissive behaviors and their age, between parental permissive behaviors and their education, and there was a positive and significant relationship between parental permissive behaviors and their religion.

Keywords: Parenting, role models, passive behaviors and relationship with age, religion, and educations

Introduction

Parents are an extremely powerful force in the lives of children. Parenting styles impact the character, fate, and future of children in the family. Parenting styles vary regionally, nationally, and internationally. While parents play a substantial role in the development of their children, studies on the influence of parental style are rare in India and particularly so in Kerala. Parenting as a skill is not adequately researched and addressed in an appropriate way in Indian society, hence, the need for a study of this nature. In this chapter the researcher will discuss the family and its functions in society, parenting techniques, the importance of parenting to the family and society, the characteristics, roles and styles of parenting, parent-child relationships, and the need and importance of the present study.

Parenting has been a theme of academic interest for several decades and has attracted much attention in recent times. Child and family researchers have long recognized parenting as making a significant contribution to child development. Parenting is a foremost factor in the well being of children in families. Amongst those of us who talk about parenting, there is great diversity as to what 'parenting' really means. To some, it means controlling, disciplining, fulfillment of one's childhood desires through one's child/children, and to yet others, it means 'value formation' of children, formation of personalities. There are various parenting styles that have its impact on children's behaviour, attitude formation, and personality development. One should understand that parenting should be seen as an instrument, which can enhance a child's day-to-day activities thereby enriching his/her quality of life. In India, very few studies have been conducted on parenting styles and their benefits for children.

Research Methodology
Statement of the problem

Parenting is an art and a skill that helps strengthen and develop children's personalities. Parenting affects the life positions of children. Parenting means different things to different people. What then is parenting? Do children have different perceptions of parental roles from their parents? What is this difference that is causing problems for children? The fruits of parenting can be seen in terms of children's achievements. However, one can counter this assertion by stating that effective parenting is something more than just pushing children to excel in examinations. Effective parents may serve as role models for their children. The inspiring parent will sport a balanced attitude to life. Good parenting can bring forth a generation of mature adults.

With the increasing compulsion for dual incomes, both parents are forced to go out to work leaving the children to take care of themselves. This

has led to untold turmoil among children. Children are at risk at home and in the neighborhood in the absence of adult supervision ultimately leading to child abuse.

In the wake of major economic changes and the materialistic cum consumeristic society we live in today, family life is steep in luxurious living, T.V., films, and a make-believe world of 'mega' serials on local channels. Thus, such a lifestyle not only takes control of one's time, and mind, as well as shapes one's attitude to life.   Parents have a tough time grooming their children into good people. While such forces are at work, parents can be role models to children by not indulging in these redundant practices.

Significance of the Study

This study has both international and national significance as parenting roles have been shaped by the forces of social change leading to a degeneration of values in society. Sociology of family has become important in India owing to the increase in divorces, suicides, and crimes.   This reflects on the faulty upbringing of children. Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to explore this field to gain a clearer picture of what parental role and parental styles means to both parents and children.

While parents have their own perceptions regarding parenting roles, children too have their own expectations of ideal parental roles. Parents who are busy working may hardly meet their children's real needs. This coupled with the fact that there still exists a lacuna in our understanding of the roles of parents is reason enough to initiate studies of this nature.   Therefore, it becomes relevant to analyze the following issues:
- the parenting styles from the parent's perspective
- what do children think about their parents' parenting style
- the correlation between the academic achievement and religious affiliations of parents and their parenting styles

Field of the Study

The researcher selected Carmel College, Mala, Kerala, India as the field of study. Undergraduate students and their parents were picked for the study. The parents and students represent parent and child populations.

Research Design

The present study is a descriptive study of the perceptions of parents and children on parental roles, skills, and styles. The relative novelty of this topic combined with the fact that no such study was conducted in this part of the country makes it inevitable that this research be descriptive in nature. Descriptive studies merely describe the qualitative data and therefore they do not test any hypothesis.

The Universe and the Sampling

The universe in this study was the students of Carmel College, Mala, Kerala, India, and their parents. A sample size of sixty-five respondents was drawn from the universe of 675 student households. All the student respondents are undergraduate students from both arts and science majors. The sampling technique used in this research was a simple random sampling method. This technique was used as the researcher wanted to gather information about the parenting patterns among the population through a descriptive design, which required much closer access to the population.

Sources of Data Collection

Both primary and secondary sources of data collection were used in this research. The primary sources were the responses from the respondents through the questionnaire method. The secondary sources of data comprise materials from books, journals, and the Internet on parenting theories, techniques, styles, and roles. The primary data was collected through the questionnaire. A questionnaire was prepared separately for parents and students. A questionnaire was preferred to other tools as majority of the respondents are either literate or studying in college.

Objectives of the Study
1. To determine the parenting styles of parents in the family.
2. To understand children's perspective of parenting styles.
3. To examine the correlation between the academic achievement and religious affiliations of parents and parenting styles.

Review of literature

While research has shown that there are numerous family variables that influence the career choices of young adults (i.e. socioeconomic status, education level of parents, parenting styles, interactions), it appears that family interactions play an important role in forming aspirations and decisions about careers. Interestingly, there has been a great deal of research focusing on family interactions and family characteristics on career development, yet there have been few studies that examine parental perceptions of their influence.

Measurement of parenting characteristics: Theoretical Framework

According to Freud (1936) parents were responsible for their child's developmental trajectory (McDermott, 2002). On the contrary, Erikson's (1963) theory of psychosocial development emphasized the importance of internal biological and external societal factors rather than parental influence on a child's growth and development (McDermott, 2002). Thelen and Adolph (1992) describe Gesell's behavioral genetics theory, in which they endorsed

that a parent's central role is to help children realize their inherent genetic dispositions and to provide a conducive environment to stimulate growth (McDermott, 2002). Today, behavioral geneticists are beginning to recognize the importance of the environmental factor on child outcomes. Sutherland's (1983) study demonstrated that American parenting in the 1980s might be considered neglectful if they supported Gesell's theory of natural unfolding growth and development. One of the major findings of her study was the uncertainty of parents' perception of their children's needs and their roles in parenting. She found that Mexican American mothers were between Gesell's parenting model and the American parenting model, which placed more active roles for mothers in their children's development (Sutherland, 1983).

Piaget and Inhelder's (1969) research on "children's different stages of cognitive development" continue to enlighten theories of how parents can take advantage of knowledge on the differential stages of cognitive development of children to enhance their parenting styles (McDermott, 2002). Vygotsky (1978) stresses the influence of social interactions between children and their caregivers on a child's development (McDermott, 2002). Bell (1968) also looks at the interaction processes between parents and children and uses Lewin's (1935) transactional theory to establish the relationship between individuals and their environment. His "child effects approach" suggests that parents and children constantly regulate each other's behavior through their interactions (McDermott, 2002).

Trait theories examines parents' personality or style rather than on a parent's ability to adjust to different children of different ages, genders, temperaments, and times (McDermott, 2002). Schaefer (1959) discussed the parenting continua of warmth and control (McDermott, 2002). Baumrind (1989; 1996) described three parenting styles as authoritarian, permissive, or authoritative, some of which included warmth and control (McDermott, 2002). While these approaches may help us understand more about parents and their parenting roles, there is a common view that parenting styles vary with different children (gender, age, and developmental stages) and at different times. Holden and Miller (1999) described the trait approach as the oldest and most prominent approach to the study of parents, but added that the trait approach is intended to reflect a general study of parenting.

Bell's child-effects perspective and the traits perspective are just parts of a larger transactional model (McDermott D. , 2002). As Holden and Miller (1999) note in describing Bell's important work, parenting should be thought of as a relational interaction rather than an individual difference paradigm and hence child-rearing will vary when interacting with different children in a family (McDermott, 2002). Mischel and Shoda (1995) also found that the person-situation interaction was a better measure to understand behavior than personality styles or traits (McDermott, 2002).

Related to the above parent-child interaction is attachment theory (Ainsworth and Bowlby, 1991) where research demonstrates that the attachment between a parent and child reflects a behavioral system promoting survival and proficient functioning (McDermott D. , 2002). These theorists suggest that caregivers need to establish a secure base for infants over the first year of life by being sensitive to the cues emitted by infants, addressing the infant's needs, and providing emotional regulation. Infants learn to trust that caregivers will take care of their needs. That trust develops into secure attachment facilitating the exploration of the environment and supporting the development of social and cognitive competence, establishing the important feelings of efficacy (McDermott D. , 2002). The next generation will be able to adapt to changing environments. Today's brain development research supports the need for understanding the crucial role of parents in the early years of a child's development.

Rogers (1963)'s humanistic and reflective theory encourages sensitive feedback and communication to older verbal children. He recommended parents use therapeutic skills of empathy to understand a child's needs and feelings (McDermott, 2002). Maslow's (1971) hierarchy of needs becomes useful while parenting. Minuchin (1985) added another dimension to understanding parent-child processes, which is the family systems theory. This theory stresses the importance of relationship amongst all members of the family. Researchers have found that fathers are more demanding of sons when wives are present than when they are absent (Buhrmester et al., 1992). Holden and Zambarano (1992) found that the stress of domestic violence results in more maternal aggression in children (McDermott, 2002). Hinde (1989) explored parents' adaptations to changing children and changing environments over time. While adapting takes skills it is more than merely a bag of skills; parenting becomes a dynamic process. Hinde's (1989) social relationships theory holds that ongoing human interactions forming interpersonal relationships represent the most important aspect of the environment for parenting (McDermott, 2002). These dynamic interactions between parents and children are embedded in long-term relationships; are affected by both preceding interactions and expectations about future ones.

Darling and Steinberg (1993) have explained parenting from a historical perspective (Stewart and Bond, 2002). One strategy used to describe parental characteristics has been to place them along single dimensions of parenting such as acceptance–rejection (Rohner, 1986; Stewart and Bond, 2002). Baumrind's (1967) typologies of parenting styles have served as the template for the design of many such recent studies (Stewart and Bond, 2002). Baumrind described the authoritative parenting style that incorporates high levels of three separate dimensions: warmth, involvement, and inductive discipline (McDermott, 2002).

Maccoby and Martin (1983) described the two essential components of parenting styles to be responsiveness and demandingness. Parental responsiveness also referred to as parental warmth or supportiveness refers to 'the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands' (Baumrind, 1991). Parenting demandingness also referred to as behavioral control refers to 'the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts, and willingness to confront the child who disobeys' (Baumrind, 1991, pp. 61-62).

Parenting style, as the young people in the family perceive it, is clearly associated with their academic success and with their chance of engaging in socially dangerous behaviors. There is devastating evidence that young people who see their parents as both kind (supportive/responsive) and firm (demanding) have more success socially and academically. Though children who are living with only one parent or who are poor do not succeed to the same degree as their counterparts with two parents or higher incomes, they still are positively impacted by an authoritative/democratic parenting style. Different studies have examined the association between parenting style and behavior from different perspectives. The general conclusion from all these studies is that when young people perceive that their parents are warm, responsive, and kind with high expectations, they tend to achieve great success in life.

Hill, (1997) describes how parenting differs based on social class among African American women. It was done on qualitative and quantitative questionnaire data from 243 middle-class African American women from working and middle-class backgrounds (Hill, 1997). Middle-class parents have high expectations of their children and more involvement in their education and also middle-class parents want their daughters to be successful in careers (Hill, 1997). Women from working-class families did receive support from their parents but not as much as did those from middle-class backgrounds (Hill, 1997).

From the above review of literature, it is evident that several researches on parenting skills have been conducted. It helped the researcher to widen the knowledge in the area. It also helped the researcher to identify the gap in the previous research.

B.   *Consequences for Children*

A review of literature reveals that parenting style has been found to predict child well being in the domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem behavior. Research based on parent interviews, child reports, and parent observations consistently

finds:

- Children and adolescents whose parents are authoritative rate themselves and are rated by objective measures as more socially and instrumentally competent than those whose parents are non-authoritative (Baumrind, 1991; Weiss & Schwarz, 1996).
- Children and adolescents whose parents are uninvolved perform most poorly in all domains.

In general, parental responsiveness predicts social competence and psychosocial functioning, while parental demandingness is associated with instrumental competence and behavioral control (i.e., academic performance and deviance).

- Children and adolescents from authoritarian families (high in demandingness, but low in responsiveness) tend to perform moderately well in school and be uninvolved in problem behavior, but they have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression.
- Children and adolescents from indulgent homes (high in responsiveness, low in demandingness) are more likely to be involved in problem behavior and perform less well in school, but they have higher self-esteem, better social skills, and lower levels of depression.

In reviewing the literature on parenting style, one is struck by the consistency with which authoritative upbringing is associated with both instrumental and social competence and lower levels of problem behavior in both boys and girls at all developmental stages. The benefits of authoritative parenting and the detrimental effects of uninvolved parenting are evident as early as the preschool years and continue throughout adolescence and into early adulthood. Although specific differences can be found in the competence evidenced by each group, the largest differences are found between children whose parents are unengaged and their peers with more involved parents. Differences between children from authoritative homes and their peers are equally consistent, but somewhat smaller (Weiss & Schwarz, 1996). Just as authoritative parents appear to be able to balance their conformity demands with their respect for their children's individuality, so children from authoritative homes appear to be able to balance the claims of external conformity and achievement demands with their need for individuation and autonomy.

C.   *Parent- Children Interactions*
Since the mid-fifties, research has suggested that family interaction is linked to occupational behavior. It is even believed that possibly the notion of

family interaction or functioning—incorporating parenting style (authoritarian or passive), level of support, guidance, and responsiveness—may have more influence on career development than demographics, including the educational aspirations of parents.

Parental support and encouragement are factors that have been found to influence their vocational outcome. For instance, the attitudes and behaviors, which children adopt toward work, may be the result of what parents say. Parents convey their influence on children through interactions such as conversations and through their reactions (both verbal and nonverbal). This then affects what children think, say, and perceive about various careers.

Often there is a contradiction between what parents say to young adults and what they ask of them. For instance, a parent may comment that it is acceptable to pursue a position with a nonprofit agency, but then counter such statements with comments about low pay and long hours. These types of references imply that it's more important to earn a high salary than to pursue a satisfying position. Parents may also become overly involved in career decisions because they want their children to be satisfied in a career that is popular in the Indian society. Children may begin to identify and accept what parents say to satisfy them. Therefore, they take their parents' comments as absolute and neglect to challenge them or to assess their validity. Although parenting styles may differ, parents tend to want to do what is best for their children, and children generally pay attention to what is said by their parents. Consequently, parenting styles play an important role in the future success of their children.

D.   Summary of Previous Research

While research has shown that there are numerous family variables that influence the career choices of young adults (i.e. socioeconomic status, education level of parents, parenting styles, interactions), it appears that family interactions play an important role in forming aspirations and decisions about careers. Interestingly, there has been a great deal of research focusing on family interactions and family characteristics on career development, yet there have been few studies that examine parental perceptions of their influence.

Main Findings

1. There was a positive and significant relationship between parental permissive behaviors and their age
2. There was a positive and significant relationship between parental permissive behaviors and their education
3. There was a positive and significant relationship between parental permissive behaviors and their religion

Suggestions and Recommendations

Further research must be conducted in the field to increase the scope of benefits for the students of Carmel College, Mala.

Training programs for parents during Parent Teacher Meetings will be helpful in imparting parenting skills required today.

Conclusion

This study brings out the perceptions of parents and children regarding parental roles. Parents were satisfied with their parental roles as they help children meet the challenges of the 21st Century by aiming high and achieving academic success.

The secondary sources of data were significant in the fact that much of the findings of this research confirm existing theory.

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The Accessory Nature of the Penalty and the Peculiarities of Payment

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Abstract

This paper focuses on analyzing the accessory nature of the penalty, the peculiarities of its payment, and the legislative provisions regulating the penalty. It also presents their shortcomings and criticizes the wrong opinions in the legal literature on the concept and types of the penalty. The penalty is considered as the institutions with only accessory nature. Reduction of the penalty requires the debtor's counterclaim, without which the court is deprived of the possibility of reducing the penalty. The provision of Article 417 of the Civil Code is considered a serious legislative gap by the paper. The novelty is the provisions of the paper and the necessity of introducing norms on legal penalties in the Civil Code is substantiated, without which the case law may become a factor of unjustified violation of the rights of the participants of the private relations. There is also substantiated provision, which refutes the validity of the opinion of the authors who exclude the initiative of the court in the issue of reduction of the penalty. The aim of this paper is to analyze certain aspects of the regulation of penalties, which, together with the theoretical aspects, have practical significance that will provide better understanding of a number of issues as well as the correct qualification of the rights and obligations arising from the payment of penalties. Logical and systematic analysis of norms, as well as comparative-legal methods, are used to achieve the above-mentioned goal. Using these methods, it is possible to determine the progressiveness of Georgian law norms and to identify existing gaps in them. This further provides a better understanding of their content so as to develop suggestions and recommendations to improve the norms and practices.

Problems are analyzed on the examples of Georgian and German civil law. In terms of types and concepts of penalties, common characteristics and shortcomings between Georgian and German models were revealed. The efficiency of the Georgian model was also examined in terms of establishing the penalties. The study revealed that the Civil Code of Georgia determines the type of contractual penalty and allows its reduction. Based on this, a wrong conclusion has been made in science and practice about the existence of only one type of penalty in Georgian law. The circumstance that private law legislation does not consist solely of the Civil Code was not taken into account. The paper examines the applicable legislation of Georgia, which sometimes does not even use the term "penalty", but actually provides for a legal penalty in various provisions. It is inevitably necessary to reflect the norms in detail in order to regulate the payment of legal penalties in the Civil Code of Georgia.

1.   Introduction

The norms regulating penalties are reflected in the Civil Code of Georgia, which speaks of additional means of securing demand. Existing legislation on penalties is influenced by German law. Obviously, there are some differences between the German and Georgian arrangements, but the main essence is common. By introducing a contractual penalty, the legislature has given priority to the principle of the will and private autonomy of the parties. The principle "pacta sunt servanda" is applied in private law and the contract must be fulfilled. On the other hand, fulfillment of the contract depends significantly not only on the will of the party but also on the means of security. In addition, the collateral must not exceed the damage caused by the non-fulfillment of the obligation. The mechanism of a fair balancing of the interests of the debtor and the creditor must be found by the court in a situation where the security measure bears a heavy burden on the debtor. The institution of the penalty which contains the assessment categories gives the court the discretion to assess the non-compliance of the penalty. More so, there are consequences if the contract is breached. Therefore, a fair balance is ensured between the weak and the strong parties. The penalty is also a means of securing the obligation.

The concept of security is not provided by law. It is not an unambiguous technical legal term, but an expression belonging to the legal language. This indicates the means of achieving a specific goal (Kvinikadze, 2016, p.86).

Article 417 of the Civil Code (hereinafter referred to as abbreviation "CC") of Georgia has a significant meaning under non-fulfillment of obligations. This issue should be interpreted in the systemic connection with

Article 316 of the CC, according to which the fulfillment of the obligation may be manifested in refraining from acting as well. According to Article 339 of the German Civil Code, if the fulfillment of an obligation is to refrain from acting, the penalty is subject to payment in case of acting that is contrary to such obligation (Kropholler, 2014, p.240).

This paper utilizes the systematic and comparative method to analyze the effectiveness of the norms regulating penalties that define the concept, form the penalties, and possibly reduce the penalties by a court. It is necessary to also determine the practical and theoretical significance of the accessory nature of the penalty. However, achieving the set goal is impossible without practice. The purpose of the analysis of practice and legislative provisions is to identify gaps in both norms and practice and to develop proposals for the improvement of each of them. By doing this, the provisions regulating the penalties are accepted from German law. The aim of the study is to determine the similarities and differences between the Georgian and German models, which makes it possible to see the advantages of each of these models.

During the writing of the abstract, both Georgian and German legal literature was selected as the study material. The conclusions and recommendations developed in the paper are of practical and theoretical importance since they will help to form unified approaches.

2.   The Concept and Purpose of the Penalty

The legal definition of a penalty is given in Article 417 of the Civil Code of Georgia. It is a misconception that a penalty as a specific manifestation of private autonomy can only be determined by the agreement of the parties (Chanturia, 2012, p.237). Therefore, it should be noted from the outset that the Codex definition of a penalty is imperfect. This is because, according to Article 417 of the Civil Code, a penalty is a sum of money payable which is agreed by the parties to a debtor for non-fulfillment or improper fulfillment of the obligation. On the other hand, payment of the penalty may be determined not only by agreement between the parties but also by the Law. Although it is expected that the debtor pays the penalty to the creditor, it would still be desirable to specify in the law that the debtor does not simply pay the penalty but pays it to the creditor.

According to the generally admitted opinion, the penalty is an additional means of securing an obligation. Securing the obligation through the penalty implies that the obligation to pay indulges the debtor to duly fulfill the obligation. In case of non-fulfillment or improper fulfillment of the obligation by the debtor, the penalty loses the securing nature and the obligation to pay becomes a means of protecting the interests of the affected creditor.

Collateral rights and penalties arising from the fulfillment of the obligation are of an accessory nature. However, the demand of the penalty combines both accessory and non-accessory demand signs. The accessory nature of the right means that it cannot arise unless a principal obligation has arisen. Also, it cannot exist if there is no basic obligation and it will be terminated if the basic obligation is terminated (Schöbi, 1990, p.10-25).

The penalty is the most commonly used means of securing the performance of an obligation. This is explained by the fact that, unlike the determination of the amount of damage to be reimbursed, the penalty is not difficult to calculate. More so, its payment does not require establishing a causal relationship between the debtor's illegal action and the damage incurred by the creditor. This conclusion is based on the analysis of Articles 401 and 417 of the Civil Code.

The basic reason for the purpose of the penalty is to ensure regulatory obligations. However, the penalty may also secure the protective obligations (for example, the obligation of the guarantor is seen in the first part of Article 891 of the CC, while the obligation of the insured to the insurer for the reimbursement of the insurance sum is seen in the first part of Article 799 of the CC).

The purpose of the penalty is also to encourage the debtor to fulfill the obligation, in anticipation of an unfavorable prospect, and at the same time to determine in advance the amount of damage caused by non-fulfillment (Chitashvili, 2020, p.19).

According to the analogy with the rules on penalties, the parties can use them in order to ensure the performance of relative obligations. However, the major issue is about duties and not obligations.

This duty is not of an obligatory nature. This is because, on its basis, there is no transfer of property from one person to another between the participants of the civil turnover, which is the main sign of the obligation. Therefore, this is not an action to be taken under an obligatory right. It refers to the obligation to conclude a contract for the performance of a preliminary contract (Article 327, Part 3 of the CC). Under the law, a preliminary contract may give rise to an obligation to enter a future contract. Therefore, it is incorrect to use the word "obligation" in the wording of this norm. The Civil Code of Georgia does not also provide for the obligation to conclude a contract or contracting as a result of non-fulfillment of this obligation.[1]

3.   Types of Penalties

The penalty is accrued through various means. Among these means, a distinction is made between the interest and fine. Although there is no direct

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[1] Compare to Article 319 of the CC.

record of this in Article 417 of the CC, the signs are characterized in the legal literature. This makes it easier to distinguish an interest and a fine.

The fine is imposed/charged once, while the interest is imposed for a certain period of time (By hours, days, months, etc.) (Akhvlediani, 1999, p.78-79). A typical basis for charging the interest is the overdue payment of a basic obligation. The fine is imposed in case of other types of violations. An example of this is the Labor Code of Georgia according to Article 31, Part 3, which states that "The employer is obliged to pay the employee 0.07 percent of the delayed amount for each day of any delay in payment or settlement."

Both interests and fines are calculated either in proportion or in lump sums. In addition to fines and interests, the penalty is distinguished based on the following:

1. According to the basis for its determination. This is a contractual (voluntary) and legal (normative) penalty. The contractual penalty is determined by the agreement of the parties, while the legal penalty is determined by a normative act. It is worthy to note that the normative act establishing a penalty can only be a legislative act. The point is that imposing a penalty means imposing legal liability. According to Article 8 of the Law of Georgia on Normative Acts, legal liability can be imposed only on the basis of a legislative act. Article 7 of the same law defines the types of legal acts. Unfortunately, the issue of legal penalties is not properly regulated by the Civil Code of Georgia;
2. According to the payable penalty and damage to be compensated. There are different types of penalties such as the penalty to be counted, the exceptional, and the alternative penalty (Article 419 of the CC, etc.).
3. According to the nature of the debtor's breach of obligation. There are different types of penalties such as penalty for non-fulfillment of the obligation and penalty for improper fulfillment of the obligation (Article 417 of the CC).[2]

Like Georgian law, German law imposes a penalty in monetary form. However, Article 342 of the German Civil Code states that the contracting parties may determine a penalty in a non-monetary form. Accordingly, Articles 339-341 of the German Civil Code apply also.

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[2]A comparative-legal discussion of the types of fines is given in the paper- Rolf Knieper, Lado Chanturia, Hans-Joachim Sahramm (Hrsg). Probleme des Vertragsrechts und der Vertragssicherung in den Staaten des Kaukasus und Zentralasiens. Materialien einer internationalen Konferenz an der Universität Bremen vom 10. Und 11 Apriel 2008. BWV. Berlin, 2009, S. 362.

The German Civil Code also provides for only a contractual penalty (Vertragsstrafe). This means that it does not provide the possibility of determining a penalty by law.

Unlike the Civil Code of Georgia, the German Civil Code (hereinafter referred to as the abbreviation GCC) does not contain a norm defining the form of agreement on the penalty. According to Article 341 of the GCC, the debtor makes a "promise" to pay a penalty for non-fulfillment or improper fulfillment of the obligation. According to the general rule established by the case law, the agreement on penalties is subject to the same procedure as the form of the contract signing. Thus, both oral and written agreement on the penalty is allowed.

The approach of the Georgian Civil Code to this issue should be considered more progressive. This is because the form of the deal is the factor that determines its authenticity and also facilitates the proof of the existence of an agreement on the penalty. It will be practically impossible to prove the fact of the oral agreement on the penalty, especially in order to establish the existence of a monetary obligation since the Georgian law considers the testimony of witnesses insufficient (Article 624 of the CC). However, the case law also considers some evidence, such as audio record, unconstitutional. Hence, this is treated or regarded as inadmissible evidence.[3] In such circumstances, it is the written form of the penalty that facilitates the proof.

The issue of the ratio of the penalty to the performance of the obligation and the demand for damages refers to Articles 340 and 341 of the GCC. In order to protect the debtor's rights, these articles determine that the creditor may demand from the debtor either payment of a penalty only or performance of the obligation only in a particular case. Also, in the event of a demand for compensation of damages, if the payment is made for improper fulfillment of the obligation, it shall be paid along with the demand of fulfillment of the obligation. The norm of the GCC should be applied in a situation where doubt arises because it is necessary to determine whether the creditor is interested in the actual fulfillment of the obligation by the debtor or whether the partial fulfillment of the obligation and compensation of the unfulfilled part of the obligation in monetary form is sufficient for the creditor.

It should be noted that Articles 340 and 341 of the GCC are not the imperative provisions. The parties have the right to agree that no penalty will be paid in case of non-fulfillment of the contract. However, such a deviation from the provision of law requires an individual/separate agreement.

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[3]If, for example, the Supreme Court by the decision of 1 June 2010 on the case of №AS-1154-14-16-09 considered that an audio recording was admissible for determining the private relationship, it established the opposing practice in 2015 (see the Supreme Court's decision of May 4, 2015, on the case №AS-1155-1101-2014).

Therefore, it is not sufficient to formally provide for one of its articles or provisions in the contract.

According to Article 340 of the GCC, if the debtor is obliged to pay a penalty in case of non-fulfillment of the obligation, the creditor has the right to request a penalty payment instead of the contract fulfillment. A request for payment of a penalty for non-fulfillment of an obligation is not applied when the obligation has been improperly fulfilled. In the event that the creditor notifies the debtor that he/she demands the payment of the penalty, a claim for the fulfillment of the obligation to the debtor is excluded.

According to Article 341 of the GCC, the creditor has the right to demand payment of a penalty for improper fulfillment of the obligation (overdue fulfillment, positive breach of contract, dishonest fulfillment). He/she also has the right to request for the fulfillment of the obligation (accumulation). If the creditor accepts the fulfillment, then payment of the penalty can be demanded for. However, this is possible only if the creditor's right to do so in accepting the fulfillment was agreed in advance.

If the creditor is entitled to compensation for damages as a result of non-fulfillment or improper fulfillment of the obligation, then he/she may demand payment of the penalty in the form of a minimum amount of compensation of damages and file a claim at the court for compensation of damages for the amount that exceeds that of the penalty.

If the creditor does not use the penalty and continues to demand payment, he/she can still claim the penalty later (Jamernig, 2009, § 340, Rn. 5).

4.   The Accessory Nature of the Penalty

This study also focused on examining the relationship between a penalty and a demand secured by the penalty. In this case, the opinion deserves criticism since the demand for a penalty is an integral part of the demand secured by the penalty. (Civil law 3rd ed. 2006, p. 44-45). The demand for a penalty and the demand secured by the penalty are independent rights. The following circumstances makes it possible to draw the following conclusion:

1. The named rights arise on the basis of different legal facts and, at the same time, these rights do not arise simultaneously (the origin of the basic demand precedes the origin of the right to a penalty); 2. The named rights may belong to different persons (for example, the demand for a penalty may be conceded while the basic demand remains with the original creditor). Thus, the German Civil Code commentary on the case of concession of the demand of the accessory rights does not assign the demand of the penalty to the right of demand (Palandt, 1993, Rn. 455); 3. The named rights may have existed in isolation from each other (the basic demand may be terminated, for

example, by fulfillment, while the demand for a penalty may continue to exist). Therefore, it can be concluded that if a change or termination of a basic demand does not result in a change or termination of the demand for penalty claim, the demand for penalty is not an accessory right in the full sense of the word.

This is why the demand for a penalty and the basic demand, when isolated from the demands of each other, may be conceded since both have independent property value. Consequently, in the case of concession of the basic demand, the penalty demand cannot be automatically transferred to the new creditor (cessionary). This means that it remains the property of the cedant.

Since the Civil Code of Georgia provides only for contractual penalties, it is important to identify the basis of the legal facts through which the contractual penalty is imposed. These facts include: a) the contract on the penalty and b) the occurrence of the condition of the right (condicio juris). Such a condition is non-fulfillment or improper fulfillment of the obligation, which is secured based on the penalty by the debtor.

According to its legal nature, the contract on the penalty is a causal contract. This is why its validity depends on the validity of the deal underlying the obligation that is secured by the penalty (Article 153 1 1 of the CC). Given the accessory nature of the penalty, the invalidity of the principal contract to secure the penalty or the debtor's guarantee automatically leads to its invalidity (Gottwald, Peter, 2007, Rn. 6). A contract on the penalty can be concluded after the origin of the basic obligation or before the origin of the basic obligation. An essential condition of such a contract is to determine the amount of the penalty, indicate the main obligation in the contract, and the kind of penalty that will be imposed on the debtor. When determining the interest, the parties must additionally agree on the periodicity of its accrual.

In a situation whereby a contract on the penalty needs to be concluded in advance, the creditor will receive a conditional demand for a penalty, which is considered a future right. The implementation and purchase of this depends on the non-fulfillment or improper fulfillment of the basic obligation (Krasheninnikov, 2005, p. 13,15).

A conditional demand for a penalty is an accessory right to the basic demand. Its accessory nature is manifested in the fact that: a) it cannot arise without a basic demand; b) it changes with the modification in the basic demand; and c) it comes to an end upon termination of the main demand.

5.   Peculiarities of the Payment and Reduction of the Penalty

Non-fulfillment or improper performance of the obligation secured by the penalty in relation to the contract on the penalty is a condicio juris. This happens if the debtor is liable for breaching this obligation (Article 401 of the CC), i.e., if the non-fulfillment was caused by the debtor's fault. In some cases, condicio juris may be found in the debtor's non-faulty action. This is evidenced by the provision of Article 402 of the CC. Nonetheless, in a situation where condicio juris occurs, the contract on the penalty enters into force. This is reflected in the conversion of the creditor's conditional demand into the demand of the penalty.

Unlike the demand for the contractual penalty, a legal penalty demand arises on the basis of only one fact instead of several facts. This implies that it is the non-fulfillment or improper fulfillment of the basic obligation by the debtor. The debtor pays the penalty voluntarily, otherwise, the creditor will apply to the court to enforce the demand for the penalty. The debtor also enjoys the right to a reduction of the penalty. In this regard, the following issues are examined: 1) Whether the court can reduce the penalty on its own initiative in the absence of a debtor's counterclaim; 2) Whether it is possible to reduce the legal penalty; 3) What legal facts should the court take into account when reducing the penalty; and 4) In what way is it possible to reduce the penalty. It is necessary to answer each of these questions consistently. There is an opinion in the Georgian legal literature that the court cannot reduce the penalty on its own initiative (Contract Law, Authors' Group, 2014). This view cannot be shared. The case law proves that the court can reduce the penalty on its own initiative as well. It is a valid opinion and Article 420 of the CC does not indicate specific alternatives. Nevertheless, a certain limit is set within which the decision must be made by a court (Kurdadze & Khunashvili, 2015, p.58). However, reference to only Article 420 of CC is not enough to reduce the penalty (Liklikadze, 2019, p.245). More so, it can be said that Article 420 of CC is one of the most evident examples of interference in the content of the contract (freedom of contract) (Jorbenadze, 2017, p.281).

As for the possibility of reducing the legal penalty, it should be emphasized that the possibility of the reduction applies to both contractual and legal penalties. In this case, the court reduces the penalty at the demand of the debtor or based on his own initiative.

In the event of a reduction, the penalty demand changes. This leads to the payment of the penalty depending on the amount determined by the court.

The disadvantage of the Civil Code of Georgia indicates that it provides a reduction in Article 420, but it does not specify the inconsistent situations for the reduction of the penalty such as the debtor's property situation, damage caused or the amount of unfulfilled or violated obligation (Kapanadze, 2016, p. 115). This means that it does not stipulate the basis of

the legal facts by which the penalty can be reduced. Here it is important to imply the penalty that is clearly inconsistent with the consequences of breaching a basic obligation. These consequences include damage to the creditor's proprietary or non-proprietary rights or his/her legitimate interests. The criterion for non-compliance may be an excessively high interest rate on the penalty, a significant excess of the amount of the penalty on the damage incurred, the duration of the non-fulfillment of the obligation, etc.

Reduction is possible in two ways: 1. to reduce the percentage of the penalty; and 2. to reduce the penalty in the form of a lump sum payable at once (Rustavi City Court decision of 2010 on case №2-652-10).[4] Clearly, the latter is more acceptable to the debtor.

The court has the authority to consider the penalty as inappropriately high and then reduce it. In the event of a dispute, the court is obliged to study this issue (Ioseliani, 2016, p.63).

When reducing the penalty, the court is obliged to determine the real ratio of the requested penalty and the consequences of the debtor's non-fulfillment of the contractual obligation, which is nothing but an expression of the principle of justice (Khunashvili, 2016, p.181).

A penalty is considered counted when the damage is partially reimbursed in the part that is not reimbursed by the penalty. If the penalty to be counted has already been paid by the debtor or a court decision has been made on its payment, then the creditor is no longer entitled to demand the compensation of damages by the penalty in the compensated part. Any penalty shall be considered as the counted penalty unless otherwise provided by law or contract.

A fine penalty will not be counted in the damage report, and this does not reduce the damage. Mentioning the penalty as a fine in the contract does not give grounds to assign it to the fined penalty. A fined penalty is also called a cumulative penalty (Commentary of the Civil Code of Georgia, Collective of Authors, 2001, p.487). In the case of an exclusive penalty, the creditor has the right to demand the payment of the penalty, but not the payment for damages. Such a penalty is used when it is necessary to separate the amount of the debtor's liability. This occurs when the amount of the penalty is so large that it exceeds the expected damage (Chanturia, 2012, p.239).

The alternative is called a penalty and the creditor is authorized to choose to pay the penalty, to fulfill the contractual obligation, or to compensate the damage (Sekhniashvili, 2019, p.53). However, the enforcement of the creditor's demand for compensation of damages in the form

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[4]Review of practice of law on fines (see also Chantladze Madi, Explanation of Expression of Will, Reduction of Fines, Principle of Nominalism, Journal ,, Review of Georgian Law'', №5 / 2002-1, Tbilisi, 2002, pg. 168-174).

of a penalty leads to the termination of the demand for the penalty and vice versa. Compared to the penalty to be counted, the alternative penalty is almost not used in practice because it is unfavorable to the creditor. Unlike the alternative penalty, the penalty to be counted enables the creditor to get the compensation for the part of the damage caused to him by demanding the penalty. This can occur without losing the demand for compensation of damages in the part that is not reimbursed by the penalty.

In a situation where an obligation is violated, the creditor is authorized to demand fulfillment of the obligation, compensation for damages, and payment of a penalty. However, it is inadmissible to demand the payment of the penalty and fulfillment of the obligation at the same time. Notwithstanding, it is possible to demand the payment of the penalty and compensation of the damage at the same time (Article 419 of CC). Accordingly, the creditor must choose to demand fulfillment or a penalty. It is also worthy to note that in both cases, the demand for damages is allowed (Meskhishvili, 2014, p.22).

Reimbursement of damages and payment of a penalty for improper fulfillment of a basic obligation shall not terminate this obligation. In contrast, compensation for damages and payment of a penalty for non- fulfillment of a basic obligation results in termination of the basic obligation. This is evidenced by the provision of Article 419 of the CC. In addition, other consequences of the payment of a penalty may be determined by law or contract.

Conclusion

The analysis of the study results revealed important problems. A comparative analysis of German and Georgian law on the regulation of the institution of penalty shows that German law expands the forms of penalty to be imposed on the debtor and provides for the possibility of using its non-monetary form as well, which is unfavorable for the debtor. It is practically impossible for the debtor to request a reduction of the existing non-monetary penalty, which makes the Georgian model more flexible than the German one. This creates a greater opportunity for fair balancing of the rights of the parties.

The advantage of the Georgian model over the German model is also evident in the definition of the form of the penalty since German law bypasses the issue of the form of the penalty, which allows it to be determined verbally. This makes it difficult for the creditor to prove the existence of a penalty agreement. Conversely, Georgian law clearly defines the form of the agreement on the penalty.

The concept of a penalty is limited in the Civil Code of Georgia, and it is reduced to a contractual or voluntarily determined by means of security. As a result, it is advisable to change the wording of Article 417 of the Civil Code

as follows: "The penalty, i.e., the monetary amount, which is determined by Law or agreement between the parties shall be paid by the debtor for non-fulfillment or improper fulfillment of the obligation". In the category of non-fulfillment of the obligation, the penalty is indicated. It is important to understand this in a systemic connection with Article 316 of the Civil Code. Accordingly, the penalty also ensures restrained action, which is also an obligation.

Considering a fine as a purely accessory right is inadmissible. The penalty demand contains both accessory and non-accessory demand signs.

The parties may also use the penalty in pre-contractual relationships or for the fulfillment of the preliminary contract.

The study proved a common shortcoming of both German and Georgian models. This is because both of them acknowledge the existence of a contractual penalty only. The concept or essence of the penalty is similarly formed in both models. Depending on the basis for determining the penalty, it can be legal or normative and contractual or voluntary. In addition, a normative act determining the penalty may only be a legislative act since a penalty is a form of legal liability. According to Articles 7 and 8 of the Law of Georgia on Normative Acts, the type of legal liability and the basis for imposition may be determined only by a Georgian legislative act.

The agreement of the parties on the penalty is causal in nature since it depends on the validity of the obligation, which is guaranteed by the penalty.

The court may reduce the penalty on its own initiative, even without the motion of the debtor, which is based on the rational definition of Article 420 of the Civil Code. This is also confirmed by the analysis of court practice.

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The Strategic Obstacles Preventing Israel's Attack on Iran's Nuclear Reactors

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Abstract

The study analyzes the reasons that prevent "Israel" from launching a comprehensive military strike against the nuclear sites and other vital sites of a military nature in Iran, in light of the escalation of the indirect military confrontation between them in many conflicts in the Middle East. The study summarizes the "Israeli" risks to implementing "preventive war" on the Iranian scene in four obstacles, which are: the operational, the legal, the military, and the armed non-state actors. The study concluded that: despite the blockade imposed on Iran, especially with regard to the import of advanced military equipment, Iran was able to build a relative deterrent force consisting of three pillars, which rest on its ability to (1) threaten navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, (2) undertake terrorist attacks on multiple continents, and (3) conduct long-range strikes, primarily by missiles (or with rockets owned by proxies deployed in many countries of the Middle East, and its ability to target "Israel" with short and medium-range ballistic missiles. The Iranian deterrent force, or what has come to be called the Iran's deterrence triad, was the real obstacle to Israel from launching a preventive war against Iran.

Keywords: Iran, Israel, the Begin Doctrine, preventive war, force, strategic barriers

1.   Introduction

The "Israeli" Prime Minister Menahem Begin drafted the unofficial doctrine that is named for him, "the Begin Doctrine," seeking to prevent

countries hostile to Israel calling for its destruction from developing a nuclear military capability. To that end, Israel destroyed the reactor in Iraq in 1981, and the scenario was repeated in 2007 when it took control over major areas of Syria (including over the actual Syrian reactor site in Deir ez-Zor).[1] "Israel" commented on the military strike on the Iraqi nuclear reactor, saying: "We will not allow any enemy in any way to obtain weapons of mass destruction against the people of Israel."[2]

There are critical arguments against a decision to attack a nuclear reactor in an enemy country:

a. Operational risks: The reactors are high value targets that are well protected, and thus an attack incurs the risk of casualties and possible mission failure, which might compound strategic embarrassment with strategic and political costs.

b. Legal risks: The international community opposes preemptive strikes and deems them acts of aggression rather than self-defense. Consequently, international sanctions and punitive measures are possible responses to an attack, and these may result in significant strategic costs.

c. Risk of deterioration into war: The enemy's response might be wide scale and painful – from missile fire and attacks on high value targets in Israel, to all-out war, particularly if there is a common border.[3]

d. Risks of armed non-state actors: As Iran possesses armed non-state internal actors, such as the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, and regional actors such as the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq, Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, Hamas and the Islamic Jihad in Gaza, and it possesses military capabilities that can destroy "Israel". So, this paper investigates the "Israeli" risks and apply them on the Iranian case.

This study attempts to understand and analyze the strategic risks that prevent the implementation of the "Israeli" preventive strike against Iranian nuclear facilities. In addition, this study seeks to verify the validity of the hypothesis, which demonstrates that the Islamic Republic of Iran has been able during the past decades to build its peaceful military, political and nuclear

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[1] Amos Yadlin, The Begin Doctrine: The Lessons of Osirak and Deir ez-Zor, Institute for National Security Studies, 21/3/2018.
https://www.inss.org.il/he/publication/the-begin-doctrine-the-lessons-of-osirak-and-deir-ez-zor /
[2] Doreen Horschig, Is Israel Thinking About a Military Strike on Iran? History Tells Us It's Possible, National Interest, June 24, 2019.
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/israel-thinking-about-military-strike-iran-history-tells-us-its-possible-63976
[3] Yadlin, The Begin Doctrine.

power bases, support non-armed state actors, and make them as "barriers" to any possibilities for targeting them militarily at regional and international levels.

1.1.   The Theoretical Framework

Power or Force is the cornerstone of international relations, especially in its soft and hard forms. Among the many components of power, the military element becomes one of its major characteristics as soon as the State has reached adulthood and come to possess a monopoly of violence.[4]

Here, Iran has worked, from the perspective of this theory, to increase and develop its military capacity in order to avoid military options against its balance. Besides, Israel has found that the use of military force against Iran will destroy its interests, and bring unnecessary damages.

Supporters of the Neo realism school focus on power on the one hand and interest on the other hand, as they consider force as the basic concept in international relations, but there are other relationships that often hide behind moral and legal terms or expressions.[5]

As for classical realists, power is a goal in itself. Although they acknowledge the various elements of power such as economic and technological resources, they demonstrate that military power is the most important component of state power. As for the new realism, it does not agree with those who see military force as an essential tool in running the state. The neo-realists consider power to be more than cumulative in military resources and the ability to use this power to coerce and control other member states of the international system. The neo-realists see force as a collection of the complex capabilities of the state. Consequently, states are differentiated in the system by their power and not by their function. Power gives the state a place in the international system, which in turn determines the state's behavior and its role in international politics.[6]

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[4] Shaimaa Owais Abu Eid, Power in International Relations: An Authentic Study, 2018, (Egyptian Institute for Studies) p.1.
[5] Dougherty, J. E. (1971). Contending theories of international relations: A comprehensive survey. Addison Wesley Publishing Company. Pages 8,9,21,24, 82-83.
[6] Ahmed Nuri Al-Naimi. Modern Structuralism in International Relations, Journal of Political Science, No. 46, p.20.

the international system. The neo-realists see force as a collection of the complex capabilities of the state. Consequently, states are differentiated in the system by their power and not by their function. Power gives the state a place in the international system, which in turn determines the state's behavior and its role in international politics.[7]

Therefore, and through the Iranian leadership's understanding of the risks facing its national security since the establishment of its Islamic revolution in 1979, and their understanding of the limits of their military and technological power in light of imposing harsh sanctions on Tehran, they have formulated a relative deterrent force consisting of three pillars, which rest on its ability to (1) threaten navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, (2) undertake terrorist attacks on multiple continents, and (3) conduct long-range strikes, primarily by missiles (or with rockets owned by proxies deployed in many countries of the Middle East such as the Lebanese Hezbollah or the Houthis in Yemen or armed groups in Iraq or some armed Palestinian factions such as the Jihad and Hamas movements, or through cells spread in Europe and Latin America.

2.   "Israeli" Strategic Risks of launching a preventive strike against Iran:

2.1.   The Operational Risks: The great and middle powers seek to protect their vital installations and fortify them from any external aggression, so that these sites are built in a special engineering form and in areas far from the population, and they are protected by advanced air defense systems. In the Iranian case, these fortifications make Israel and the United States afraid of failure in any attack against the Iranian nuclear sites, which in turn will lead to strategic and political changes. There is no doubt that Iranian nuclear reactors enjoy a great degree of protection and come in two parts, which are as follows:

The first part relates to advanced air defense systems that protect these vital installations from any foreign air aggression. Iran's S-300s seem to be an amalgam of different generations of Russian air defense systems, reflecting either Tehran's unique operational requirements or patchy availability from Moscow. In any case, Iran is now equipped with a potentially formidable system that can threaten even fifth-generation low-observable aircraft if used properly. The S-300's 64N6E radar can be paired with the 1L119 Nebo electronic beam-steering VHF radar previously delivered by Russia, which could help Iranian operators discriminate between low-observable and conventional radar targets and adjust their response accordingly. Iran also

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[7] Ahmed Nuri Al-Naimi. Modern Structuralism in International Relations, Journal of Political Science, No. 46, p.20.

bought the sophisticated Avtobaza-M passive surveillance system from Russia in 2011. According to the manufacturer, the mobile Avtobaza can detect low-probability-of-intercept (LPI) radars associated with stealth aircraft at a range of 150 km. Moreover, the S-300 can operate in "silent mode" with the help of passive systems such as Avtobaza and Kolchuga (also reportedly in Iranian service), which allows it to keep its radar turned off until the end of engagement.[8]

The second part indicates that the construction of nuclear reactors is done in an engineering way to withstand "Israeli" and American missile strikes. Underground nuclear reactors are built 100 meters deep under the rocks and are built with special armed concrete to withstand the large missile attacks.

In 2012 the United States delivered "GBU-28" bunker-busting bombs to "Israel", The GBU-28 is a special bomb developed for penetrating bunkers located deep underground. The GBU-28 can penetrate more than six meters of concrete or more than 30 meters of earth. In addition, the range of this bomb is 9.5 km, and its warhead is 286 kg.[9] One or two GBU-28s will be enough to destroy the reinforced dome over the Natanz facility. But the Fordow facility is built inside a mountain at a depth of about 100 meters beneath the rocks. Therefore, all the bombs in service with Israel - GBU-27, GBU-28, GBU-31 - are not capable of hitting this object.[10]

The reason for the reluctance of the "Israel" to launch a preventive strike against Iran is due to two main reasons:[11]

The first reason relates to the logistical reasons: Unlike the attack on the Iraqi nuclear reactor (June 1981, "Israeli" strikes will not be as effective due to the dispersion of the sites and the level of protection enjoyed by the Iranian nuclear sites. In addition, given Iran's distance, there will also be technical problems.

The second reason relates to Iran's capabilities to respond by using Shahab-3 missiles, which have a range of 1,300 km, and can reach "Israel". In addition, there is a possibility that Hezbollah will bomb northern Israel and

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[8] Farzin Nadimi, Iran Takes Another Step Toward Fielding S-300 Missiles, (Washington: washington institute, March 7, 2017).
https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/iran-takes-another-step-toward-fielding-s-300-missiles
[9] GBU-28 Bunker Buster, Deagel, 2019.
http://www.deagel.com/Defensive-Weapons/GBU-28-Bunker-Buster_a001151007.aspx
[10] Eurasia Daily, Can Iran's nuclear facilities be destroyed in a single strike? The Israeli experience, 7 August 2019.
https://eadaily.com/ru/news/2019/08/07/mozhno-li-unichtozhit-iranskie-yadernye-obekty-odnim-udarom-izrailskiy-opyt
[11] Alain Dieckhoff, Directeur de recherche CNRS, Ceri –Sciences Po, vient de publier Le conflit israélo-arabe, Armand Colin, 2011, 182 p.

the rest of the non-Iran-allied actors may carry out some military actions in the region.

There are other reasons that are no less important than the two previous reasons, and they come as follows:[12]

The problem is posed by the wide geographical dispersion of nuclear facilities in Iran over a large area (Isfahan, Arak, Natanz, Bushehr), unlike the Syrian and Iraqi reactors located in one area, which in turn is combined with the insufficient ranges of the "Israeli" aviation. To carry out such an operation, it will be necessary to refuel aircraft - in the air or even at friendly airfields.

Israel realizes that the military option will not stop the Iranian nuclear program, which was confirmed by the former head of the Mossad, Meir Dagan, that it is impossible to contain the Iranian nuclear program, and waving a military option - it does not deter the Iranians, but serves their interests, and will not prevent Iran from having nuclear weapons. He added that There are other alternatives to address the Iranian challenge. He also indicated that the military option against Tehran could completely backfire, such as accelerating the pace of the Iranian nuclear program, solidify the Iranian people, who are currently divided and partly disgusted by the regime.[13]

2.2.   The Legal Risks: Since its occupation of the Palestinian lands in 1948, Israel has adopted the doctrine of "preventive war", which was later called the "Begin Doctrine,". It was also the first application of a process after its 1967 military attack on Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon, and renewed that after its attack on Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon In 1975, the Tammuz nuclear reactor in Iraq in 1981, as well as the Syrian nuclear reactor in Deir Ez-Zor in 2007. Israel justified all its military attacks by what it called "preventive legitimate defense" at that time.

Article 51 of the United Nations Charter states that: "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.[14]

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[12] Abdullah Al-Rashdan, Al-Khammash Rana, The Iranian Nuclear Program, Regional and International Dimensions 2002-2016, (Naif University Publishing House, 2017), 113-114.
[13] Website walla, Meir Dagan: "An attack will not stop Iran's nuclear program".2012
https://news.walla.co.il/item/2537658
[14] Charter of the United Nations, 32-33.

Ismail Sabri defines the preventive war as the main aspect of planning a nuclear strategy on the basis of pure attack, as a particular party seeks to embrace this strategy that ensures the maximum possible damage to the opponent, and this is considered the best alternative to the defensive strategy. While Samuel Huntington defines it as a purely military action carried out by one country against another, with the aim of preventing a change in the balance of power between the two states, which leads to a reduction in the military security of the first country.[15] The preventive war here aims to prevent the shifting of balance of power, such as those aimed at stopping the enemy from obtaining the means that enhance its strategic position.

Preventive war means the state's right to take preemptive military action to prevent imminent military aggression. Article 51 of the United Nations Charter has been the controversial among legal scholars and politicians regarding its interpretation. It states: Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defense shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security.[16]

The interpreters differed on this Article (51) and divided into two directions: the first expanded its interpretation, and the second added to its interpretation:[17]

The first trend: among them is "Bowett", who believes in expanding the interpretation of Article 51 to protect the state and preserve its existence, especially in light of the tremendous development in weapons, which may expose the state to a fatal blow that paralyzes its defenses and threatens its existence. This interpretation is based on the principle of surprising the enemy before being surprised.

The second trend indicates that the right to legitimate self-defense is in the case of an armed aggression against the state. As for saying that there is an imminent danger, it is not sufficient to be a justification for a legitimate self-defense, and this is a restriction on the exercise of the right to legitimate self-defense except in one case, which is a case of aggression, and most of the jurists support this trend. Legitimate self-defense should be practiced only in case of armed attack.

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[15] Ben Ammar Imam, Preventive War in American Strategic Thought - Iraq as a Case Study - (Algeria: University of Muhammad Khudair - Biskra, 2008), p. 17.
[16] Makhadmeh, Preventive War, 383.
[17] Ibid, p. 383-384.

By looking at Article (51), there are conditions for legitimate self-defense, which are:[18]

1. The occurrence of an armed aggression against the state.
2. The proportionality between the defense and the act of assault.
3. Notify the UN Security Council: Article 51 of the United Nations Charter stipulates that the state that responds to aggression shall notify the Security Council of the measures it has taken to defend itself.

3.3.   Military Risks: The Islamic Republic has diversified and well-qualified military capabilities in its military, land, sea, air and defense sectors, and has proven its efficiency in a limited range of the recent confrontation in the Gulf, especially after shooting down the American spy plane.

Iranian engineers and scientists are adept at developing cutting edge military technologies. It has been ten years, for example, since Iran successfully launched its first satellite into orbit. Of course, satellite launch technology can provide cover for advanced ballistic missile work. Tehran is seeking, through massive updates in military industrialization, to change the regional military balance in its favor.[19]

The Iranian government has also encouraged nanotechnology investment. It has created joint nanotech centers in China and active links between Iranian and Chinese nanotech companies. However, it acquires technology, Iranian military tacticians increasingly appear to be incorporating artificial intelligence if not fully autonomous systems into their platforms. As the Iranian leadership embraces new technologies, its whole-of-government approach means that its work occurs not only on military bases, but also in Iran's universities and nominally civilian companies within the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' economic empire. Indeed, one of the primary motives for the Islamic Republic to send students—especially the children of regime elites and other loyalists—to Western universities and to invest heavily in cyber-espionage is to gain access to the latest in advanced technical fields.[20]

3.3.1. Iranian ballistic missiles:

Iran's ballistic missiles constitute a primary component of its strategic deterrent. Lacking a modern air force, Iran has embraced ballistic missiles as a long-range strike capability to dissuade its adversaries in the region—particularly the United States, Israel, and Saudi Arabia—from attacking Iran.

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[18] Makhadmeh, Preventive War, 385-386.
[19] Michael Rubin, Iran's Military Is Making Strides into Twenty-First Century Technology, national interest, August 8, 2019.
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/middle-east-watch/irans-military-making-strides-twenty-first-century-technology-72191
[20] Ibid.

Iran has the largest missile force in the Middle East, with a substantial inventory of close-range ballistic missiles (CRBMs), short-range ballistic missiles (SRBMs), and medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) that can strike targets throughout the region as far as 2,000 kilometers from Iran's borders. Iran is also developing land-attack cruise missiles (LACMs), which present a unique threat profile from ballistic missiles because they can fly at low altitude and attack a target from multiple directions. Iran is also working to develop many ballistic missiles with high accuracy, such as the "Emad-1" missile, that improve Iran's ability to strike distant targets more effectively. Iran could also complicate regional missile defenses by launching large missile salvos.[21]

Iran uses a number of strategic tools for regional hegemony instead of comprehensive military techniques in the Air Force and Navy, which suffer from great weakness as a result of the international embargo imposed on Iran from importing weapons and spare parts for its various sectors of war. These strategic tools can be summed up in two main axes, the first: building a missile base Large and wide-ranging that would grant immunity to the Iranian political system, allow Iran to pose strategic threats to its enemies in the Middle East, and create a balance of deterrence to prevent any possible attack on its vital installations. The second: Building and supporting armed non-state actors, namely the armed groups in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, which will be a deterrent to any aggression against Iran.[22]

A key component of Iran's military doctrine is the development of an indigenous ballistic missile program, and the country's rapid development of missile expertise has raised concerns in the US and among its allies. Iran embarked on an indigenous ballistic missile program in 1986, when the Revolutionary Guards created a "self-sufficiency unit" to develop military industries that would not require assistance from other countries.[23]

Iran has the largest and most diverse ballistic missile arsenal in the Middle East. (Israel has more capable ballistic missiles, but fewer in number and type.) Most were acquired from foreign sources, notably North Korea. The Islamic Republic is the only country to develop a 2,000-km missile without first having a nuclear weapons capability. Iran is still dependent on foreign suppliers for some key ingredients, components and equipment, but it has the technical and industrial capacity to develop long-range missiles, including an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile, or ICBM.[24]

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[21] Anthony H. Cordesman, Iran and the Changing Military Balance in the Gulf - Net Assessment Indicators, Center for Strategic and International Studies, page.197

[22] Shaul Shi ،Iranian Missile Strategy ،(IDC Herzliya: Herzliya ،9.2018) ،page 1-2.

[23] Farhad Rezaei, Iran's Ballistic Missile Program: New Developments, BESA Center Perspectives Paper No. 1,110, March 12, 2019, page 1.

[24] Michael Elleman, Iran's Ballistic Missile Program, United states institute of peace.

Iran has come a long way in building the largest missile system in the Middle East, and thus it has the largest firepower in the region, and it is the most important tool today for deterrence and therefore it strongly refuses to discuss imposing restrictions on it. During recent years, it has sought to improve the quality of missiles, expand their range and improve their accuracy, which imposes a safe space for the Iranian regime.[25]

Since the signing of the 5 + 1 Vienna Agreement, Iran has conducted a series of tests of medium-range ballistic missiles, satellite launchers and cruise missiles. Al-Awsat believes that the international, regional, and even commanders of senior generals in the Iranian army have stated that Iran has the ability to launch a large number of missiles against its opponents, which is the most important element in deterrence and the ability to defend itself, at least as long as it does not possess nuclear weapons.[26]

Iranian missiles can be classified into two main categories:[27]
- The long-range strategic ballistic missile group, which could strike strategic targets in Israel, Saudi Arabia and US bases throughout the Middle East. In the future, this system aims to carry nuclear warheads when Iran is allowed to develop them.
- Short and medium-range missiles, which Iran supplies to armed non-state actors in the vicinity of its regional opponents such as Hezbollah, Hamas, Jihad, Shiite groups in Syria and Iraq, and the Houthis in Yemen.

3.3.2. Air defense systems

Iran possesses many advanced air defense systems, which have proven their presence in the operational and field, such as the "Nazir" and "Pina" system, which are considered as two air defense systems that have the ability to strike long-range targets, as well as fight in light of electronic wars. Also, Iran has multiple radar systems, with different ranges and functions. Some of them are coastal and some ship-borne radar, and their ranges are 60-500 km.[28]

This is what happened recently after Russia signed a memorandum of understanding with Tehran to start supplying the advanced "S-300" system after years of delay. This system has a range of 400 km, and it can target 100 targets in the region at one time and engage 12 other targets at the same time. It can also target infiltrating secret aircraft and ballistic missiles, and this

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[25] Ephraim Kam, Iran's Missile System: The Principal Means of Deterrence, (Institute for National Security Studies: Tel Aviv ،22.4.2019), p 2.
[26] Ibid, p. 7-8.
[27] Ibid, 1-2.
[28] Commander Joshua Himes, "IRAN'S TWO NAVY: A MATURING MARITIME STRATEGY", The Institute for the Study of War (US), October 2011, Pages 6, 8, and 17.

missile defense system will enable Iran to fortify its nuclear sites from any military attack on them. It would also change the standards regarding nuclear negotiations between Iran and the major powers.[29]

Iran also revealed another modern system, "Khordad 15", which can detect targets such as fighters and drones attacking 150 km away and track targets at 120 km. It is able to detect hidden targets at a distance of 85 km and engage with and destroy them at a distance of 45 km. It is also able to detect and track 6 targets simultaneously, carry out, launch and destroy operations against 6 targets. In addition to its ability to engage targets at an altitude between 27-150 km and a range of 7 to 75 km).[30]

On August 10, 2019, Iran revealed an advanced missile defense system with a combat range of up to 400 km. This system is equipped with a "gamma" or "falaq" radar, and the system is able to detect types of cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, stealth aircraft, drones, and others.[31]

Falaq's radar is considered an analogue of the Russian "Gamma-DE" radar. This radar can monitor 200 DFMs and update its data every 5 seconds,[32] while Falaq's radar has great capabilities. It is able to detect and track targets that move at high speed and at an altitude of 5 meters -120 km.[33]

In the first operational tests and in completely realistic conditions, the Iranian home-made air and missile defense system proved to be of tremendous capabilities when it managed to shoot down the most advanced American spy plane in the US Navy (RQ-4A Global Hawk), which in turn represents a serious challenge to military superiority of the USA in the air.[34]

With all these defensive capabilities, the US military magazine "The National Interest" argues, Iran poses a major challenge to US F-22s, even though American aircraft and Russian S-300 defense systems have never formally encountered. And if Iran acquires the Russian "S-400" system, almost everything will change. Recently, the Russian ambassador to Iran

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[29] Maysam Behravesh, "Will Russia Live Up to Its Iran S-300 Contract?", CBS News, October 5, 2015, Page 1

[30] The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), the unveiling of a new Iranian air defense system, June 9, 2019.
https://2u.pw/Xudh9

[31] Reuters Agency, Iran unveils an upgraded missile defense system, 10/8/2019.
https://ara.reuters.com/article/topNews/idARAKCN1V008Z

[32] Website Rosoboronexport, AIR DEFENCE SYSTEMS.
http://roe.ru/eng/catalog/air-defence-systems/radar-and-electro-optical-equipment-for-air-target-detection/gamma-de/

[33] Website actualnews, The Ability of the Iranian super-radar "Falagh" will undermine the competitiveness of the American aircraft electronic warfare "Growler", 15.08.2019.
https://actualnews.org/exclusive/304206-potencial-iranskoj-super-rls-falagh-podorvet-konkurentosposobnost-amerikanskogo-samoleta-rjeb-grouler.html

[34] global security, 'Iran has sent a message!' Experts on downing of US drone, Jun 25, 2019.
https://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/iran/2019/iran-190625-presstv06.htm

announced that his country will not face a problem in selling Tehran the advanced air and missile defense system "S-400" when the arms embargo imposed by the United Nations on the Islamic Republic ends.[35]

The real danger with upgraded S-400s, it would appear, likely pertains to computer processing speeds the extent to which they are networked to one another. If an ability to maintain a "track" on an aircraft improves at higher speeds over greater ranges due to an ability to more quickly integrate and network information than planes could be more vulnerable even if the hardware or munitions themselves have not changed much.

3.3.3. The Navy:

The Iranian Navy relies on speed and camouflage in order to carry out effective attacks, so hundreds of small boats and ships have been equipped with a wide range of simple weapons, ranging from machine guns to missile launchers and short-range missiles such as the 704-C and Nasr-1 missiles, and torpedoes such as an Iranian-made torpedo (whale), in addition to reconnaissance and intelligence drones. The Iranian navy possesses ballistic missiles capable of disabling US aircraft carriers, such as the Fateh-110 missiles.[36]

Iran recently developed an anti-ship missile "Zulfiqar Naseer", which has a range of 700 km. This type of Iranian missile has a great ability to carry out accurate strikes against naval targets in the Strait of Hormuz region. Of course, the biggest feature of this anti-ship missile is the photoelectric researcher, and it is a major achievement in the Iranian missile technology. This missile can also counteract interference, making it relatively perfect in all respects. Therefore, this missile poses a great threat to US aircraft carriers, which may become a living target.[37]

While Iran has an integrated mix of naval forces, it has three classes of kilo submarines that it took from Russia in the 1990s, and it has built a number of submarines, these submarines fire long-range lethal torpedoes and can plant mines. It had a Ghader missile weighing 120-150 tons in 2007. Now it has 17 types. Each submarine carries a mixture of 18 missiles and guided torpedoes,

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[35] Kris Osborn, Could Iran Shoot Down a U.S. F-22, F-35 or Stealth B-2 Bomber? The National Interest Magazine, October 9, 2020.
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/could-iran-shoot-down-us-f-22-f-35-or-stealth-b-2-bomber-170417
[36] Eyal Pinko, Dealing with lateral assumptions in an asymmetrical naval campaign; The Revolutionary Guards Navy in Iran as a case study, Haifa University, January 2017, p 79-84.
[37] Sina newspaper, The third anti-ship missile appeared suddenly, with a range up to 700 km, and the U.S. aircraft carrier will become an open target, 17/10/2020.
https://k.sina.com.cn/article_6433466398_17f76e81e00100sg4s.html?cre=tianyi&mod=pcpager_news&loc=3&r=9&rfunc=34&tj=none&tr=9

and Iran has purchased 1,000 modern Russian mines. These mines are equipped with modern and accurate sensors that these submarines can hit torpedoes for a distance of 4000-6000 meters to hit targets that no country can reach or discover. Iran also has huge numbers of anti-ship missiles on different types of launch pads in addition to advanced naval aviation used for maneuvering.[38]

3.3.4. Air Force

The Iranian air force on paper is one of the biggest air arms in the world. Its order of battle includes around 350 fighters, more than twice as many as the Royal Air Force possesses.

But most of Iran's fighters are old and outdated. The ones that aren't old are just new copies of old designs. The air force's squadrons fly American-made F-14s, F-5s and F-4s dating from the 1970s, some 1980s-vintage MiG-29s and Sukhoi fighter-bombers and a few J-7s that the Islamic Republic bought from China during the 1990s. Tehran tried again, ordering from a cash-hungry Russia a fresh batch of bombers. This time around the United States successfully applied pressure on Russia to cancel the sale.[39]

3.4.   Armed non-state Actors:

The Islamic Republic of Iran has deliberately built and supported a large and extended base of armed non-state actors in areas adjacent to its regional enemies or opponents, which is an old Iranian strategy to preserve its national security from any "Israeli" or Western aggression, as it feels that it is being targeted by Israel and the West for its nuclear ambition and regional hegemony.

One of the most important non-state actors formed by the Islamic Republic of Iran is the "Iranian Revolutionary Guard", an organization independent of the armed forces organizations. The Revolutionary Guard's total is 125,000 individuals, divided in the country into the sectors of the Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force, and the Revolutionary Guard represents nearly a quarter of the total. Iran's regular military forces are equivalent to (24%) of the total armed forces.[40]

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[38] The previous reference, Page 25- 31.
[39] David Axe, Iran Has A Big Air Force, But One Reason Keeps It Weak, The National Interest Magazine, December 9, 2019.
https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/iran-has-big-air-force-one-reason-keeps-it-weak-103457
[40] A previous reference, Page 10.

3.5.   The strategic consequences of ending the arms embargo on Iran:

After the end of the arms embargo on Iran on October 18, 2020, imposed by the United Nations within the "5 + 1" nuclear agreement, officially known as the "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action", Tehran can import and export all kinds of heavy conventional military equipment. Although the United States tried many times to extend the arms embargo in various ways, all of these attempts were unsuccessful.

On the other hand, Iran will seek to purchase military equipment and obtain a license to produce it domestically, such as the basic components of modern combat aircraft. Iran will not have a chance to enhance its military capabilities unless it is able to become self-sufficient in the production of these weapons in the future. For many decades, US sanctions on Iran caused huge financial losses. It is likely that the strength of the Iranian military will gradually recover, yet the United States will continue to obstruct Iranian efforts from time to time, and how to deal with the American effort depends solely on Iran's behavior.[41]

Iran has recently been able, through its domestic defense investments, to acquire some unique capabilities, which have enabled it to deliver long-range precision strikes, wage guerrilla warfare, and conduct proxy operations. The regime used these capabilities to extend its regional influence and protect its internal area from any external aggression.[42]

In Tehran's view, the successes that its proxies and partners have registered in the Middle East—expelling "Israeli" forces from Lebanon in 2000, ousting U.S. forces from Iraq in 2011, and defeating the "U.S.-Saudi-Zionist conspiracy" to unseat Bashar al-Assad in Syria since 2011—have vindicated its approach of using force to shape the regional security environment. Iran also regards its armed forces as an effective deterrent against a large conventional attack—a mindset no doubt reinforced by Washington's reluctance to employ military levers as an integral part of its maximum pressure policy. Iran is therefore likely to maintain this basic approach if the ban on arms transfers ends later this year, while filling capability gaps and selectively modernizing its conventional forces to reflect lessons learned in Syria. To this end, it would try to purchase at least some of the systems it has been unable to produce domestically, such as advanced

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[41] Sina newspaper, All obstacles failed, and the iranian arms embargo was lifted gradually! Russian experts analyze the weapons that iran will purchase, 21/10/2020.
https://k.sina.com.cn/article_7451666431_1bc2767ff00100wgc3.html?cre=tianyi&mod=pcp ager_news&loc=7&r=9&rfunc=34&tj=none&tr=9
[42] Michael Eisenstadt, If the Arms Ban Ends: Implications for Iran's Military Capabilities, The Washington Institute, July 23, 2020.
https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/if-the-arms-ban-ends-implications-for-irans-military-capabilities

surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), fighter aircraft, infantry fighting vehicles, and tanks.[43]

It is likely that any process of purchasing new weapons will be for defensive or deterrent purposes and will be viewed by the Iranians as a policy against any possible attack on Iran by its opponents. On the other hand, lifting the arms embargo may not have a significant impact on Iran's imports. It is likely that Iran will become a major regional supplier of military equipment through its exports. Iran would benefit from selling its domestically produced weapons and other military equipment at a much lower price than other countries can offer. Syria is likely to be the first country to be interested in importing Iranian defense systems, especially after the two countries signed a defense agreement to strengthen bilateral military cooperation.[44]

Iran's primary goal in benefiting from the lifting of the arms embargo will be to address the weaknesses in its vital military sectors, such as the air force, submarines and warships, and develop its advanced capabilities in the air defense force. It is also likely that Iran will import advanced weapons from Russia and China with permission to produce them domestically through self-efforts, and this scenario is closest and appropriate to the Iranian economic reality.

4.   Expected Losses of Wider War with Iran address all the military scenarios

Before addressing the expected losses of the attacking parties, "Israel" as a first party and the United States as a secondary party, there are three broad forms that military action could take: a directed strike against Iranian nuclear facilities, a larger strike that included general military targets, or a full-scale invasion with the intent to overthrow the Iranian regime.[45]

The latter two scenarios are probably not realistic options for Israel to reduce the level of the Iranian nuclear threat, and Israel cannot work to achieve it alone, even with its strategic ally, which is America, since the latter has not yet recovered from the nightmare of Afghanistan and Iraq and has not completely healed from the global economic crisis that occurred in 2008.

In addition, there is a major problem with Washington and Tel Aviv, as the military operation against Iran will practically require more than just a series of attacks on a small area, but the attacking countries will need to expand

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[43] Ibid.

[44] Farhad Rezaei, The strategic consequences of ending the arms embargo on Iran, The Bulletin, August 14, 2020.
https://thebulletin.org/2020/08/the-strategic-consequences-of-ending-the-arms-embargo-on-iran/

[45] Whitney Raas and Austin Long, Osirak Redux?: Assessing Israeli Capabilities to Destroy Iranian Nuclear Facilities, (The MIT Press: USA)Vol. 31, No. 4 (Spring, 2007), pp. 9.

the fire circle to a large area beyond and target the main army and Iranian Revolutionary Guard headquarters during the first day of the military operations. Washington and Tel Aviv are obliged to target the main sites of non-state actors associated with Iran in various countries in the Middle East.[46] Also, talking about the war scenario between Washington and Tel Aviv on the one hand and Tehran on the other hand is not inevitable, but it is likely to happen in light of the increasing tension between those parties, but the most important question that is on the minds of observers and those interested in Middle East affairs, what are the costs of this war on Washington, Israel and its regional allies?

On the other hand, apprehension and appreciation of the expected losses from any war on Iran increases the fears of the United States and Israel, as these losses are always present in the strategic, military and security minds of both sides.

The Islamic Republic of Iran possesses various weapons that have the ability to target all American military bases stationed in many countries of the Middle East, and Tehran also has the ability to target US military naval vessels located in the Arabian Gulf, which is agreed upon by many experts, as the Russian military expert Konstantin expects Sevkov: "Tehran has enough weapons in its arsenal to inflict serious losses on the United States.[47]

The expert Sivkov estimates that the American losses will be from the early hours of the start of the war, in which the US army could lose hundreds of its soldiers, and that the Iranian armed forces could direct missile strikes to the enemy forces and destroy 10-15% of the military aircraft stationed in the Gulf.[48]

More broadly, the regional scene will carry many retaliatory responses and will not stop at Tehran alone. Rather, retaliatory responses will start from Iran, whether by the regular army or the Revolutionary Guard through secondary bases or through a backup plan developed by the Iranian military and political leadership, and at this time the first retaliatory responses will begin. The core of Iranian targets will then contain vital targets for the Gulf countries, including the US military bases and oil installations, in addition to targeting oil and military ships along the Gulf Sea and the Strait of Hormuz, and non-state actors associated with Iran will participate in the retaliatory operations, such as the Houthi group in Yemen, the Popular Mobilization Forces in Iraq and groups, The armed forces in Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the resistance factions in Gaza. At that time, the space for retaliatory

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[46] Rogers Paul, "Iran: Consequences of the outbreak of war," Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 11, pp. 37.36, (2006), 198-201.
[47] Website avia.pro, First US losses in the war with Iran announced, 23/5/2019.
http://avia.pro/news/ozvucheny-pervye-poteri-ssha-v-voyne-s-iranom
[48] Ibid.

responses will extend to Israel and US military bases in all countries of the Middle East.[49]

Conclusion

Tehran's large and diverse regular military force or its military allies in the Middle East prevents Israel from any unilateral military action, and makes the joint military action between Washington and Tel Aviv today heavy and risky, but war decision could overcome all these expected dangers and start with accurate and wide military operations, which will put the regional and international arenas on the edge of wars, which can only be stopped by invading one party, which is something that absolutely cannot be rushed!

Obviously, in the Iranian case, the preventive war cannot be stopped at the borders of the first military operations in striking Iranian nuclear sites and military sites for the Iranian army and the Iranian Revolutionary Guards. Non-state actors will conduct military actions and attack "Israel" and the interests of the United States in the Middle East as a whole.

In other cases, the war against Iran and its non-state actors is bound to be a strategic threat to the security of "Israel" and the interests of the United States in the Middle East. Washington and Tel Aviv could have finished off Tehran at the beginning of the Iranian nuclear file in 2003, but it lost this opportunity today due to the development of the extended Iranian military force in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen to the Gaza Strip. "Israel" is also aware that delaying the war is more harmful to its power.

In other words, the United States and "Israel" are well aware of the risks and losses that are expected to pay if they launch a war against Iran, and therefore it is expected that both countries will refrain from targeting Iran because of the great security risks related to that decision. So, the scene will return to the beginning of searching for a peaceful way out of the crisis, which in turn guarantees the West and Israel to limit the risks attributed to Iran and its alliance in the region, and on the other hand, guarantees Iran its national rights.

Likewise, Iran will not accept the American and international sanctions imposed on it, which will escalate tension in the region and raise the ceiling of expectations and risks related to the outbreak of a comprehensive or limited war between the various parties. Therefore, there is no way out for the United States, the West and "Israel" to come out of the crisis except through the official declaration of Iran, its full national rights and regional sovereignty, and a return to the "Vienna 5 + 1" agreement.

On the other hand, if we resolve the debate over assessing the ability of "Israel" to destroy the Iranian nuclear facilities, especially after the

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[49] Paul, "Iran: Consequences of the outbreak of war, 2003-207.

modernization that accompanied its air force and firepower that might enable it to destroy nuclear facilities. The desired benefit of a military operation is to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. A very important question is raised here, which is: Is this benefit worth the operational risks and the political and military costs?

So after the end of all the circumstances before Israel realizes Begin's preventive doctrine in the Iranian scene, nothing remains in front of it except what the former Mossad chief, Meir Dagan said, regarding the continuation of the shadow war with Iran in an effort to delay the maturation of the nuclear program at a time when stopping it is impossible and fraught with very great risks for the "Israeli" national security.

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The Impact of Deductive, Inductive and Mixed Methods of Instruction on EFL Students' Public Speaking Skill (A Case of Georgian Higher Educational Institution)

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Abstract
The paper aims to assess EFL students' abilities to master public speaking skills at higher educational levels when applying different teaching approaches: inductive, deductive, and mixed (inductive & deductive) ones. Public speaking samples, namely TED talk videos, were used for observation and inspection during the teaching procedure, accompanied by various public speaking tasks and assessment rubrics that students participated in. The forty-seven video-taped public speaking performances, which were prepared and delivered by the participants, were analyzed and scored with the help of Public Speaking Competence Rubric (PSCR). The speeches were assessed by the researcher and some other expert and non-expert raters, as well as students themselves to maintain objectivity and avoid any kind of bias. Students were all informed about and taught the criteria that the PSCR involves during the studying procedure. The experiment was based on students representing B2 level of English language according to Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and it was carried out at one of the private HEIs in Tbilisi, Georgia. Statistical data were collected through pre, while and post-experimental tests in terms of public speaking performance and later analyzed in the SPSS program. According to the research results, TED Talk video samples have a positive impact on EFL students' public speaking skills quality when accompanied by mixed (inductive and deductive) methodological teaching approaches. Particularly they improved their gesturing and posture,

the majority of them overcame the stage fright (standing and speaking in front of an audience), their speeches became more organized.

Keywords: Public speaking, deductive approach, inductive approach, TED Talks

Introduction

As society evolves, students require more instruments to learn new information and create discoveries. Teaching or learning a language is a dynamic process in which new approaches and ideas emerge with each new individual coming into contact with it. English instructors have a plethora of materials, ideas, and facilities at their disposal to conduct an effective lesson. Language learning strategies develop in tandem with culture (Harmer, 2007). When communication between nations is at its peak, this is referred to as a communicative technique. These ideas form the foundation of modern language teaching methods (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). According to Brown (1994), communicative language teaching (CLT) prepares students for real-life situations outside the classroom by providing them with skills and strategies. In short, authenticity in the classroom is critical for improving learners' real-life skills. That is why the ability of public speaking has been stressed at large in the twenty-first century since it integrates all skills crucial for a language student. Teachers must instill in their pupils the importance of thinking creatively, working cooperatively, and speaking boldly. These abilities, which were once considered soft skills, are now more necessary than ever, and teaching public speaking is on the rise at schools and higher educational institutions (HEIs), but not everywhere yet. Georgian HEIs are no exception in this regard; they lack required public speaking courses, particularly those that are linked with L2. So, the author chose to address an existent issue in the country, namely at HEIs, and experimented with one of the private universities to demonstrate the necessity of such courses and the efficacy of the methods used while teaching it.

Literature Review

According to Shyam and Joy (2016), public speaking is a structured speech pattern given to an audience with three major goals in mind: to inform, persuade and entertain. Public speaking is the way to unlocking empathy, sparking passion, sharing information and ideas, and supporting a common dream (Anderson, 2016). Public speaking is not a new phenomenon and history is replete with instances of great orators and public speakers dating back to ancient Greece and continuing into modern civilization. In the fifth century B.C., the Greeks began to study rhetoric (Kennedy, 2007). According

to Rapp (2010), rhetoric is the study and practice of persuading audiences via communication.

Current internationalization and globalization tendencies place a great value on strengthening students' communication ability at a higher educational level. (Killick, 2015; Kramsch, 2014; Choudaha & Wit, 2014). Despite its popularity, CLT is not completely adopted in every country's secondary or higher education system for a variety of reasons like large classrooms, a lack of appropriate teaching materials and textbooks that will primarily focus on improving students' communicative skills, and many more are the primary factors impeding the process's smooth flow (Anderson, 1993; Campbell & Zhao, 1993; Liao, 2000; Wu, 2011, Savignon, 2002). Another major difficulty is students' L2 level, accompanied by inadequate language skills, which impedes the process of fully implementing CLT and forces teachers to assist them by educating in methods other than CLT. This style of education may result in instructor control, as in traditional classrooms, and therefore the fundamental advantage of CLT, learner-centered instruction, is lost (Yu, 2001; Liao, 2004; Li, 1998; Liao, 2000; Chang, 2011).

Choosing appropriate teaching methods and techniques for a certain EFL community and culture is critical for adopting and integrating public speaking skills (PSS) in the educational environment. Thus, teaching public speaking at higher education institutions is critical because clear teaching standards, appropriate training, and regular practice produce the desired results. For more than a decade, arguments regarding the utility and efficiency of EFL teaching techniques have dominated the educational arena, particularly when comparing deductive versus inductive teaching approaches in teaching English as a Foreign Language. The deductive approach is based on top-down theory, in which language is seen from whole to small pieces, whereas the inductive approach is based on bottom-up theory, in which learning focuses on portions of the language and then generalizes it as the whole (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2001). Both methods have pros and downsides. Although the deductive approach provides learners with theory, explanation, and problem-solving strategies, it limits students' capacity to think critically and come up with their own answers to issues. In contrast, the inductive approach allows students to draw their own assumptions based on examples and then expand the theory or problem-solving approaches using logical and critical thinking. However, it requires more time and effort to achieve the greatest results (Liu, 2016). According to Swartz (1997), teaching should entail assisting students in discovering methods to improve their language study and make it more concrete and helpful in real-life practices, and this will only happen if learners are actively involved in the construction process and critically examine things. As Dalton (1997) claims "the main point of public speaking is not structure or performance, but rather communicating something meaningful, developing

ideas, justifying and providing the rationale for arguments, and bringing the community together" (p.7). In today's classroom, there is neither a single obvious and straightforward approach nor style of teaching communication competence nor is it with public speaking skills. Therefore, the experiment will reveal the effectiveness of each approach based on the methodology discussed below and will demonstrate which method works best in applying and implementing public speaking techniques at a higher educational level.

Participants and Sampling

Totally 47 (20 male and 27 female) students were taking part in the experiment from different faculties: Media which involves students from the faculty of 1) Journalism and Mass communications, 2) Public Relations (PR); department of Governance which involves students from 1) International Relations and Diplomacy, 2) Public Administration; faculty of Economics; and faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences which involves future teachers, psychologists, sociologists. There were three groups: one control group and two experimental groups with varying training methods. For the control group, the researcher used the deductive teaching technique, for experimental group 1 – the inductive teaching strategy, and experimental group 2 - the hybrid teaching approach. Students in the three groups ranged in age from 18 to 21, 35 freshmen, 7 sophomores, and 5 junior ones. All the participants were monolinguals enrolled at the same university learning English as a foreign language. Convenient sampling was used by the researcher as the university administration distributes groups itself. Likewise, the administration tests the students' level based on B2 level (CEFR) tests. For the sake of impartiality and to minimize external variables influencing the outcome, the researcher checked students' learning styles before the experiment began, by using a questionnaire that evaluates students' inductive and deductive learner typology and thinking skills. Based on the six-item questionnaire (see appendix A) it was possible to balance the number of deductive and inductive learners per group so that if the control group had ten deductive learners, the same number of these types of learners should be present in the experimental groups, as well as the number of inductive learners. As a result, any bias resulting from the learners' skills and learner types is eliminated, and the research findings are only the result of teaching techniques, rather than the learners' learning styles or preferences. Here (table 1) is an example of one group (the experimental group 1) and the computation of the proportion of deductive and inductive learners in this group.

Table 1: *The proportion of deductive and inductive learners in experimental group1*

B2 level experimental group 1	Inductive Questions			Deductive Questions		
Students' codes	Q.1	Q.3	Q.6	Q.2	Q.4	Q.5
G008-0001	4	5	4	3	2	1
G008-0002	5	5	4	1	1	1
G008-0003	4	4	4	2	2	1
G008-0004	2	2	1	5	4	4
G008-0005	1	1	2	4	4	4
G008-0006	3	5	4	1	2	3
G008-0007	2	2	1	5	4	3
G008-0008	3	2	3	5	4	4
G008-0009	1	2	1	3	4	5
G008-0010	3	4	4	1	1	1
G008-0011	5	5	5	2	2	1
G008-0012	4	5	4	2	1	3
G008-0013	4	4	5	2	2	1
G008-0014	1	2	2	4	5	5
G008-0015	5	5	5	3	2	3
G008-0016	2	1	1	5	4	3
G008-0017	4	3	4	1	1	2
G008-0018	1	1	1	4	3	3

Deductive learners were labeled in green, whereas inductive learners were coded in yellow. The first three columns show different sorts of inductive questions and students' replies on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from never (1) to always (5). Similarly, the next three columns contain deductive question categories and student replies. We can observe from the data that students marked primarily 3,4,5 on a Likert scale for inductive question types and mostly 1, 2, and sometimes 3 for deductive question types. As a result, these pupils learn inductively. Similarly, pupils who answered 3,4,5 for deductive questions and 1,2,3 for inductive ones are considered to be deductive learners. As a result, we can observe that Experimental group 1 has 10 inductive and 8 deductive learners. The identical process was carried out in experimental group 2 and the control group, with the same proportion of inductive/deductive learners, 10/8 in each group.

The experimental phase was part of a teaching method that lasted one academic semester, particularly 15 weeks. Before the experimental process, the participants were provided with an "informed consent" form (See appendix B) which they were required to sign if they consented to participate in this experiment. All students, both in the experimental and control groups, used the same coursebook, which included authentic listening materials in the form of TED Talks. Pre experimental and Post experimental questionnaires (See appendix C) checking students' awareness and progress in public speaking

were statistically analyzed. The mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis were calculated for each Likert-scale item per group, and based on the findings the answers are claimed to be reliable and trustworthy.

Procedure

Throughout the semester, it was observed how much working on TED samples improved students' public speaking skills using three different teaching methods: "deductive approach," "inductive approach," and "mixed" to determine which one works best in developing students' public speaking skills in English as a foreign language. PSS improvement was observed almost in every student's case, with slight differences in strong points. The majority of them showed improvements in body language, such as gesture and posture, less movement during speech, and more eye contact with the audience. Some of them represented well-organised structures, giving realia and evidence for their persuasive speeches, etc. To begin, the three groups, taught by the same teacher, used the same coursebook and material and had the same teaching hours. In addition, the time devoted to public speaking discussions and preparations was identical. The semester began and ended at the same time, and the number of public speaking performances was also identical, specifically mini speeches (max 5 mins.)– for preparation and practice 4 times per semester, big speeches (10-12 mins) in terms of pre, while and post-test performances 3 times per semester _ at the beginning of the term to check students' level of public speaking, in the middle of the semester to see how the technique and practice worked in each group's instance, and at the end of the semester after all of the resources for public speaking preparation and practice have been used to see how participants progressed or regressed over the semester. The sole difference between these groups was - teaching methodology: the control group was taught with a deductive approach, experimental group 1- with an inductive approach, and experimental group 2 - with a mixed (inductive + deductive) approach.

In the control group, the instructor began the courses by explaining public speaking skills. Then she distributed ready-made handouts prepared with the assistance of the website www.RateSpeeches.com that contains all the necessary public speaking techniques. Each handout comprised public speaking standards and strategies, as well as terminology and its explanation, so that the students were aware of public speaking guidelines by reading the handout and listening to their instructor's explanation of each word specified in the handout. In certain situations, the instructor was required to interpret some points to make them clearer to the class. After listening to the TED Talk, the students had to check the boxes next to each phrase in the handout that was acted out by the TED speaker and discuss them with their instructor. This sort

of practice and mastery of public speaking methods occurred 9 times per semester since the teacher had 9 handouts in total, 3 of which focus on PS delivery tactics, 3 on the contents of the speech, and the other 3 handouts typically address time management and slide designs, etc. Furthermore, the teacher gave mini-presentations on public speaking methods once or twice per semester to recap all that had been taught. To summarize, the deductive approach is primarily teacher-centered because the instructor provides all the information and explains the rules and the techniques. Students in this scenario work simply with what their instructor gives them; they do not research PS approaches on their own and do not take an active role in building a critical learning environment.

Students in the inductive and mixed methodological classrooms, on the other hand, actively participated in the creation processes. They created their own handouts and rules and had critical discussions about the topics. Their suggestions were sometimes better and more comprehensive than those in the handouts. The following is the teaching-learning process in experimental group 1, using an inductive classroom setting. First, the instructor collected from students the methods required for public speaking, and after eliciting one or two techniques, the teacher offered students a mini demonstration of how to evaluate each approach. Following that, students viewed the TED talk and wrote notes on some Dos and Don'ts, i.e., likes and dislikes of the speech. The teacher provided pupils with a handout that simply contains the terminology without explanation. Students examined the terminology and attempted to provide their own interpretations for the words defined in the handout. Depending on the number of students in each group, they worked in teams. Each group displayed a self-designed handout with their own explanations and interpretations of the terminology. Students created their own public speaking methods and rules, which they then offered to their peers to compare. If there was a need for clarification of anything, the teacher took open class feedback by asking some questions. To summarize, the teaching/learning approach was entirely student-centered, since each participant was equally involved in the process of developing rules that they would use in the future. The teacher was only a facilitator who was watching to ensure that the process was under control. Every member in each group had their own job: some were writing, others were giving ideas, some were looking for further online materials, and so on.

Similarly, in experimental group 2, with mixed methodological methods, elicitation technique occurred in the same manner as in the inductive group. Here is the procedure for how it was conducted. Firstly, students were given a handout with just terms on it, like in the inductive group, and they worked in the same manner. Collaboration and group work took place while considering some practical explanations and analysis for each provided notion.

After the completion of the debates in their own groups, they switched places with other students, and two members from each group carried the material to another group to compare and fill up any gaps. Students watched the TED talk to get some ideas from the sample and to check the boxes utilized by the speaker. After summarizing, the teacher distributed a pre-designed handout (the one that was used in the deductive group). Having all the rules and explanations on it, students could compare their thoughts to those provided on the handout with cautious and critical thinking. Each group reflected what they already had and what they added from the handout, resulting in a hybrid form of the rules. Then they watched the Ted talk and marked the items that were performed in the sample, they assessed good and bad points according to the recommendations they had combined.

In short, the students in the control group learn from their instructor, remember the provided information, and try to apply it in their own practice; whereas students in the experimental groups first analyze information based on their own observations, inspect, explore, and create their own versions of handouts, which they then combine with already tried and tested models of the materials and handouts for later application. It is logical to state that when students work on an issue on their own, with or without a team, then listen to others' opinions and suggestions, compare and critically examine the given information, they master any skill much better than the person who is simply a passive listener of the information provided. As a result, it is not surprising that the experimental group students outperformed the control group students over the semester while working on public speaking methods and subsequently delivering their own speeches. It has to be mentioned that a change for the better was observed in the control group as well, albeit not to the same degree as it was in the experimental groups, particularly in the mixed experimental group, where improvement was by far the best and greatest. The result is demonstrated by displaying the findings and statistical calculations below.

Instruments

The Public Speaking Competence Rubric (PSCR) (See appendix D) by Schreiber (2012) was used to assess each participant's performance using reliable techniques of assessment. PSCR was chosen for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, it is frequently utilized for public speaking evaluation at the higher education level since it is understandable by both students and speech raters. Second, it is an excellent combination of the most necessary PS approaches and includes virtually all key features demonstrated in previous public speaking rubrics such as Thomson and Rucker's (2002), Morreale et al. (2007), Lucas' (2007), AAC&U's VALUE rubric (Rhodes, 2010), and many more. Some rubrics had too many criteria to look at, while others had too few;

some provided a comprehensive and exact description of each criterion, while others lacked such accuracy. So, for the experiment, the best option was chosen, which covers nine core competencies and two additional ones to determine a precise level of public speech on a 5-point scale with corresponding scores and descriptors, where band 4 represents an advanced level of PS, 3- proficient, 2- basic, 1- minimal, 0- deficient. Following the selection of the evaluation rubric, the researcher used the tool to test participants' and raters' comprehension of each criterion. The researcher required students' comprehension of the rubric to make them aware of the needs outlined in it for PS development and to test peer evaluation among participants to improve their critical thinking abilities. As a result, it was critical for participants to fully comprehend the rubric. In terms of raters, all three of them had professional experience in assessing speaking, particularly public speaking skills. Two were the researcher and her colleague, both of whom had extensive expertise in the field of EFL teaching and training, as well as extensive experience in public speaking and communicative skill evaluation. The third was a senior student from the faculty of International Relations and Diplomacy at the same university where the experiment was conducted, with extensive experience in public speaking in a variety of fields and venues, such as international conferences, delegating European Parliaments, chairing the IR committee, and so on. Two of the three raters were randomly assigned to alternately attend the participants' public speaking engagements. The third rater afterward watched the recorded films and evaluated the participants. Their assessments of the student's performance were extremely similar as they got full practise and understanding of the rubric that they were going to use for assessment before the experiment, during the so-called "practice session" which lasted for two days. Each day, raters saw three films and evaluated them in separate rooms to retain neutrality and provide unbiased comments. The degree of agreement was calculated through Cronbach Alpha where each set of assessments was higher than 0.8 (between 1 and 0.8) and p=0.000 which is lower than 0.01 meaning that the results from those raters were trustworthy.

Because the raters' assessments were similar, they attended the students' public speech performances three times per semester at the pre, during, and post-experimental testing procedures and assessed participants' public speaking skills using the rubric mentioned above. Following each stage, the answers were compared and calculated about one another. The results of these assessments, as well as the experiment's outcome, are shown below.

Results/findings and analysis of the results

SPSS 16.0 was used to perform statistical analysis on the collected data. The paired-samples t-test was used to determine whether the difference between the control and experimental groups' results was statistically significant.

T-test was calculated using the means of each test:
- for the control group and experimental group 1 (**table 2)**
- for the control group and experimental group 2 (**table 3**)
- for experimental groups 1 and 2 (**table 4**)

Table 2. *Summary for T-test (B2 level) Means of Control group and Experimental group 1.*

	Control Group	Experimental Group[1 (inductive approach)]
Pre- test	17.31	18.44
While -test	21.69	27.28
Post-test	25.92	35.00
Delayed-test	19.08	29.06

Table 3. *Summary for T-test (B2 level) Means of Control group and Experimental group 2.*

	Control Group	Experimental Group[2 (mixed approach)]
Pre- test	17.31	18.50
While -test	21.69	28.13
Post-test	25.92	39.56
Delayed-test	19.08	38.38

Table 4. *Summary for T-test (B2 level) Means of Experimental group 1 and Experimental group 2.*

	Experimental Group[1 (inductive approach)]	Experimental Group[2 (mixed approach)]
Pre- test	18.44	18.50
While -test	27.28	28.13
Post-test	35.00	39.56
Delayed-test	29.06	38.38

The means at the pre-test level in the control and experimental groups were fairly close to each other in the tables above (2,3,4), indicating that the participants in all groups were more or less at the same level before the experimental treatment. However, as compared to the control group, the mean per group changed substantially in experimental group 1 and dramatically in experimental group 2. The transition from pre-test to while-test and subsequently from while-test to post-test was evident in both experimental groups although it was more pronounced in experimental group 2, where a mixed teaching method was used.

Table 5. *Statistical data of all three groups*

Groups	Confidence interval	Mean	Std.Deviation	df	significance	t
Control/Exp.1	95%	2.28	6.35	5	P=0.000	8.78
Control/Exp.2	95%	2.36	7.94	5	P=0.001	7.31
Exp.1/Exp.2	95%	2.63	8.49	5	P=0.001	7.59

To summarize table (5) above, we may state that the difference in the outcomes between the control and experimental groups is statistically significant, because not only did the experimental groups' results grew more than the control group's results, but t-test paired sample statistics revealed the significance (p) which is less than 0.05 in all three situations, demonstrating that there is a statistical difference between the groups and that this difference is statistically important. T >1 in all three cases strengthens the fact that significance is important. Furthermore, the statistical Mean of the control and experimental group 2= 2.36 which is greater than the Mean result of control and experimental group 1=2.28. In other words, 2.36 > 2.28, indicating that the difference between the control and experimental groups 2 is greater. Consequently, progress in public speaking abilities was greater among participants in experimental group 2 than in experimental group 1. However, the outcomes were higher in both experimental groups than in the control group. As a result, we may say the experiment was a success.

To strengthen the fact that the experiment was successful, a delayed test was held a month later. The individuals and the surroundings remained the same as they had been during the experiment. As a result, the participants were asked to make one persuasive speech in front of the same audience to demonstrate how their public speaking abilities remained consistent over time. Due to the break between academic semesters, the researcher did not have great hopes of students executing the speeches substantially better than they did the previous time. However, the expectation was that the situation would not be significantly different from the experimental period, and only in that scenario could we have claimed that the experimental treatment had a long-term effect on participants and the experiment was effective. According to tables (2,3,4) above, there was no rise in PSS improvement based on the evaluation they received in the delayed test. However, keeping more or less the same level or very little reduction might also be a sign of a favorable trial outcome. But in the case of the control groups, the decline was fairly obvious, indicating that that sort of approach was inefficient or at least short-termed. As we can see, the control group's mean declined substantially, and from the

post-test mean result of 25.92, it plummeted to 19.08, virtually back to where it was before the experimental period began. In the case of experimental group 1, it has also reduced, although not as much as in the case of the control group, and from the post-test mean result of 35, it has dropped to 29.06 (delayed test result). In this situation, the mean result remained at the level obtained after the while-test, indicating that the therapy is effective. In the instance of experimental group 2, the change was not as severe as in previous situations, with practically no reduction seen. The mean of the post-test result for experimental group 2 was 39.56, while the mean of the delayed-test result was 38.38. We cannot call it a reduction since, after a while, a shift like this is natural, especially when students were on vacation and, most likely, none of them used public speaking methods during that time. As a result, we can state that the experimental therapy in mixed methodology classrooms was effective and had a long-term influence on the participants.

The same can be asserted using the SPSS tables (2.1; 3.1; 4.1.) below, where we calculated the t-test based on the means, this time incorporating the delayed-test results, and below is the outcome. In table 2.1., where the results of the control group and experimental group 1 are compared, we can see that t=10.93, the confidence interval for the difference is 95 percent, the mean is 2.27, and the standard deviation is 5.88; df=7, p=0.000<0.05; meaning that the difference between the control group and experimental group1 results are statistically important.

Table 2.1: *Paired Samples Test for Control and Experimental group 1 (B2 level)*

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	
Pair 1	VAR00001 – (scores in Control group) VAR00002 (scores in Experimental group 1)	2.27225E1	5.88077	2.07917	17.80605	27.63895	10.929	7	.000

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	VAR00001 (scores in Control group)	24.2225	8	6.16284	2.17889
	VAR00002 (scores in Experimental group 1)	1.5000	8	.53452	.18898

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	VAR00001 (scores in Control group) & VAR00002 (scores in Experimental group 1)	8	.559	.150

In table 3.1. where the control group and experimental group 2 results are compared, we can see that t= 8.21, confidence interval of the difference is again 95%, mean=2.46, Std.Deviation=8.46, df=7, p=0.000<0.05; meaning that the difference between the control group and experimental group 2 results are statistically important.

Table 3.1. *Paired Samples Test for Control and Experimental group 2 (B2 level)*

		Paired Differences							
			Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean			Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	VAR00001 – (scores in Control group) VAR00002 (scores in Experimental group 2)	2.45712 E1	8.46252	2.99195	17.49641	31.64609	8.212	7	.000

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	VAR00001(scores in Control group)	26.0712	8	8.78204	3.10492
	VAR00002 (scores in Experimenta l group 2)	1.5000	8	.53452	.18898

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlatio n	Sig.
Pair 1	VAR00001 (scores in Control group) & VAR00002 (scores in Experimental group 2)	8	.617	.103

In table 4.1, where experimental group 1 and experimental group 2 results are compared, we can see that t=9.83, confidence interval of the difference is again 95%, mean=2.78, Std.Deviation=8.00, df=7, p=0.000<0.05; meaning that the difference between experimental group1 and experimental group 2 results are statistically important.

Table 4.1. *Paired Samples Test for experimental group 1 and experimental group 2 (B2 level)*

		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviati on	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	VAR00001 - (scores in Experimental group 1) VAR00002 (scores in Experimental group 2)	2.77938 E1	7.99554	2.82685	21.10931	34.47819	9.832	7	.000

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	VAR00001 (scores in Experimental group 1)	29.2938	8	8.10899	2.86696
	VAR00002 (scores in Experimental group 2)	1.5000	8	.53452	.18898

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	VAR00001 (scores in Experimental group 1) & VAR00002 (scores in Experimental group 2)	8	.244	.561

Conclusion

Table 6 below, which summarizes experiment findings for B2 level groups, clearly shows that T > 1 in all three situations, indicating that the outcome is already positive. In addition, while determining which experimental group produced a more efficient outcome, we can look at the means, and here we can see that 2.46 > 2.27, indicating that experimental group 2 produced a more efficient result based on delayed test results. As a result, we can confidently claim that the combined methodological approach performed far better than the exclusive inductive technique. However, both experimental groups outperformed the control group in terms of efficiency. Particularly in terms of body language, voice control, eye contact, the organizational structure of the speech, even the slide designs, etc. Overall, we can claim that the majority of students' stage fright, which was visible from pre-experimental questionnaire, was overcome during the experiment.

Table 6. *Summary of experimental results*

Groups at B2 level	Paired sample T test	Mean	Significance (p)
Control and Exp.1	10.93	2.27	p=0.000<0.05;
Control and Exp.2	8.21	2.46	p=0.000<0.05
Exp.1 and Exp.2	9.83	2.78	p=0.000<0.05

The research limitations and works to be done further

As for the limitations of the study we can name the number of students per group. We could have more students, but unfortunately, we had to exclude their results from the experiment due to their frequent absence. To generalize the findings in the future, the researcher is planning to conduct a similar experiment at other levels, namely at C1 (advanced) level, to see whether the procedure and methodology work the same way and gives the same positive result as it happened at B2 level.

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Appendix A
Learner Typology Questionnaire
https://forms.gle/UU3mtfJ44nqdZCNf9

Appendix B
Informed Consent
https://forms.gle/Nibs9k6pw9vSf8Gn8

Appendix C
Pre & Post Experimental Questionnaire
https://forms.gle/5T7TJeYhgZVv46D3A

Appendix D
PSCR Rubric and Score sheet

Public Speaking Competence Rubric for Speeches
Individual Student Score Sheet

Name or Participant ID#_____

Performance Standards					Score
Advanced 4	Proficient 3	Basic 2	Minimal 1	Deficient 0	
The Student...					
1. Selects a topic appropriate to the audience and occasion					
2. Formulates an introduction that orients audience to topic and speaker					
3. Uses an effective organizational pattern					
4. Locates, synthesizes and employs compelling supporting materials					
5. Develops a conclusion that reinforces the thesis and provides psychological closure					
6. Demonstrates a careful choice of words					
7. Effectively uses vocal expression and paralanguage to engage the audience					
8. Demonstrates nonverbal behavior that supports the verbal message					
9. Successfully adapts the presentation to the audience					
10. Skillfully makes use of visual aids					
11. Constructs an effectual persuasive message with credible evidence and sound reasoning					
Total Score					
Total divided by # of relevant categories					
Public Speaking Proficiency Rating					

Proficiency Rating Scale	
4.00 – 3.50	Advanced
3.49 – 3.00	Proficient
2.99 – 2.50	Basic
2.49 – 1.00	Minimal
.99 - 0	Deficient

Public Speaking Competence Rubric
for Evaluating Speeches

Performance Standard	Assessment Criteria				
The student....	Advanced 4	Proficient 3	Basic 2	Minimal 1	Deficient 0
1. Selects a topic appropriate to the audience and occasion	Topic engages audience; topic is worthwhile, timely, and presents new information to the audience	Topic is appropriate to the audience and situation and provides some useful information to the audience	Topic is untimely or lacks originality; provides scant new information to audience	Topic is too trivial, too complex, or inappropriate for audience; topic not suitable for the situation	A single topic cannot be deduced
2. Formulates an introduction that orients audience to topic and speaker	Excellent attention getter; firmly establishes credibility; sound orientation to topic; clear thesis; preview of main points cogent and memorable	Good attention getter; generally establishes credibility; provides some orientation to topic; discernible thesis; previews main points	Attention getter is mundane; some-what develops credibility; awkwardly composed thesis; provides little direction for audience	Irrelevant opening; little attempt to build credibility; abrupt jump into body of speech; thesis and main points can be deduced but are not explicitly stated	No opening technique; no credibility statement; no background on topic; no thesis; no preview of points
3. Uses an effective organizational pattern	Very well organized; main points clear, mutually exclusive and directly related to thesis; effective transitions and signposts	Organizational pattern is evident, main points are apparent; transitions present between main points; some use of signposts	Organizational pattern somewhat evident; main points are present but not mutually exclusive; transitions are present but are minimally effective	Speech did not flow well; speech was not logically organized; transitions present but not well formed	No organizational pattern; no transitions; sounded as if information was randomly presented

Zoom in (Ctrl+Plus)

4. Locates, synthesizes and employs compelling supporting materials	All key points are well supported with a variety of credible materials (e.g. facts, stats, quotes, etc.); sources provide excellent support for thesis; all sources clearly cited	Main points were supported with appropriate material; sources correspond suitably to thesis; nearly all sources cited	Points were generally supported using an adequate mix of materials; some evidence supports thesis; source citations need to be clarified	Some points were not supported; a greater quantity/ quality of material needed; some sources of very poor quality	Supporting materials are non-existent or are not cited
5. Develops a conclusion that reinforces the thesis and provides psychological closure	Provides a clear and memorable summary of points; refers back to thesis / big picture; ends with strong clincher or call to action	Appropriate summary of points; some reference back to thesis; clear clincher or call to action	Provides some summary of points; no clear reference back to thesis; closing technique can be strengthened	Conclusion lacks clarity; trails off; ends in a tone at odds with the rest of the speech	No conclusion; speech ends abruptly and without closure
6. Demonstrates a careful choice of words	Language is exceptionally clear, imaginative and vivid; completely free from bias, grammar errors and inappropriate usage	Language appropriate to the goals of the presentation; no conspicuous errors in grammar; no evidence of bias	Language selection adequate; some errors in grammar; language at times misused (e.g. jargon, slang, awkward structure)	Grammar and syntax need to be improved as can level of language sophistication; occasionally biased	Many errors in grammar and syntax; extensive use of jargon, slang, sexist/racist terms or mispronunciations
7. Effectively uses vocal expression and paralanguage to engage the audience	Excellent use of vocal variation, intensity and pacing; vocal expression natural and enthusiastic; avoids fillers	Good vocal variation and pace; vocal expression suited to assignment; few if any fillers	Demonstrates some vocal variation; enunciates clearly and speaks audibly; generally avoids fillers (e.g. um, uh, like)	Sometimes uses a voice too soft or articulation too indistinct for listeners to comfortably hear; often uses fillers	Speaks inaudibly; enunciates poorly; speaks in monotone; poor pacing; distracts listeners with fillers

Page 2

8. Demonstrates nonverbal behavior that supports the verbal message	Posture, gestures, facial expression and eye contact well developed, natural, and display high levels of poise and confidence	Postures, gestures and facial expressions are suitable for speech, speaker appears confident	Some reliance on notes, but has adequate eye contact, generally avoids distracting mannerisms	Speaker relies heavily on notes; nonverbal expression stiff and unnatural	Usually looks down and avoids eye contact; nervous gestures and nonverbal behaviors distract from or contradict the message
9. Successfully adapts the presentation to the audience	Speaker shows how information is personally important to audience; speech is skillfully tailored to audience beliefs, values, and attitudes; speaker makes allusions to culturally shared experiences	Speaker implies the importance of the topic to the audience; presentation is adapted to audience beliefs, attitudes and values; an attempt is made to establish common ground	Speaker assumes but does not articulate the importance of topic; presentation was minimally adapted to audience beliefs, attitudes, and values; some ideas in speech are removed from audience's frame of reference or experiences	The importance of topic is not established; very little evidence of audience adaptation; speaker needs to more clearly establish a connection with the audience	Speech is contrary to audience beliefs, values, and attitudes; message is generic or canned; no attempt is made to establish common ground

Additional Performance Standards can be found on following page.

Page 3

Additional Performance Standards (To be added to grading rubric as needed)					
10. Skillfully makes use of visual aids	Exceptional explanation and presentation of visual aids; visuals provide powerful insight into speech topic; visual aids of high professional quality	Visual aids well presented; use of visual aids enhances understanding; visual aids good quality	Visual aids were generally well displayed and explained; minor errors present in visuals	Speaker did not seem well practiced with visuals; visuals not fully explained; quality of visuals needs improvement	Use of the visual aids distracted from the speech; visual aids not relevant; visual aids poor professional quality
11. Constructs an effectual persuasive message with credible evidence and sound reasoning	Articulates problem and solution in a clear, compelling manner; supports claims with powerful /credible evidence; completely avoids reasoning fallacies; memorable call to action	Problem and solution are clearly presented; claims supported with evidence and examples; sound reasoning evident; clear call to action	Problem and solution are evident; most claims are supported with evidence; generally sound reasoning; recognizable call to action	Problem and/or solution are somewhat unclear; claims not fully supported with evidence; some reasoning fallacies present; call to action vague	Problem and/or solution are not defined; claims not supported with evidence; poor reasoning; no call to action

Swearing on Twitter: Khaleeji Dialect

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Abstract
Swearing is an inevitable part of any language and culture around the world, yet each culture has its own distinctive swear words and phrases used among its members. This language phenomenon is observed on Twitter, one of the most popular social network platforms where heated comments often occur. In this study, the examination of the Khaleeji dialect of the Arabian Gulf countries on Twitter reflects the influence of culture, religion, and language on the perception and use of swearing in the Arabian Gulf. Upon corpus-based categorization and analysis of one hundred swear words and phrases written by Khaleejis on Twitter, the data shows that Khaleejis refer to ten different thematic swearing categories, with animals being their top reference. The findings accordingly answer the following questions: What swear words do Khaleejis often use? What is the logic behind opting for the swear words recorded?

Keywords: Swearing, Khaleeji dialect, social media, Twitter, corpus

Introduction
Social media in all its forms has become an essential part of everyone's life in recent years. Active users of social media, as well as passive users, use different social network platforms for various reasons, such as reading news, posting personal posts, watching videos, commenting on events, etc. In the Middle East specifically, the Arab Social Media Report survey in 2015 showed that the primary motive for using social media in the Middle East was connecting with people in general, indicated by 55% of the overall result. This, in turn, means that users are more likely to interact with other users, whether

through interactive chats, expressing opinions, or inquiring about specific issues. Accordingly, it is possible that the language used on these platforms may be considered obscene or offensive in some cases (Mubarak et al., 2017), which could trigger many users to express their disapproval or negative stances in various ways. This can be easily seen on social media platforms as people interact with each other (Pamungkas et al., 2020), including but not limited to interactions of people from the Arabian Gulf.

The Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Gulf consists of six countries: Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Bahrain. However, due to Iraq's cultural and linguistic similarities with the rest of the countries of the council, many people consider Iraq part of the Gulf countries, which are also called "Khaleeji countries." Hence, in this study, the aforementioned seven countries are considered Khaleeji countries, where different forms of social media are used even though each country favors certain platforms over others. Many surveys on social media show that Facebook is the most used application in the Middle East overall. Yet, Radcliffe and Lam (2018) show that Facebook usership dropped from 76% to 55% in Saudi Arabia, in UAE from 83% to 70%, and in Qatar from 43% to 22%. However, it is difficult to validate whether the accounts are active since many users may have inactive accounts for their own reasons. Although not statistically proven, active usership of Facebook, for example, is almost nonexistent in Kuwait as Kuwaitis prefer other platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, and mainly Twitter.

Since Twitter is rich with controversial topics where heated comments and discussions occur (Pamungkas et al., 2020), the phenomenon of swearing on Twitter is addressed in this study through corpus-based analysis to answer the following questions: What words or phrases do Khaleejis often use to swear? What is the logic behind opting for the swear words recorded? These questions initially target the Khaleeji dialect from a linguistic perspective, but their answers will provide rich information about the notion of swearing in the Khaleeji culture. In the analysis process, controversial tweets were examined on topics that would trigger Twitter users to swear freely without any external factors influencing their swearing decisions. Therefore, religious and political subjects were avoided since they are considered not only taboo but also so sensitive that many people choose to avoid them to prevent legal action from being taken against them. Instead, the data involved tweets on a specific international soccer-related topic since it is the most popular sport in the region, one which people take seriously and about which they express their opinions freely. Data collection methods will be explained in further detail in this paper.

Literature Review
Swearing

First, the notion of swearing has been approached in several studies under different names, including but not limited to swear words, profanity, and cursing. It has been explained and defined differently in several studies, all of which were approached from diverse perspectives. Some scholars opted for general definitions such as that of Finn (2017): "Swearing, a linguistic universal, is used to express intense emotions (fear, joy, anger, excitement)" (p. 18), while others opted for more detailed definitions such as that of Vingerhoets et al. (2013): "a form of linguistic activity utilizing taboo words to convey the expression of strong emotions" (p. 287). For the sake of this paper, swearing is defined as any word or phrase that associates a negative quality to the target referent in the Khaleeji culture. Mercury (1995) states that all obscene language is taboo language because the use of these expressions in public is restricted in some way. However, swearing is based on a culture's taboo categories (Vingerhoets et al., 2013), which indicates that what is considered obscene or offensive in one culture might not be the case in another. Accordingly, the continuum of politeness and rudeness around the world is vague since there is no unified, universal line that determines appropriate use of language across all languages or cultures; every culture has its own politeness-impoliteness continuum and words that are considered to be swearing (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). Swear words are generally defined by social codes. For instance, as covered later in this study, calling someone a *cow* in China has an entirely different implication than in the United States.

Swearing is often used connotatively based on certain emotional nuances associated with each swear word or phrase (Taylor, 1995). That is, although swear words may have clear denotative or literal meanings, they are usually not perceived based on that denotative or literal meaning. For instance, when someone shouts "*Shit!*" due to accidentally hitting the table with their elbow, people nearby would not expect to see feces around the table; this word is commonly perceived as an explicit expression of emotion. This recalls the discussion mentioned earlier: swear words and phrases do not have universal perception in all cultures worldwide. It is possible, therefore, that in some cultures, shouting "*Shit!*" would be understood denotatively or literally. Accordingly, swearing is culture-based since each culture has its own perspective, ideas, and understandings of different tangible objects and abstract concepts. In the end, swearing is a product of language itself, and language reflects the practices, perspectives, products, and members of the culture (Moran, 2001). Therefore, analyzing Khaleeji dialect or cultural swearing on Twitter enhances our knowledge of how people in the area practice culture through language.

Data Collection Method

   One hundred tweets on Twitter were collected that included swear words or phrases about a controversial soccer-related topic; they were compiled into a corpus. The tweets search process was completely random; different soccer news accounts were visited then tweets about the target topic in their timelines were investigated. In this stage, tweets written by other accounts replying to those tweets were examined; if a tweet has swear words, then the owner's nationality is checked. If he/she was proved to be a Khaleeji, the tweet was finally recorded in the corpus. One of the challenges was to detect Khaleeji accounts on Twitter since they do not necessarily include information about their owners' nationalities. Hence, besides looking for tweets written in Khaleeji dialects, different techniques were followed to confirm the owners' nationalities. This involved checking the profile picture of the accounts, the followers and followings, as well as any clues in their bio or in their profile in general that would reveal their nationalities. Now it is essential to know the context in which the phenomenon of swearing takes place for full comprehension of the target swearing used (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008; Allan & Burridge, 1991). The topic includes a soccer player, Mauro Icardi, being stripped of the captaincy armband of an Italian team due to problems with his agent, Wanda Nara, who is also his wife, as she had spoken unprofessionally or disrespectfully about the team. Accordingly, the recorded swear words were in regard to the player, his wife, the club, the club management, the fans, or any other related referents in this context. As mentioned earlier, the logic behind focusing on an international soccer-related topic is that other religious or political topics might confine writers and control their choice of words, as they fear legal consequences; religion and politics are sensitive topics in the Gulf area since the law does not tolerate offenders against religion or public political figures in the region.

   After the data was collected, the swear words were classified thematically based on their semantic references (e.g., "زق" [shit] is classified as shit-related swearing). Then the data was analyzed based on the knowledge gained from all the references mentioned in this paper to clarify what these swear words reflect about swearing in Khaleeji dialect. In other words, the references in this paper were investigated to justify how and why the swear words recorded were used from cultural, religious, as well as linguistic perspectives. In the data collection process, linguistically manipulated swear words were also collected for the sake of this paper. For instance, in one of the tweets, "جحييييم" (he<u>eee</u>ll) had three ي letters extending the word but was still included in the data. Also, some tweets had more than one swear word; the one that was more emphasized was chosen in this case.

Results and Discussion
Animals

Animal-related words and phrases were the most common swearing category, accounting for 34% of the overall data collected. After close analysis of each sample, sheep were mentioned in exactly half of the samples, then dogs with 35%, and finally donkeys, bulls, and a general reference to the word "animal," with 3% for each category.

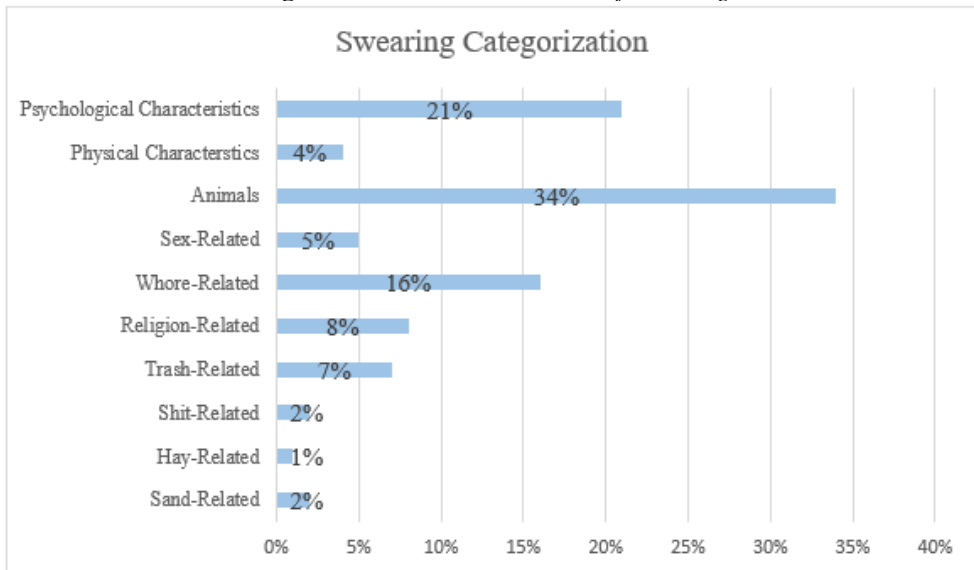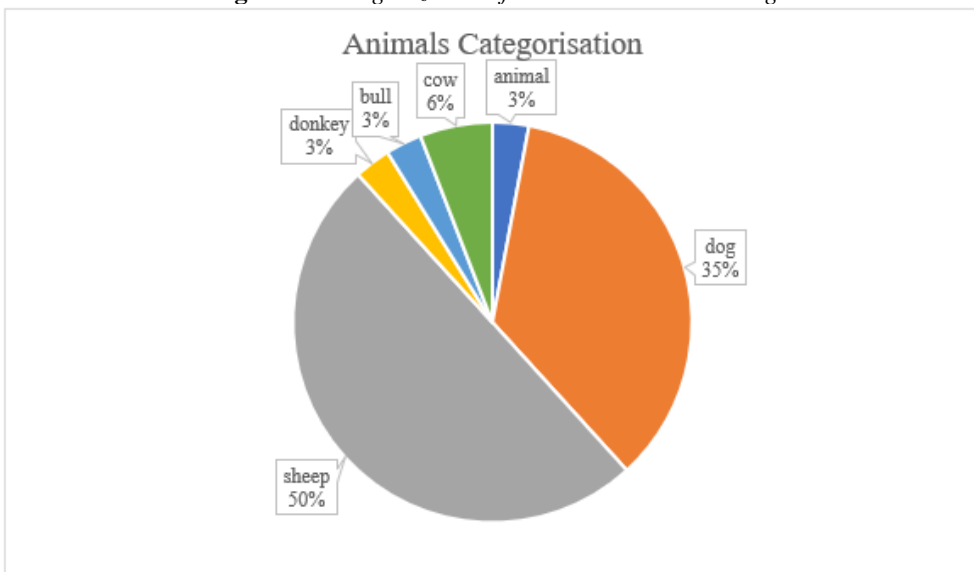**Figure 1:** *Thematic distribution of swearing*

Figure 2: *Categorization of animal-related swearing*

Animals, in general, have different connotations in cultures around the world. In their paper, Anjomshoa and Sadighi (2015) cover the different connotations between the English and Persian animal words. They state: "These differences are caused by religion, history, geographical environment, customs, and so on" (Anjomshoa & Sadighi, 2015, p. 76). Therefore, all the recorded animal-related words in the data were examined from the aforementioned perspectives in order to thoroughly understand the logic behind referring to these animals in specific in swearing.

"Animal" in General

There was only one tweet from the database in which the word "animal" was mentioned in general without specifying a particular animal: "ايكاردي حيوان" (Icardi is an animal). The widespread use of animal metaphors is based on the hierarchical structure in which humans stand above animals. Hence, referring to animals—including the term "animal" itself—reinforces the speaker's superiority over the addressee, as it excludes the addressee from the superlative humanistic structure. Humans are considered civil and smart creatures, unlike animals; therefore, by calling someone "animal" in general, the speaker assigns him/her with negative attributes such as depravity and stupidity (Haslam, 2017).

"Sheep"

Many newspapers and online articles in the Gulf countries, including those by Alhaidari (2014) and Alodhaidan (2015), have discussed the implication of calling males—especially those who are married—sheep in an adjective or noun form (e.g., a sheep husband). In general, and based on the articles mentioned, married men are called or referred to as sheep when they show extreme obedience to their wives, as they either follow them blindly, accept all their requests unconditionally, or fail to impose control over them. The articles criticize the implications of this term in society, as it links these false attributes with a sense of manhood. The term also reinforces the false importance of maintaining a male-dominant relationship between the husband and his wife. This, in turn, could reflect the prevailing sense of a typical husband-wife relationship in the Gulf area in which the husband is expected to dominate and maintain power in the marriage relationship by not adhering entirely to his wife's demands or requests.

"Dog" and "Donkey"

As for the terms "dog" and "donkey," they can be approached from another perspective. Citizens of the Gulf countries are predominantly Muslims. Kuwait, for example, has only 289 Christian citizens and another 23 citizens whose religion was not stated, among its total 1,402,801 citizens, according to the official report of the Public Authority for Civil Information back in 2018. Accordingly, religion probably has a significant influence on

people's practices, including their vocabulary choices; this can be conscious or unconscious (Moran, 2001). While it is not mentioned in the Quran, the holy book of Islam, some hadiths* present dogs as filthy and impure creatures. One hadith says that dogs' saliva is impure and that if any object comes in contact with saliva, the object must be purified: "When the dog licks the utensil, wash it seven times, and rub it with earth the eighth time" (Sahih Muslim, Hadith 551). Another hadith says that owning dogs for purposes other than farming and herding is not preferable in Islam: "Whoever keeps a dog, his good deeds will decrease every day by one 'qeeraat' [a unit of measurement] unless it is a dog for farming or herding" (Sahih Muslim, Hadith 2943). These hadiths, among others, represent dogs as despised creatures rather than likable, unlike in many other cultures such as the United States, for example, where dogs are considered human's best friends.

Therefore, citizens of the Gulf countries employ "dog" in their tweets in different phrases to insult others, such as "dog," "son of a dog," or even "daughter of a dog." While it is not mentioned in the samples collected in this study, one of the most used dog-related swearing phrases in the Gulf countries is "son/daughter of a sixteen dog," which assigns the addressee with the quality of dogs up to their sixteenth ancestor. Moreover, when one mentions dogs in their speech, it is usually collocated with the word "حاشاك" or "تكرم" either before or after. They generally mean that the interlocutor acknowledges that the addressee is more valued and regarded to hear such a despicable word. The previous words are collocated with anything that is considered to be despicable or devalued, including some other animals (e.g., donkeys), and they often occur in more formal contexts.

The use of "donkey" might have a clear reason from a religious perspective also. The Quran explicitly loathes donkeys in many verses, as it represents them as unintelligent and ugly: "And walk thou at a moderate pace, and lower thy voice; verily, the most disagreeable of voices is the voice of the ass" (Quran 31:19). Also, "The likeness of those who were made to bear the law of Torah, but would not bear it, is as the likeness of an ass carrying a load of books" (Quran 62:5). Accordingly, calling people donkeys expresses that the speaker despises the addressee's characteristics, as it is meant to refer to their lack of intelligence. The only sample in the data where "donkey" is mentioned is "والله انك مدرب حمار" (I swear, coach, you are a donkey), which supports the aforementioned hypothesis since it assigns the coach with lack of wisdom or intelligence, as he is believed to have contributed to the decision of stripping the player of the team captaincy; it is evident that the writer of this tweet stands with the player against the coach here.

"Bull" and "Cow"

Languages, or more specifically cultures, share so many lexicons that have the same referents in the real world. Chinese and Arabic both have vocabularies that refer to the same referents. For example, 牛 in Chinese and بقرة in Arabic refer generally to a cow. However, they have totally different implications in both cultures. In Chinese, the term "cow" could be employed in the language to express admiration, as explained in one forum post discussion (Cragin, 2017) (e.g., You did a really good job today; you are a cow). Also, in Chinese, the cow is a lunar symbol, aligning itself with feminine qualities (Anjomshoa & Sadighi, 2015). In Arabic, however, there is almost no possible context in which cows are employed to express admiration.

The two samples where "cow" was mentioned might indicate that it is aligned to feminist qualities in Arabic just like in Chinese: "ياخي البقره ازعجتنا" (Bro, I swear this cow is annoying) and "أتفق خل تنفعه بقرته" (I agree, let him والله be with his cow); they both refer to Icardi's agent/wife. Likewise, the bull—which is a breed of cattle just like the cow, yet masculine—is also mentioned in the data: "الله يقلعك يا ثور" (get lost, you bull). However, it was assigned to a masculine referent instead, unlike cow. Based on the context, "cow" and "bull" seem to assign negative connotations to the referents in general, although it is impossible to know the writers' actual implications without investigating their intentions. While Haslam (2017) in his online article claimed that "cow" is used to refer to physical characteristics rather than psychological characteristics, the two tweets where "cow" was mentioned probably negate his claim since many might agree that the referent (the wife/agent) is not a stereotypical example of a person who is likely to be called a cow due to her physical appearance; she is relatively thin. However, the author did not take language or cultural variation into account, so it is assumed that he approached this from his own language or culture, which is Australian-English. Accordingly, it can be claimed that in the third sample, "cow" referred to a negative psychological characteristic such as disagreeableness, just like "bull" in the other sample.

Psychological Characteristics

Swearing related to psychological characteristics came second, accounting for 21% of the overall data. These involved words or phrases that refer to abstract negative human qualities. Jay (1992) states that children often swear with reference to psychological characteristics. While it is difficult—if not impossible—to determine a Twitter user's age by merely examining their profile, it is unlikely that the collected tweets were written by children due to the sophisticated nature of the context in question in this study. In general, there are plenty of words and phrases that lie within the aforementioned notion of psychological characteristics, but they do not seem to have as strong or

offensive emotive connotations as in the other categories. For example, "غبي" (idiot) and "فاسدة" (corrupt), as mentioned in the samples, do not seem as offensive as words or phrases in other categories such as "قحبة" (whore) as perceived in Arabian Gulf culture. Again, some might claim that terms such as "idiot" or "corrupt" would not be considered swear words, yet based on the criteria of swear words and phrases mentioned earlier in this paper, they do reflect a negative image on the target referents based on the cultural norms in the Arabian Gulf; therefore, they are considered swearing—at least for the sake of this paper.

After examining the data, the swear words and phrases collected in this category did not show significant restrictions for certain languages or cultures. That is, words such as "كذاب" (liar), "فاشل" (loser), or "حقيرة" (despicable) are more likely to be words that are commonly used in many other languages or cultures. It is difficult to claim that they are used more often in the Arabian Gulf region than in other regions without another comparative study of a different dialect.

Whore-related

Whore-related swearing constituted 16% of the overall data. What is worth observing here is the notion of "whore" in the Arab world. Which females are considered to be whores? According to an online article (Dream FM, 2016), the standards of labeling women as whores in the Arab world might be more complex than one thinks. To be more specific, not only are females who engage in sexual acts called whores, but also other females based on different ideologies in the Arab societies. For instance, many extremists consider a female who travels alone, smokes, wears short dresses or gets into friendship-relationships with males a whore. The reason this is mentioned is that there might be a potential reason why Icardi's agent/wife is associated with whore-related aspects: an old controversial incident in her personal life that every soccer fan knows about. Briefly, Nara's current husband, Icardi, was best friends with her previous husband, Maxi Lopez. The latter claims that while he had considered Icardi his best friend, Icardi stole his wife as she cheated on him while they were still married. This, in turn, might be perceived differently based on the conservative cultural norms of the Arabian Gulf countries. While she would not be considered a whore in many cultures around the world, it is not unlikely that she would be called a whore in the Arabian Gulf. The point is, it cannot be determined if she was associated with the quality of a whore due to her known past or if it was just a general reference to a pejorative term.

Moreover, the word "whore" was expressed in many forms in the data, in both colloquial and standard Arabic. Seven out of sixteen samples (44%) were recorded in standard Arabic, "عاهرة," even when the rest of the tweet was

written in colloquial Arabic in some cases. In one case, the standard Arabic form was modified as "عويهر," which is a form of the linguistic phenomenon "hypocorism."* This shift in style or formality might not be arbitrary; the writer might have opted for standard Arabic since swearing—and communication in general—usually occurs in colloquial Arabic, which is the natural, spontaneous form of speech. That is, colloquial swearing might leave more of a negative image on the interlocutor for violating cultural norms compared to the standard form, which is more formal in nature.

Although not mentioned in the samples, it is common in the Khaleeji dialect to employ "whore" to refer to the addressee's mother, as in "ابن القحبة" (son of a whore). This might be in some ways similar to "son of a bitch" in English. In English—American English, for example—the word "bitch" is commonly used nowadays as a pejorative term for women in general. Although the word "bitch" has been used to refer to a female dog since about 1000 A.D., according to the Oxford English Dictionary, it also has other indications or references, including but not limited to "whore" (Gee, 2017).

Religion-related

Eight percent of the data was classified as containing religious references, such as "الله يلعنكم" (Allah damn you) and "الله يحرق واندا" (Allah burn Wanda). Again, the Gulf countries are significantly impacted by Islam as the main religion in the region. While it cannot be claimed that all tweet writers of the data collected were actually Muslims—or practicing Muslims—, yet religion-related swear words is possibly coined in the lexicon as part of the widely heard words in the region. In other words, they became culturally based rather than religiously based. In addition, Ljung (2010) states that diabolic swearing involving the devil and hell do not seem to exist in Muslim cultures, but one of the collected samples contradicts this statement since *hell* was actually mentioned: "إلى الجحييييم" (to heeeell). However, the tweet was written in colloquial Arabic first then shifted to standard Arabic. This shift from colloquial to standard in the same tweet can be a rich topic for further potential research. For the purpose of this paper, this will not be covered in order not to deviate from the main topic.

Trash-related

A total of 7% of the data was categorized as trash-related. While no references that discussed the topic in question were found for the sake of this paper, it can be claimed that calling someone "trash" cannot have positive indications in any imaginable context in any culture, for the word itself seems to have a universal negative connotation. In eight samples, referents were associated with trash in different forms, such as "زبالة" (trash), " البنت محتاجه إلى مزبلة" (the girl should be in the bottom of the trash), and "تكون في قاع الزبالة"

"التاريخ يا إيكاردي" (to the trash of history Icardi). This shows how creative swearers can be in manipulating words and associating several meanings with one phrase to insult others.

Sex-related

Sex-related vocabulary (5%) provides a rich source for taboo terms and phrases that can be used to insult others. Languages around the world have their own sex organ-related terms that are commonly used by their speakers in different cultures or regions, depending on the context. For example, the male genitals are often referred to in different colloquial forms, such as "prick" in Britain and the United States. In Italian also, *cazzo* (prick) can be heard in heated discussions. Female organ-related terms are also used, such as "cunt" in English in general, not to mention sex-neutral terms such as "ass." All the aforementioned terms are used by both sexes, and they can refer to the same gender or opposite gender. In the data, explicit sex organ-related references appeared four times, three of which were explicit, as they were associated with motherhood as in "كس أمك" (your mother's cunt).

Just like sex organ-related terms, sexual activities in general also provide language users with many words or phrases that can be used in the act of swearing. In one of the tweets, sexual activity was implied rather than explicitly stated: "خل يمسكه" (let him hold it). On the literal surface, it is impossible to interpret the latter example without a given context, yet its implication is understood in the context in which the tweet was written. The latter sample shows that implications vary in degree and that context plays a fundamental role in interpreting or understanding swear words.

Physical Characteristics

Swearing in this category constituted 4% of the data. Just like psychological characteristic-based swearing, according to Jay (1992), children's insults are also based on physical characteristics. This might also indicate that they are not as strong or offensive as other swearing used by adults. Hence, whenever they are used by adults, they are intended to be less offensive. As recorded in the four samples in this category: "شمطاء" (hoary), "صليعان" (baldy), "أم ضروس" (toothy), and "بو ديود" (booby), they do sound more descriptive and humorous rather than offensive. Hence, they might be good examples of swearing triggered by humor rather than anger (Stone & McMillan, 2012). However, this cannot be verified without direct examination of the writer's psychological condition when a tweet was written.

Shit-related

Jay (1992) provides a comprehensive analysis of shit-related swearing in American culture and how children use these swear words compared to adults:

> Scatological terms refer to human waste products and processes. Such terms are among the early words that children hear and use when they are toilet trained. American have a great penchant for coining childish terms rather than using standardized terms or those of scientific origin. Scatological insults are common among children. Different cultures pay attention to different types of taboo. American have a penchant for sexual and religious terms; French insults are more sexual than Americans and the Germans appear to be more attentive to scatological reference than others. The terms children say are usually different than those that adults would pick for the same referent. Some only say the vulgar would use scatological terms, when a more refined euphemism or technical term could be substituted.
>
> Since scatological references are about feces and elimination they appear as:
>
> Poo Poo, ka ka, poop, turd, crap, shit, ass Shit for brains, piss, piss pot, piss off, fart. (p. 9)

While only 2% of the data was scatological, the words were colloquial rather than formal; "زق" (shit), not "براز" (feces), as explained by Jay (1992). Accordingly, although it was not one of the most chosen categories as seen in the data, scatological insults are among those that Khaleejis opt for when swearing on Twitter.

Hay- and Sand-related

Nearly 3% of the data contained abnormal activities that are uncommon among human beings, e.g., portraying them eating hay or sand. Obviously, a logical situation where a human being eats sand cannot be imagined, and if this does occur, it must be offensive or maybe humorous depending on the context. Hence, abnormal activities are also sources of insults as recorded in the data: "أكل تراب" (eat sand). On the other hand, "أكل تبن"(eat hay) can also be associated with animal-related swearing since hay is animal fodder usually eaten by horses, goats, sheep, etc. Accordingly, these words are meant to humiliate the target person by associating them with animal behaviors or activities.

Loss of Face

This was not intended to be part of this study, but the data paved the way for another interesting topic, which is individuals' loss of face when swearing. Based on the aforementioned data analysis, it is possible to say that

swearing can harm swearers' status and how they are perceived by others in the context in which the swearing occurs. According to Stapleton (2010) and Johnson and Lewis (2010), swearing is a violation of norms, and this may lead to the swearer's loss of face due to negative judgments by others. Approximately one week after collecting the data, the samples were re-examined to analyze them from a different point of view, yet six out of the one hundred samples had been deleted; only ninety-four samples remained. The goal was to examine which swearing categories might potentially cause loss of face the least/most.

On Twitter, people may choose to reveal their real identities in their accounts or simply fake them for their own reasons. Some might have their real names as well as their personal pictures, while others might choose one of these or neither. On the other hand, many accounts do not reveal the owner's identity; the owner chooses to use nicknames and non-personal profile pictures. Thus, it was assumed that those who had their personal pictures in public were less likely to risk loss of face by writing the most obscene swear words, especially in conservative societies such as in the Gulf countries. Accordingly, all accounts were re-examined to record how many had personal pictures of their owners. Then the recorded swear words were classified again based on the same categorization implemented earlier in this paper. The initial hypothesis was that accounts with real profile pictures would avoid using the most obscene swearing to avoid loss of face on Twitter or at least minimize it.

Figure 3: *Ratio of accounts with personal pictures*
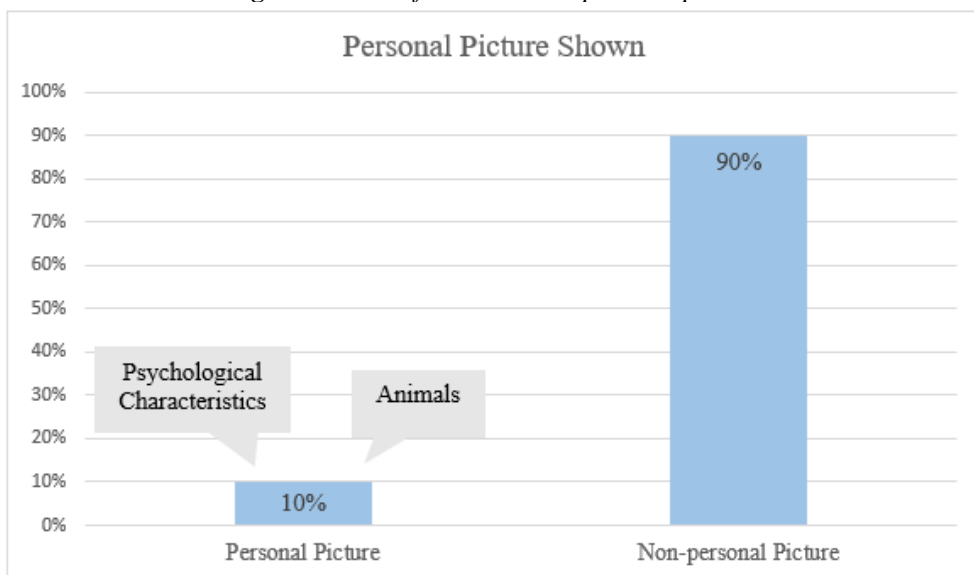
After examining the accounts, it was found that only 10% showed their owners' real pictures. The analysis showed that swearing recorded in the

tweets from those with real pictures was related to two categories only: *psychological characteristics* and *animals*. As mentioned earlier, it is assumed that the more obscene the swearing is, the more likely the swearer will lose face due to negative judgment by others on a public platform like Twitter. Accordingly, it can be stated that the aforementioned categories are not the most offensive swearing—or among the least offensive—in the Gulf culture since swearers opted for them although their personal pictures were shown in public, not afraid to be judged negatively and lose face.

Conclusion

The findings provide us with informative explanations and justifications about swearing choices in the Khaleeji dialect, each of which reflects on the culture, religion, and language from different points of view.

Khaleejis rely heavily on language about animals to unleash their anger or disapproval as they insult others through swearing. Their choices of animals have different justifications, some of which are significantly different from those of other languages or cultures. For instance, the reference to sheep reflects the patriarchal values that dominate the Khaleeji culture in which men are expected to be dominants over women in relationships. Also, the reference to cows in swearing manifests how animals have different connotations in cultures around the world; certain animals like cows have a positive connotation in Chinese, whereas in Arabic -including the Khaleeji culture or dialect- they have a negative connotation. It is clear also that religion has an impact on swearing vocabulary in the Khaleeji dialect, which is represented by the choice of swear words and phrases recorded. Dogs and donkeys, for example, are portrayed mostly negatively in Islam. This, in turn, shaped people's overall attitudes toward them, which transferred to their choice of words and logic in certain discourses where swearing occurs. The influence of religion is also seen more clearly through Khaleejis' explicit use of religious-related words and phrases such as "Allah damn you." In addition, referring to females as whores in the Khaleeji culture has more complex dimensions compared to other cultures since there is no fine line by which females can be labeled as whores based on the culture's norms. That is, the image of a whore in the Khaleeji culture is not restricted to sexual acts only but also to several other personal attributes that are perceived negatively by different segments of the society. Sexual references as well as psychological and physical characteristics are also within Khaleejis lexicon in swearing along with shit-related and trash-related words, not to mention the reference to hay and sand in different forms. Furthermore, the last section shows that opting for animals and psychological characteristics to swear does not seem as aggressive or offensive in the Khaleeji dialect as other swearing categories. Psychological characteristics as well as animal-related swear words were employed in tweets

by writers that had their personal picture shown in public, which indicates that swearing in these categories is not perceived as too obscene in a way that would cause an extreme loss of face.

However, the study has a number of limitations. First, in order to better understand and generalize the data, it is better to have a comparative dialect through which we can see the similarities and differences of swearing categorization in each dialect. This would help identify whether there are words or categories that are used considerably more in some dialects compared to others. For example, the data can be compared to another Arabic dialect so we can capture the uniqueness of the Khaleeji dialect in specific compared to other Arabic dialects. Second, the context in which the data were collected may have influenced people's choice of words and phrases. For instance, the soccer-related topic in this study involved referents from both genders (the player and his agent/wife), and the latter has a controversial past herself. If the agent/wife was not part of the context, whore-related swearing might not have been as high as recorded in the study. The same applies to the reference to sheep in the samples; they were probably high due to the specific context of the topic. Nevertheless, every topic has its own unique details that would definitely influence a person's choice of words in one way or another. It is hoped that the findings of this study are insightful for further research on swearing-related topics, whether in the Khaleeji dialect or any other dialect since the data can be analyzed from multiple viewpoints.

Notes

Hadiths are the records of the words, actions, and silent approval traditionally attributed to the Islamic prophet Muhammad. The authority of hadith as a source for religious law and moral guidance ranks second only to that of the Quran (which Muslims hold to be the word of Allah revealed to his messenger Muhammad).

A hypocorism is a diminutive form of a word or a given name created by shortening or phonetically altering it (e.g., Michael = Mikey).

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The Effect of Data-Driven Learning of Grammar on Georgian EFL University Students' Grammar Achievement

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of Data-Driven Learning of grammar on Georgian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) University students' grammar achievement. The study used a quasi-experimental research design with a quantitative approach. The sample of the research was 44 Georgian EFL students of Sokhumi State University, divided into experimental and control groups with 22 students in each. The experimental group was instructed English grammar using the Data-Driven Learning method and the control group was taught by conventional, explicit grammar teaching approach. The result of the paired-samples T-test showed that there was a significant difference in the scores for the control group (M=62.13, SD=14.46) and experimental group (M=1.5, SD=0.58) conditions; t=8.3, df=3, significance p=0.003<0.05. Thus, the difference between control and experimental group achievements was statistically valuable, Data-Driven group students achieved significantly higher results than the traditional teaching group students. A questionnaire was applied to evaluate experimental group students' perceptions of the Data-Driven Learning method. The results showed that students felt positive about the DDL method. Based on students' achievements and evaluation of the method, it can be inferred that Data-Driven Grammar Learning is an effective grammar instruction method. It builds a student-centered learning environment with improved classroom interaction, enhanced autonomous learning, and increased student engagement. It offers real-life language exploration possibilities and a skills-oriented grammar

teaching process.

Introduction

In the Georgian higher education EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context, grammar instruction is generally carried out through the deductive approach. The deductive approach to grammar teaching constitutes a teacher-centered method, the teacher transmits all information to students - provides grammar rules and explanations, and then, the students apply the rules to specific examples. In this way, the learners are passive recipients of the knowledge. Technological advances of the past decades originated a new field – corpus linguistics. The development of corpus linguistics emerged new trends in language education. Corpus-based teaching creates new opportunities for language teaching including grammar and offers transformation of traditional teaching into active, student-centered, constructivist learning.

Literature Review:

According to Reppen (2010), a corpus is "a large, principled collection of naturally occurring texts (written or spoken) stored electronically (p. 23). Corpus linguistics denotes corpus-based language studies. It emerged in the 1950s. The potential and benefits of corpora for language education have been soon recognized and gained increasing attention among scholars and teachers. Applying a corpus in language instruction started in the 1980s. The exploitation of a corpus for language teaching is referred to as Data-Driven Learning. The concept of Data-Driven Learning (DDL) was coined by Johns (1990).

Corpus has two kinds of application in the foreign language classroom: indirect application by the learners - the teacher designs corpus-based materials for students and the students detect the language patterns in these resources, or direct application – the students interact with corpus software where they investigate the language. Thus, there is paper-based or computer-based/hands-on Data-Driven Learning (Brown, 2017; Elsherbini & Ali 2017). In the DDL activities, learners have the role of researchers, they examine the data on a specific language feature, categorize the data, make a generalization based on the evidence and draw conclusions. Corpora make it available to do both quantitative and qualitative analysis of language patterns. Learners can get a frequency of occurrence of the target feature in the corpus as well as investigate its use in authentic contexts (O'Keeffe, McCarthy & Carter, 2007).

Learners can observe and analyze grammatical structures as well as lexico-grammatical patterns.

Chujo and Oghigian (2008) developed a Data-Driven Grammar Learning method, shown in figure 1.

Figure 1 : The Data-Driven Grammar Learning method
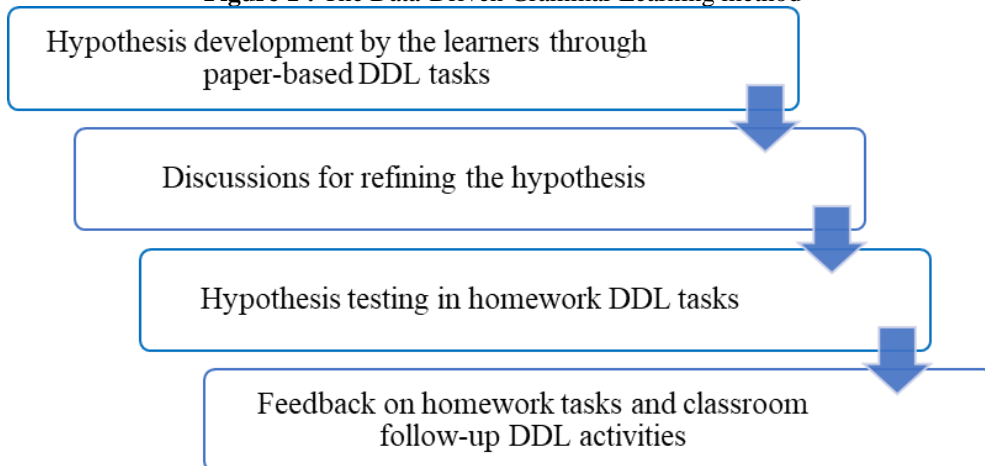
Source: Chujo and Oghigian, 2008.

In the first step, students are provided with paper-based DDL tasks. Students in pairs or groups observe the presented concordance lines on a particular grammar point and develop a hypothesis on the formation and use of this target grammar point. In the second step, the teacher gives some explanations or clarifications that allow students to improve or confirm their hypotheses. In the third step, students test the hypothesis in homework DDL tasks prepared by the teacher, and in the final step, the teacher provides feedback on completed homework tasks and some practice continues through classroom activities.

Data-Driven Learning has many advantages. First of all, through corpora students can explore the language in authentic contexts. Students become familiar with real-language examples.

The Data-Driven Learning method induces active learning in class (Chambers, 2010; Lee 2011). Students carry out investigations on language features. Data-Driven Learning is a constructivist teaching method (Boulton & Cobb, 2017; Lili, 2015). It focuses on building knowledge by the learners rather than passively transmitting the knowledge to them. Students "work independently or collaboratively to observe, analyze, and interpret patterns of language use" (Huang, 2008, p. 21). DDL activities foster interaction in class among the students and the students and the instructor as well (Meunier, 2002).

The Data-Driven Learning method transforms the roles of the teacher as well as students. In the established student-centered environment, students

perform as researchers, whereas the teacher acts as a facilitator (Huang, 2018; Kazuko, 2014). Data-Driven Learning encourages students' autonomy (Sah, 2015; Zhang & Liu, 2014).

The Data-Driven Learning method facilitates the development of higher-order thinking skills of students. Numerous cognitive skills are involved in Data-Driven Learning, e.g. "predicting, observing, noticing, thinking, reasoning, analyzing, interpreting, reflecting, exploring, making inferences (inductively or deductively), focusing, guessing, comparing, differentiating, theorizing, hypothesizing, and verifying" (O'Sullivan, 2007, p. 277).

Data-Driven Learning is often considered to be appropriate for advanced language learners. Though, there are scholars who claim DDL relevance to all levels of language proficiency. For example, Al-Gamal and Ali (2019) assert that the corpus-based teaching method is beneficial for all levels of students' language proficiency. Moreover, there are studies (e.g., Boulton, 2008; Chujo, Utiyama & Miura, 2006; Takahashi & Fujiwara, 2016; Yunus, 2014) that proved the effectiveness of Data-Driven learning on elementary language level students as well.

Research Methodology:
The design of the study

This study used a quasi-experimental research design. A quantitative research method was applied in it. The research sought to investigate the following research questions: 1) How effective is Data-Driven Learning of grammar on EFL University students' grammar achievement? 2) What are the attitudes of the experimental group students toward the Data-Driven Grammar Learning method?

The population of this research was the first-year students of the faculty of Education Sciences of Sokhumi State University, Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. They were taking English as a Foreign Language as a compulsory course in their majors. There were four groups of freshmen students, with a total number of 100 students, at the faculty of Education Sciences in the academic year 2020-2021. Out of four groups, two groups, with 22 students in each, were selected as a sample. The purposive sampling technique was used in the selection of these two groups – students of both groups were similar in English ability level. One group (consisting of 16 females and 6 males) was assigned as an experimental group, the other one (consisting of 15 females and 7 males) as a control group. So, the total sample of this research was 44 EFL students. Their ages ranged from 18-20 years. Their proficiency level of English was B1.

Treatment

The treatment was given to both, experimental and control groups. The experimental (DDL) group was instructed grammar through the four-step Data-Driven Grammar Learning paradigm developed by Chujo and Oghigian (2008). Data-Driven Learning tasks provided by the teacher at the first step of learning included original concordance lines on a particular grammar point in KWIC (Key Words in Context) format taken from Corpora at CQPweb of Lancaster University (Hardie, 2012), in particular British National Corpus (XML Edition), Brown Family (extended) and BNC sampler. The concordance lines were followed by the leading questions students needed to focus on when forming hypotheses. Data-Driven Learning tasks developed by the teacher for homework or classroom follow-up activities at the third and fourth steps of the paradigm were of different types: multiple-choice, gap-filling, Matching, True/False, error correction, transformation, close/open-ended, etc. Primarily, in all DDL tasks, original concordance lines were maintained, occasionally they were adopted to students' language proficiency level.

The control (traditional teaching) group was an explicit instruction group, learning grammar deductively. The teacher provided rules and explanations on a specific target grammar point and then the students applied those rules to different instances. *LASER B1* (Mann & Taylore-Knowles, 2013) was used to teach target grammar points to the control group.

The treatment lasted 8 weeks, 16 contact hours in total. Grammar points taught to the experimental and the control group were identical. These were: countable and uncountable nouns, comparatives and superlatives, modals, time clauses, and relative clauses.

The research tools

Two research tools – tests (pre and post-tests) and a questionnaire were developed to achieve the objectives of the study. Ordinary, non-DDL grammar tests were created for research: the pre-test aimed to evaluate students' grammatical knowledge before treatment, the post intended to measure students' achievements after treatment. The questionnaire was designed to evaluate students' attitudes towards the experimental method. The tests comprised 50 questions on the target grammar points in multiple-choice format. The questionnaire included close-ended questions. There were 10 items in the questionnaire. They followed the five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

For ensuring the validation of the pre and post-tests and the questionnaire, their content validity, and face validity were checked. Content and face validity were assessed by 3 qualified specialists in the fields of English Philology and Education Sciences. For verifying the reliability of the

research tools, the tests and the questionnaire were piloted within a group of 10 students. Their reliability was measured with test-retest correlation. For the pre-test, Pearson correlation was 0.997 and the significance was p=0.000<0.01; and for the post-test, the correlation was 0.998 and the significance was p=0.000<0.01. As for the questionnaire, the Pearson correlation was 0.934 and the significance was p=0.000<0.01. The piloting results of the tools demonstrated that in all three cases, Pearson correlation was higher than 0.08 and the significance was below 0.01 which means that in each case there was a strong correlation between the two results, the results were statistically significant and the tools (pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire) were reliable.

The procedures of gathering and analyzing data

The data was gathered by using the pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire. The pre-test was administered to the experimental and control group students before treatment to evaluate the students' grammatical knowledge before treatment was given. The post-test was administered to the students of both groups after treatment to find out what achievements the students obtained. In addition to the post-test, the questionnaire was given to the experimental group students to evaluate their perceptions of the Data-Driven Learning method. The results of the tests and the questionnaire were prepared for analysis.

SPSS 22.0 statistics program was used for analyzing the data of the research. Through the program, the mean, median, mode(s), and standard deviation of the groups' results were calculated. To see how significant the differences between groups were t-test was applied. The results of the questionnaire were also analyzed using the SPSS program.

Results and Discussions:

Students' test results and descriptive analyses of the results are shown in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1 : Control group

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
Student 1	73	82
Student 2	52	68
Student 3	54	70
Student 4	46	56
Student 5	61	78
Student 6	36	58
Student 7	56	75
Student 8	62	80
Student 9	52	63
Student 10	42	63
Student 11	51	70
Student 12	53	78
Student 13	75	86
Student 14	45	62
Student 15	47	69
Student 16	43	61
Student 17	45	67
Student 18	43	62
Student 19	37	52
Student 20	34	59
Student 21	55	71
Student 22	45	63
Mean	50.32	67.86
Median	54.5	69
Mode(s)	45	63
St. Deviation	10.68	9.02

Table 2 : Experimental group

Student	Pre-test	Post-test
Student 1	63	89
Student 2	45	69
Student 3	51	74
Student 4	77	98
Student 5	41	78
Student 6	53	85
Student 7	35	67
Student 8	44	75
Student 9	74	97
Student 10	46	82
Student 11	53	79
Student 12	37	71
Student 13	44	79
Student 14	52	86
Student 15	55	84
Student 16	57	84
Student 17	61	91
Student 18	39	67
Student 19	54	80
Student 20	40	75
Student 21	42	72
Student 22	46	77
Mean	50.41	79.95
Median	56	82.5
Mode(s)	44, 46 and 53	67, 75, 79 and 84
St. Deviation	11.11	8.77

Source: Developed by the author.

No significant difference was found between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the pre-test. The experimental group received a slightly higher result than the control group (M=50.41 vs M=50.32), therefore it is completely safe to say that the two groups were quite equivalent in grammatical knowledge on intended grammar points before the treatment. Standard deviation values show that both groups were quite heterogeneous in terms of participants' knowledge. The most frequently occurring scores in the test results of each group are also given in the tables.

Table 3 : Summary for t-test

Test	Control group	Experimental group
Pre-test	50.32	50.41
Post-test	67.86	79.95

Source: Developed by the author

From Table 3 we can see that both groups achieved higher scores in the post-test than in the pre-test. To be more specific, for the control group, the mean score of the post-test was 67.86 compared with 50.32 of the pre-test; and for the experimental group, the mean score of the post-test was 79.95 compared with 50.41 of the pre-test.

To find out whether this difference between the means was statistically significant, a paired-samples t-test was held, as shown in the tables below.

Table 4 : Paired samples statistics

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1 Control group Experimental group	62.1350 1.5000	4 4	14.45936 .57735	7.22968 .28868

Source: Developed by the author.

Table 5 : Paired samples test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Control group – experimental group	6.06350E1	14.32992	7.16496	37.83290	83.43710	8.463	3	.003

Source: Developed by the author.

A confidence interval of the difference was 95%. The results showed that there was a significant difference in the scores for the control group (M=62.13, SD=14.46) and experimental group (M=1.5, SD=0.58) conditions; t=8.5, df=3, significance p=0.003<0.05, which means that the difference between control and experimental group achievements is statistically significant. Thus, the results of the study displayed that Data-Driven Grammar Learning was an effective grammar teaching method and students of the DDL group achieved significantly higher results than those of the traditional teaching group.

The questionnaire applied to the experimental group of students is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Questionnaire for the experimental group students

Statements	1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither disagree nor agree; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree				
1. The Data-Driven Grammar Learning method was an interesting and motivational method for learning English grammar well.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The Data-Driven Grammar Learning method transformed the classroom into an active learning environment.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Data-Driven Learning of grammar was fun.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Discovering grammatical features on my own was a more valuable experience than receiving all the information from my teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The Data-Driven Grammar Learning method enhanced classroom interaction (among students, between the student and the teacher, and the teacher and the student)	1	2	3	4	5
6. Exploring the language in authentic contexts was a meaningful learning experience.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The Data-Driven Grammar Learning method generated a skills-based grammar learning process.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The Data-Driven Grammar Learning method promoted autonomous learning.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The inclusion of pair and group work in grammar teaching boosted my engagement in grammar learning.					
10. I would like to continue learning English grammar through the DDL method.	1	2	3	4	5

Source: Developed by the author.

Table 7 shows the statistical analysis of the results for each Likert-scale item.

Table 7 : Statistic results of the questionnaire

	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Item 1	4.27	4	4	0.63
Item 2	4.64	4	5	0.58
Item 3	4.04	3	5	1.25
Item 4	3.73	3	4	1.28
Item 5	4.45	3.5	5	0.8
Item 6	3.95	3	4	1.13
Item 7	4.5	4	5	0.67
Item 8	4.04	3	4	1.04
Item 9	4.59	4	5	0.59
Item 10	3.95	3	4	1.13

Source: Developed by the author.

As illustrated, the items of the questionnaire received high results. The lowest mean value was 3.73 and the highest one was 4.64. The results demonstrated that the students' evaluations of the new method were positive, they turned out to have positive attitudes towards each component of the Data-Driven Learning method. The mean to be quite trustworthy has to be close to the median and the mode and in the results of this questionnaire, the mean values were more or less close to the median and mode values. Standard deviation values revealed that the answers to statements 1, 2, 5, 7, and 9 are relatively homogenous while others are more heterogeneous. The mode values indicate that the answers "Agree" or "Strongly agree" dominated in students' responses.

To be more specific, the questionnaire results revealed that 90.90% of students found the DDL method as an interesting and motivational grammar learning method. For 95.45% of students, an active learning environment was created by the DDL method. 81.81% of students found learning grammar through the DDL method fun. 68.18% of students valued discovering grammatical features by themselves as a more valuable learning experience than receiving all information from the teacher. 90.90% of students agreed that the Data-Driven Grammar Learning method enhanced classroom interaction. For 77.27% of students, the exploration of grammatical features in authentic contexts was a meaningful learning experience. 90.90% of students accepted that the Data-Driven Learning of grammar was a skills-oriented grammar teaching method. 81.81% of students approved that the Data-Driven Grammar Learning method promoted autonomous learning. 90.90% of students agreed that collaborative learning increased their involvement in grammar learning. 77.27% of students expressed a willingness to continue EFL grammar studying through the Data-Driven Learning method.

To sum up, the findings on research question 1 "How effective is Data-Driven Learning of grammar on EFL University students' grammar achievement?" revealed that the Data-Driven Grammar Learning method was more effective than the traditional, deductive grammar teaching approach. The questionnaire results on research question 2 "What are the attitudes of the experimental group students toward the Data-Driven Grammar Learning method?" revealed that the students felt positive towards the Data-Driven Grammar Learning method.

The results of the presented study are in line with the findings of Nugraha, Miftakh, and Wachyudi (2016). The study conducted by Nugraha, Miftakh, and Wachyudi revealed that Indonesian University students had positive attitudes toward the overall Data-Driven Learning method developed by Chujo and Oghigian (2008) and each component of it: DDL worksheet, grammar explanation provided by the teacher, follow-up activities, and feedback from the teacher.

The results of the introduced study also coincide with the outcomes of Wang (2018). The study conducted by Wang showed that corpus-based grammar teaching had a significantly positive effect on Chinese EFL University students' grammar skills. Class observation and interviews revealed that corpus-based grammar teaching increased students' motivation to learn.

The results of this research are also consistent with the findings of Abdul-Ameer (2019). According to the study conducted by Abdul-Ameer, Iraqi EFL University students showed successful performance on each stage of the Data-Driven Learning model created by Chujo and Oghigian (2008). Students showed satisfaction with the integration of DDL activities in grammar learning and expressed positive attitudes towards each step they underwent.

Conclusion

This study explored the effect of Data-Driven Learning of grammar on Georgian EFL learners' grammar achievement. The outcomes of the research revealed that Data-Driven Learning was an effective method for the acquisition of grammatical knowledge by the University EFL students. Student questionnaire results showed that students were very positive towards the Data-Driven Grammar Learning method. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Data-Driven Grammar Learning is an effective grammar teaching method. It revolutionizes the teaching of grammar: promotes the transformation of teacher-centered education to student-centered learning, generates constructivism-based active learning, promotes autonomous learning and increased student engagement, and proposes a skills-oriented, real-language-based grammar learning process. The findings of the present study will bring a new perspective to EFL grammar teaching in Georgia. The study results will encourage EFL teachers to start significant shifts in grammar teaching methodology and move towards student-driven, technology-enhanced authentic learning.

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The Role of Posters Written in Indigenous Languages in Disseminating Health-Awareness Information within the Far North Region of Cameroon

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Abstract

It is an established fact that the majority of the illiterate population in Cameroon, in general, and in the Far North Region in particular are excluded from life-saving information because of illiteracy. Since all important information is usually communicated only in official languages, most illiterate men and women are not only ignorant of vital information on different issues affecting their lives, but are also vulnerable to diseases. This paper posits that combating health epidemics is more effective through the use of image-associated sensitization posters written in minority languages than through sensitization messages transmitted through official languages. It argues that posters written in indigenous languages are not only culturally relevant and well accepted by community members, but also enhance and facilitate respondents' understanding of health issues. The findings from this work obtained through the administration of questionnaires revealed that the percentages of the illiterate respondents who understand image-based posters in the MT is significantly higher than those who claimed to understand image-based posters in French. On the basis of the findings, the government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are strongly encouraged to ensure that important health-related information should be presented in picture-based posters, flyers or brochures in the MT.

Keywords: Posters, Illiteracy, Awareness, Communication, Health, Information

1.   Introduction

Poster presentations in rural areas achieve success in increasing the knowledge, changing attitudes and behavior of the indigenous people when they are carefully designed with appropriate texts in the MT. Without the use of MT in the transmission of the required information in multilingual settings, there will not be effective communication particularly in health service-providing institutions. Communication between health professionals and the illiterate population is crucial in basic information dissemination. Since the majority of people in rural communities are not literate and cannot read all health-related and other information that is disseminated to the public, the government and some NGOs often produce some of the information on posters and paste them either in the community or hospital so as to facilitate understanding for some of the illiterate population. Racks of informative brochures on different issues are also usually distributed in hospitals and neighborhoods, but are often ignored because of illiteracy. Even when brochures are given to patients by health professionals, not all of them are read, particularly if they are written only in the official language. Even spoken instructions by health professionals are not always obeyed effectively by patients, mainly because of illiteracy. Some posters can be intended for a specific target group such as illiterates who need to be informed for possible behavioral change like the ongoing COVID-19 virus. According to Resnick (2010), posters have played a special role in promoting AIDS awareness and safe sex education across cultures, different aims, messages, visual metaphors, and strategies have strongly influenced the content and design of AIDS posters. These messages can successfully reach specific targeted groups because posters are cheap and easy to produce. Public health posters are clearly in the third category, their purpose being to alter the consciousness of the public to bring about an improvement in health practices (Nunyenge, 2013). Posters aim at presenting information in a succinct and condensed manner. However, posters are not interactive and often lack in-depth, and as such not given the necessary attention they deserve. Atul et al. (2020) maintain that the very first step of preparing a poster is planning about what is to be displayed. It is an integral step since it determines how impactful the message can be. They argue that it must involve deciding upon which aspect of information is to be displayed, and how it has to be displayed-via text or via illustrations. Another aspect of planning has to be the determination of a target group. To convey the same information, different methods can be required while targeting different groups in the society. A viewer's reaction to a poster depends on his interests, inclinations, and especially on his social situation.

Consequently, each viewer may interpret a poster differently, based on his/her origin, the background, and socio-financial realities.

1.1   Research Problem

The dominance of foreign languages can be traced back to colonial language policies, which gave pride of place to these languages in official domains like administration. Although the government promotes multilingualism following the presidential decree No: 2017/013 of the 23rd January 2017, which created the National Commission for Bilingualism and Multiculturalism (NCBM), local languages are still largely relegated to the background. Admittedly, some Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are making some efforts to translate and produce some vital information on health in some Cameroonian languages. Only few researchers, linguists, and NGOs are working for the promotion of local languages, even sometimes with meagre and inadequate resources.

According to Akumbu (2020, p.193), one of the unfortunate outcomes of the use of these two official languages is that the intended sensitization information and call to action directly reach only the 40 percent to 85 percent literate Cameroonians. Chumbow (2013) also notes that at least 60 percent of the population in most African countries are not literate in the official languages such as English and French and are, therefore, marginalized and excluded from knowledge on health and development. He points out that even the knowledge they need to reduce infant and maternal mortality, hunger and poverty etc. is available but not accessible to the majority because it is hoarded in the minority official language. The majority of the population therefore lives in ignorance despite the availability of knowledge (p.41-42).

The effect of this practice is the exclusion of the majority of the country's population, especially those of the Far North Region and a negation of the democratic principle of mass participation. Exceptions to this are occasional mobilization for voting during political campaigns and the fight against some diseases like malaria, the dreaded pandemic of HIV/Aids, and Corona Virus. If wisdom can prevail for the government to conduct a sensitization campaign against HIV infection virus in some of the local languages, why can't valuable information about health, especially the ongoing COVID-19, politics, the economy, the environment and civic rights, also be disseminated in Cameroonian languages?

In Cameroon, the illiteracy challenge is inseparable from problems such as poverty, diseases such as the HIV pandemic, and conflicts. Access to literacy and education is a basic right, and literacy skills represent a potential instrument that enables people to access multiple tools, acquire fundamental rights, and amass a wide range of competencies, information, and knowledge. Since information dissemination is crucial to the cultivation of an informed

society, all avenues, both modern and traditional, should be explored for making information available. In particular, community radios devoted to the broadcast of information in local languages which have been successful in some countries should be encouraged. According to UNESCO (2008), African languages have long been undervalued, which has affected the literate environment in that very little has been published in most of these languages. For developing countries to become industrial players, a conscious plan will have to be developed to transmit the manufacturing processes into easily understood routines as Bamgbose (1991:51) points out.

Foreign ideas, concepts, and technology will undoubtedly be imported in a foreign language, but such concepts must be transmitted to the masses in the language they can understand. The economic miracle achieved by countries such as Japan was not based on a widespread dissemination of English, rather it is the result of the indigenization of such technology into terms that the ordinary factory hand can understand.

1.2   The Objective of the Study

This study investigates whether the use of posters enhances the understanding of health-related information in the selected communities. This statement leads to the following objectives:
- To find out if posters in the MT are effective in communicating health-related information.
- To find out if posters constitute a valuable tool in information dissemination, especially during health epidemics.

2.   The Importance of Posters in Information Dissemination

Lack of access to health information due to illiteracy is a major obstacle in the fight against epidemics. Lack of access to health information due to illiteracy constitutes a major obstacle in the fight against epidemics. Posters are meant to catch attention, inform, convince, and provoke. They are often the easiest and most cost-effective way to deliver messages to large audiences. Posters need to be attractive, eye-catching, and informative. They are used for various purposes and can be used by advertisers to promote an event or a movie. Posters can also be used by non-profit organizations to create social awareness (Nishtar *et al*., 2004; Gobind & Ukpere, 2014). They are written communication tools that are generally visible to people as they are usually illustrated with images and pictures. The most important aim of using posters is to attract the attention of everyone who is interested. For this reason, posters contain visuals such as photographs and pictures rather than writing.

According to Tutar et al. (2005), the visual elements in a poster should be related to the subject and support each other. Expression with pictures is at the forefront in posters (Kazancı, 1999). Posters can play a critical role in

creating an enabling and supportive environment in communities where the majority of the population is illiterate. They are also helpful in facilitating understanding. They can often be interpreted in multiple ways. The text that accompanies posters usually guide the interpretation of some of the people with limited reading skills who may by-pass the text and try to understand a message by guessing the meaning of the image in posters.

In addition, when the information in posters is not explicit enough, images may be interpreted differently even by people with high literacy skills in different domains. Posters are widely used for health promotion because they symbolize an inexpensive way of providing written information to a large proportion of the population. This educational approach can be used to encourage people to implement preventive measures, undergo screening, or adopt good treatment practices.

2.2.   Illiteracy and the Right to Information

It can be agreed with Bamgbose (2000) that illiteracy is a linguistic barrier to communication. Illiterate populations are denied access to information that has been packaged in the written form. Literacy is generally said to have liberating or empowering capacities in that the literates are able, on their own, to access information which they would not have accessed, or they could only have accessed it through intermediaries. Due to illiteracy, some people are unable to access written information, thus their right to access to information is not honoured.

In the Constitution of the Cameroon Government (1996), Article 37 stipulates that "every person shall have the right of access to all information held by the State or any of its organs at any level of Government in so far as such information is required for the exercise of his rights." Health education that comes through posters, pamphlets, leaflets, and other forms contains vital information for the population. For instance, the literature may carry information about signs and symptoms of diseases, modes of disease spread, prevention and cure. Such information is important for every citizen to use in the maintenance of his or her good health. If a citizen is denied access to such vital information due to illiteracy, then that person is not able to access information that would have enabled him/her to be informed.

3.   Literature Review Overview

Literature on the use of posters indicates that pictures in general facilitate comprehension of information in a low-literacy population. For example, Houts, Doak, Doak, and Loscal Loscalzo (2006) examined the effects of the use of pictures on health communication messaging to patients, and concluded that adding pictures to supplement written and spoken instructions can increase attention, comprehension, recall, and adherence to

messaging. The authors reviewed the literature available in peer-reviewed health education, psychology, education, and marketing journals that compared the effects of just text (written or spoken) and text plus related pictures. They found that even though all patients were to benefit from the use of pictures, low-literacy patients were the most likely to benefit.

Similar results were found in a study conducted by Mansoor and Dowse (2003) that explored the effects of pictograms in low-literacy patients' comprehension of information on a medicine label and a patient information leaflet. The study was conducted in South Africa using an experimental design where 60 low-literacy participants were randomly assigned to the control group (text only) or the experimental group (text and pictograms) and then tested on their comprehension of material. It was found that participants in the experimental group who saw the leaflet with the pictograms demonstrated greater comprehension of the more complex information.

The study by Moll (1986) on patients' comprehension of information about osteoarthritis also showed that participants demonstrated better comprehension and recall of information when they had been exposed to educational booklets that included text and illustrations. It was found that participants that were exposed to the education booklets that had texts and illustrations versus text-only demonstrated higher scores on a questionnaire about the information that took place several weeks later. The review also provides a summary of the academic and grey literature on how low-literacy populations understand and can learn from print materials. The focus of the initial search for literature was on how illiterate women in developing countries interpret, understand, and learn from print materials. Also, during the initial stage, emphasis was placed on finding sources related to farming and agriculture. However, very few sources were found on these topics, thus, the search was expanded to look for literature in general on how print materials can assist learning and training in low-literacy populations.

While research available on this study was limited, some key themes could be drawn from the available literature. Overall, findings from the literature suggest that in general, pictures can help those with low-literacy better understand messaging and instructions. However, picture-based materials may be interpreted differently by users and should not be presented as the only mode of instruction. Rather, spoken instructions should be presented along with the related picture-based materials. In terms of the best understood formats, pictures (e.g., cartoons) that are simple and do not consist of a lot of details can better facilitate comprehension than complex drawings or elaborate photos.

Gobind and Ukpere (2014) maintain that posters have the ability to present information through art and text. Often categorized as small media, the impact that posters generate cannot be mistaken. Literature has afforded

examples of studies where posters have proven effective in disseminating information. Posters in public spaces (pillars, parking lots, restrooms, hospital waiting areas, metro/bus stations, outside cinema multiplexes, etc.) in their opinion are subject to numerous external influences such as the type of environment, lighting conditions, weather conditions, competition with other close by visual media, and partial concealment by persons or objects.

Chopra and Kakar (2014) also note that poster presentation falls under the category of small media, and is an effective mode of propaganda communication which involves both intellect and creativity. Posters provide an effective mode of delivering a message, and are the commonest and most rapid way to disseminate information.

4. Methodology
4.1. Description of Participants

Since the study was focused on those who were involved in the literacy activities, the questionnaires were designed only for this particular category of the population. Thus, the selection of the participants was based on the assumption that they were literate either in their respective languages or French. Data for this work was obtained from questionnaires administered to a sample of 120 participants in the target communities out of which 103 effectively responded. They are subdivided as follows: 39 responded from Mofu-Gudur, 33 from Ouldeme, and 31 from Vame. They were selected based on their different literacy levels in the respective communities. The respondents were from different indigenous language backgrounds and t divisions of the Far North Region. The following table presents the respondents in the different communities.

Table 1. The Number of Respondents from the Target Language

Language community	Count	Percent
Mofu Gudur	39	37.9
Vame	33	32.0
Ouldeme	31	30.1
Total	103	100.0

This table shows that 39 (37.9%) of the respondents were from Mofu Gudur, 33 (32%) from Vame, while 31 (30.1%) were from Ouldeme. Given that participants from Mofu-Gudur were more involved in literacy activities, they were also slightly more than those of Vame and Ouldeme. In addition to the total number of respondents from the three communities, it was observed that women were more motivated and involved in the programme than men as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to Sex

Sex	Count	Percent
Male	36	35
Female	67	65
Total	103	100

As shown in the table above, a total of 103 participants effectively filled the questionnaires out of which 36 (35%) were males while 67 (65%) were females.

4.2.   The Survey Items

To address the study's objective, the target participants were surveyed by the use of a questionnaire that intended to find out among other things if they understood health-related information better with the use of image-based posters in the MT than image-based posters in French.

4.3   Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire items was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Results are presented below with the use of tables and the interpretation of the results are provided for each table.

Although the participants were largely literate in their respective indigenous languages because of their participation in literacy classes, some were relatively literate in French. In this vein, one of the questions sought to determine if the subjects were capable of reading and understanding French language correctly, and their responses are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Respondents Capacity to Read and Understand French Correctly

	Count	Percent
Yes	28	27.2
No	75	72.8
Total	103	100

Table 3 shows that only 28 (72.8%) of the respondents could read and understand French correctly while 75 (72.8%) could not. These results clearly reveal the fact that most of the participants were relatively literate in their MTs or averagely knowledgeable in French. The table below presents participants' ability to associate posters with text in French.

Table 4. Respondents' Capacity to Associate Posters with Text in French

		Count	Percent
	Yes	33	32.0
Valid	No	70	68.0
	Total	103	100.0

As presented in Table 4 above, less than half 33 (32 %) of the respondents could associate posters with text in French, while the majority 70 (68%) were unable to carry out this exercise. Thus, the higher percentage of the respondents who could not associate posters with text in French is a clear indication of their level of illiteracy. In terms of reading to understand a text written with images in the MT, the following results were obtained from the analysis as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Respondents' Ability to Read and Understand a Text Written with Images in the MT

		Count	Percent
Valid	Yes	70	68.0
	No	33	32.0
	Total	103	100.0

This table shows that 70 (68 %) of the respondents could read and understand a text written in the MT against 33 (32 %) who could not. These results confirm those from Table 4 above, where only a few respondents could associate posters with a text in French while more were unable to carry out such an exercise. The following table shows the respondents' ability to understand information in the MT when it is associated with indigenous images.

Table 6. Respondents' Ability to Understand Information in the MT when it is Associated with Indigenous Images

		Count	Percent
	Yes	85	82.5
Valid	No	18	17.5
	Total	103	100.0

Table 6 indicate that 85 (82.5 %) of the respondents could understand information in their respective MTs when it is associated with indigenous images or text while 18 (17.5 %) could not. These results indicate that most of the respondents would prefer information in their MT for better comprehension. As a result, the majority will be comfortable with MT-related information to make informed choices. With regards to the existence of texts with posters either in the MT or French for health information dissemination, the analysis are presented below.

Table 7. Respondents' Acceptance of the Existence of Posters in the MT and French with Texts for Health Information Dissemination

		Count	Percent
	Yes	92	89.3
Valid	No	11	10.7
	Total	103	100.0

The results in the table above indicate that the majority 92 (89.3%) of the participants acknowledged the existence of posters in the MT for health

information dissemination while 11 (10.7%) did not accept. Data was also analyzed on respondents' choice of domains where information on posters is associated either with text in the MT or French, and the results are presented below.

Table 8. Respondents' Choice of the Domains where Information on Posters is Associated with Text either in the MT or French

		Count	Percent
Valid	Health	10	9.7
	Agriculture	9	8.7
	Livestock	10	9.7
	Others	52	50.5
	All (Health, agriculture, livestock)	22	21.4
	Total	103	100.0

It is clear from this table that health, agriculture, and livestock are domains in which information on posters is associated with images either in the MT or French. With regards to the proposed domains, 10 (9.7%) of the respondents chose health, 9 (8.7%) selected agriculture, 10 (9.7%) indicated livestock, 52 (50.5%) chose others, while 22 (21.4%) thought that it was on the proposed domains of health, agriculture, and livestock. One of the questions sought to find out if the respondents could read posters with text in their MT and the results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. The Existence of Posters and Respondents' Reading Ability

		Count	Percent
Valid	Yes	78	75.7
	No	25	24.3
	Total	103	100.0

As analyzed in the table above, 78 (75.7%) of the respondents acknowledged the existence of posters in the respective communities and their ability to read them while 25 (24.3%) did not accept. This category might have been those who were illiterate in their MT. As some of the respondents claimed that they read posters, it was important to find out their frequency in reading them.

Table 10. Respondents' Frequency in Reading Posters

		Count	Percent
Valid	Very often	11	10.7
	Often	26	25.2
	Rarely	66	64.1
	Total	103	100.0

Table 10 above indicates that 11 (10.7%) of the respondents read posters very often, 26 (25.2%) read them often, while the majority 66 (64.1%) read posters rarely. This implies that literacy activities were going on in the respective communities albeit timidly. The question on respondents' ability to associate posters with text in order to improve on their understanding is analyzed in the following table.

Table 11. Respondents' Ability to Associate Posters with Text to Improve Understanding of the Subject Matter

		Count	Percent
Valid	Yes	97	94.2
	No	6	5.8
	Total	103	100.0

As presented in this table, the majority of the participants 97 (94.2%) associated posters with text to improve their understanding of the subject matter, while 6 (5.8%) could not carry out such an exercise. The participants also responded to the proposed domains where posters were used as presented below.

Table 12. Domains where Posters with Text on the MT or French could be used for Awareness-Raising Campaigns

		Count	Percent
Valid	Yes	99	96.1
	No	4	3.9
	Total	103	100.0

Table 12 shows that the majority 99 (96.1%) of the respondents thought that posters with text in the MT or French were used while very few 4 (3.9%) did not think that they could be used for awareness-raising campaigns.

Table 13. Respondents' Language Preference on Health Posters with Text during Awareness-Campaigns

		Count	Percent
Valid	Yes	103	100.0

This table indicates that all 103 (100%) respondents' preferred language choice for health posters with text during awareness campaigns should be the MT. The implication here is that 4 (3.9%) of those who chose the French language in Table 12 above still had a close attachment to their respective MTs with regards to the use of posters. One of the major questions sought to find out whether participants would prefer health sensitization posters associated with texts in the MT or in French, and the results are presented below.

Table 14. Respondents' Language Preference on Health Sensitization Posters

		Count	Percent
Valid	Mother Tongue associated with images	96	93.2
	French associated with images	3	2.9
	Mother Tongue without images	4	3.9
	Total	103	100.0

This table indicates that the majority 96 (93.2%) of the respondents' preferred language for health sensitization posters associated with images was the MT, 3 (2.9%) preferred posters in French associated with images, while 4 (3.9%) preferred posters in the MT without images. The participants also provided the reasons for posters with texts and images as presented in Table 15.

Table 15. Reasons for Respondents' Choice of Health Sensitization Posters Associated with Text and Images

		Count	Percent
Valid	Text an Text and images facilitate understanding.	83	80.6
	T Text and images enhance the understanding of those who are illiterates.	7	6.8
	They clarify information for those literate only in the MT.	4	3.9
	Text and images simplify information for those who do not know French.	6	5.8
	They promote the use of MT and facilitate comprehension.	3	2.9
	Total	103	100.0

Table 15 provides some of the reasons for respondents' choice of health sensitization posters associated with text and images. From the analysis, the majority 83 (80.6%) indicated that they facilitated their understanding, 7 (6.8%) were of the opinion that they enhanced the understanding of illiterates, 4 (3.9 %) thought that they clarified information for those who were literate only in the MT, 6 (5.8%) acknowledged that they simplified information for those who did not know French, and 3 (2.9 %) pointed out that they promoted the use MT and facilitated comprehension.

5.   Findings and Discussion

The analysis of data generally revealed that the majority of the participants 70 (68 %) could read and understand information written in the MT against 33 (32 %) for the French language. The results also showed that the majority of the respondents 97 (94.2%) associated posters with text to improve their understanding of the subject matter. From these results, it is clear that associating posters with texts effectively enhances respondents'

understanding of health-related information in their respective indigenous languages. This implies that the more posters are designed with texts in the MT, the easier the information is likely to be disseminated and understood by the rural population since they are highly illiterate.

The study has also revealed that posters increase respondents' understanding in the MT and enhance effective dissemination of health-awareness information. This is based on the analysis of data which show that such posters help respondents with low literacy skills to understand the intended messages clearly. This implies that effective use of posters builds on the use of the MT. Thus, posters in association with text will be understood more easily when they are accompanied by a clear message in the MT.

Concerning respondents' language preferences in posters, the results of data also revealed that all 103 (100%) of them preferred posters with text in the MT during awareness-raising campaigns. The majority 96 (93.2%) of the respondents acknowledged their preference for health sensitization posters associated with text in the MT against 3 (2.9%) those whose preference was French. The analysis of results also revealed that most of the respondents 83 (80.6%) preferred posters with text or images in the MT because they enhanced their understanding. From these results, it can be established that the percentages of those who understood image-based posters in the MT were significantly higher than those who understood image-based posters in French.

This analysis clearly provides evidence to the fact that the more life-saving information is communicated in the language mastered by the target population, the greater the level of comprehension by the population. Indeed, it can be stated that the majority of respondents who could understand health sensitization messages on posters were those who were literate in the MT and not in French. The results of this study are therefore a clear indication of the centrality of the MT, not only in information dissemination in all forms, but particularly in the domain of health since every community needs a healthy population for its rounded development. The respondents' preference was certainly based on their inability to read or access information exclusively in French. Thus, the use of health sensitization posters either in the MT or both in the MT and French play an important role in awareness-raising about diseases and pandemic prevention as well as other health related issues in local communities. The use of such posters also help in achieving success in the increase of knowledge, change of attitudes and behavior when they are culturally appropriate with adaptable images.

This study has revealed that the effectiveness of health communication can be significantly increased by including text in the design of posters in health education materials in rural communities. Moreover, many existing posters with health education materials could be improved by the judicious addition of indigenous images with the MT.

The findings are in agreement with Gignon (2012), Ward (1994), and Kerr (2000) who established that despite the limitations of posters as a means of health education, previous studies have reported that posters displayed in hospitals, waiting rooms, and emergency departments are effective vehicles for health education on several topics such as anti smoking campaigns, family planning, AIDS prevention, and promotion of physical activity*".*

The results are also backed up by Delp and Jones (1996) who suggest that the addition of pictures will have a greater effect on the behavior of people with low literacy skills than on people with high literacy skills. People who have difficulty reading may be more influenced by materials with pictures because they are accustomed to making inferences from pictures, and because they are unable and/or uncomfortable reading words.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Although posters may be superficial in graphical design and physical appearance, they can be well exploited in the promotion and success of knowledge transfer from foreign to local languages.

It is pertinent to adopt and use effective health literacy practices across all verbal and written communication. To make it easier for local consumers to access and understand health information, the health specialists, professionals, and practitioners should develop and implement best practices for providing written and verbal health information in the MT. Such health information is supposed to be made relevant and accessible to all, particularly by communicating or translating them into the MT in order to avoid the exclusion of the illiterates.

Moreover**,** health-related information should provide users with the necessary materials to understand the health care issues for better understanding and appropriate response.

There is also a need to use image-based health posters, flyers, and brochures among others in all health information dissemination in rural communities. Since information dissemination is critically important to the cultivation of an informed society, all avenues, both modern and traditional, should be explored to make information available to the illiterate population of every community in their MT. Journalists need to be trained on how to broadcast in local languages in order to communicate and transmit information in all domains, particularly on health issues both at the community and regional stations.

The overall findings indicate that in general, posters in the MT help those with low-literacy to better understand health sensitization information. This is crucial considering the fact that ignorance, disease, and poverty can be considered as silent killers in rural areas because most of the populations are not informed particularly on vital aspects about their lives in general and

health in particular. When posters' design is clear, simple, and straightforward in the MT, there is likelihood for more exploitation than those produced in colonial languages. When they are carefully designed or translated from an imported to an indigenous language, they contribute largely in sensitizing the population as the intended information is communicated easily to the target population without any barrier. Posters will continue to be an important medium to combat not only different health-related and sensitization messages vital to the illiterates, but also other basic elements of life to the common man. They are an economical and effective mode of sensitizing the population against infectious diseases in the society. Locally produced posters that are culturally relevant should be produced because they are easier for the local population to read, understand, and accurately interpret the information. However, image-based posters may be interpreted differently by users and should not be presented as the only mode of information and communication. Given that most people are still not sufficiently informed about the ravaging effect of the ongoing COVID-19 virus in rural areas, picture-based posters and materials as well as community-based spoken communication should be used increasingly for their sensitization. Posters offer a cheap alternative approach to the sensitization of the illiterate population on health issues and also constitute one of the most effective strategies for the revitalization of the selected languages.

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The Impact of Students` Needs and Interests on Vocabulary Acquisition in a Private University in Georgia (A Case of Georgian Higher Education Institution)

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Abstract

  The aim of this research was to measure the impact of students` interest-based materials on vocabulary skills development through a two-tailed quasi-experiment. Contemporary classrooms with digital natives seeking 21st-century skills require many significant changes in the instructional process. Being put in a democratic, student-centered environment, students have to be granted the opportunity to personalize their learning process. The issue of adjusting and tailoring materials to learners` needs, demands, and interests is widely considered daunting for teachers all over the world. The presented article highlights the importance of designing contextualized materials and adjusting materials to learners` interests and needs to achieve desired learning outcomes. The statistical data were gathered using a two-tailed quasi-experimental design in two control and two experimental groups through pre, while, and post-tests, and analyzed by paired samples tests. The study revealed that vocabulary acquisition is influenced significantly when materials are designed according to students` interests and needs.

Keywords: Textbooks, materials design, vocabulary, learners` interests, contextualized tasks

Introduction

Textbooks are considered a de facto syllabus for many teachers, especially for novice ones, as they feel more comfortable and secure while following sequenced materials (Ansary & Babaii, 2002). However, several problematic issues must be considered while following textbooks, as most materials in textbooks are based on irrelevant topics, neglecting learners` preferences and the appropriate level of input (Ur, 1996; Richards, 2001). It should be noted that teachers usually have to design or modify the materials related to language. Frequently, teachers have to adapt vocabulary materials and give a wide variety of tasks to involve the learners more in the learning process. It is notable that vocabulary is significant in the language acquisition process and should be the major focus in textbooks (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002; Chen & Chung, 2008; DeCarrico, 2001; Min, 2008).

Moreover, vocabulary is one of the main components in language learning as it helps comprehension skills become easier due to rich vocabulary (Rouhani & Purgharib, 2013). Lessard-Clouston (2013) stated that vocabulary helps learners comprehend easily, "without sufficient vocabulary students cannot understand others or express their ideas" (p.2). Vocabulary is the key point in communication while conveying information. As Wilkins (1972) stated, ". . . while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (pp. 111–112). That is why teachers have to design, modify, tailor or replace materials related to vocabulary in the textbooks and personalize the learning process accordingly. However, designing various vocabulary materials, which are adjusted to learners` needs, interests and demands is complex and challenging.

Theoretical Framework: Vocabulary and Material Design

The language learning process focusing on vocabulary acquisition involves multifaceted dimensions (Kim, Crossley, & Kyle, 2018; Pellicer-Sánchez, 2016). Frequently, learners find learning vocabulary daunting as they have to memorize the words. Frequently, the list of vocabulary is given without any context in the classroom. However, learning vocabulary and focusing on vocabulary development should include "moving beyond single words and direct first language (L1)" and second language (L2) equivalencies (Coxhead, 2015; Elgort, 2017). As mentioned above, vocabulary is multifaceted, as it is connected to the target language itself and lexis frequency in textbooks, de-contextualized, and contextualized words, and incidental language (e.g., unplanned language items incorporated in tasks) (Pellicer-Sánchez, 2016). The latter is not incorporated in the syllabus, but it usually is incorporated in teacher-tailored contextualized materials. Contextualization is vital in the learning process as it enables the learners to link schemes in the context (Qian, 2008; Tyler & Ortega, 2018).

Moreover, it should be noted that learners remember the context and story more and retrieve lexical items easily afterward (Qian, 2008; Tyler & Ortega, 2018). Frequently, learners guess the meaning of unknown lexical items from the context, as they "derive an idea of its meaning" (Gairns & Redman, 2006, p. 83). Teaching vocabulary in a meaningful context is vital, as a learner focuses on "not only linguistic knowledge of a word, such as phonetic, syntactic and semantic rules but also the knowledge of how to use the word properly in a context" (Amirian & Momeni, 2012, p.2302). It has to be detected here that context is of different types: a) vocabulary items in a list without context; b) vocabulary items in minimal context, chunks of sentences; c) vocabulary items in texts; d) vocabulary items in elaborated context (Laufer & Shmueli, 1997). However, elaborated context might not be enough if the topic of the text is not related to learners` interests, preferences, and needs. Trianto (2016) mentioned that needs-based context should link materials and the real world for learners. Thus, context without personalized interests and topics might not be helpful and productive for learners.

It is thought-provoking that textbooks consider the learners' interests but not for a particular group of learners with different educational and cultural backgrounds. Consequently, the teachers are granted the opportunity to personalize the context more and design materials based on the needs assessment. It is noteworthy that a plethora of scientists studied the impact of materials development on learners' academic performance and identified materials as one of the main factors of a successful language lesson (Castilo, Insuasty, Osorio & Fernanda, 2017; Harwood, 2013; McGrath, 2013; Richards & Renandya, 2002; Tomlinson, 2011a; Widodo & Savova, 2010). Brown (1995) mentioned that materials are "any systematic description of the techniques" that can be used in the classroom (p.139). However, some authors stated that materials can be any task designed by a teacher (Cakir, 2015; Tomlinson, 2011a). Tomlinson (2012) claimed that the task can be anything "videos, graded readers, flashcards, games, websites and mobile phone interactions" (p. 143).

According to Duarte and Escobar (2008), appropriate materials with interesting context can positively impact the learning process and encourage autonomous learning, as it "can positively influence students' motivation when learning a foreign language" (p. 63). However, materials should be adjusted to learners` interests and preferences focusing on relevant topics (Bao, 2008). Materials should "involve a variety of ideas about effective practices" (Byrd & Schuemann, 2014, p.381). Johnson (1989) stated that "designing appropriate materials is not a science: it is a strange mixture of imagination, insight, and analytical reasoning" (p. 153). Having a great emphasis on learner autonomy, motivation, and personalization, the teachers tend to create a democratic, student-centered environment for students.

According to Tomlinson (2003), there are four broad types of materials: "instructional, experiential, elicitative or exploratory" (p. 2). *Instructional materials* are mainly based on coursebooks and are frequently used, in almost every lesson. Richards (2001) mentioned that "instructional materials generally serve as the basis of much of the language input that learners receive and the language practice that occurs in the classroom" (p. 251). Instructional materials, called coursebooks, follow the syllabus but are not always effective as they are not adjusted to learners` real life. *Experiential materials* focus on the experience of the language, usually seen as a top-down approach, holistic approach in the classrooms (Tomlinson, 2003). *Elicitative materials* can be seen as a task that pushes learners implicitly to use the language items. *Exploratory materials* are created to "help learners make discoveries about language for themselves" (Tomlinson, 2003, p.2). These materials are key components in inductive learning, as learners are guided to discover language themselves and have opinions about language and its rules.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) stated that the process of materials designing includes four main pillars: input, content, language focus, and task. *Input* can be spoken or written, and it is divided into two sub-areas: target language and content. *Content* should be personalized and contextualized, focusing on the learner`s needs and preferences, encouraging communication, and activating schemata. Content can be subdivided into more components: knowledge, values, culture, skills, and subjects (McKimm, 2003). *The language focus* is related to the target language. Input should be linked to language focus, as they should encourage the recycling of language items.

But it should be noted that the aim of designing materials should be a natural language, as "the ultimate purpose of language learning is language use" (Pardo & Tellez, 2009, p.109). These four elements are interrelated and serve to design a task. The process of designing and creating a relevant task comprises the following techniques described in the table below.

Table 1. Task Designing Process

TECHNIQUES	PROCESS	SUB-STEPS
Modifying	Modification serves teachers to make the task more appropriate in terms of **content** to make it more personalized, **topic** to link it to learner`s preferences, **culture** to avoid inappropriate input, **level** to make it relevantly challenging.	**Adding**- Generally, teachers add more input, sentences to the given task to make the task more appropriate for the particular group and level.
		Simplifying- Teachers have to grade their language to simplify materials and adjust the task to particular groups, individuals.

		Deleting- This is used to make the task more appropriate for the learners; this is used to adjust the task more to learners` preferences and culture.
Re-ordering	To have the flow of the lesson, teachers have to re-order the tasks in coursebooks. Each system/body follows a particular methodology, and each teacher has to adapt coursebooks and tasks, according to the individual s/he is teaching and the system/ department demands.	
Designing an alternative material	Teachers design the materials themselves without using the coursebook. Sometimes materials are designed from scratch in order to make them more appropriate for particular learners. These materials/ tasks are adjusted to the learner's needs and interests.	

Moreover, McGrath (2002) stated that not only these elements should be taken into consideration while designing materials, but learner`s needs and their interests. The latter is linked tightly to needs analysis. Needs analysis is usually done by the teacher at the beginning of the course to identify learners' expectations, needs, background, and preferences. The task is appropriate if it motivates learners through content, personalized context, and makes learners use the target language. Moreover, needs analysis can act as a diagnostic test revealing learner`s strengths and weaknesses and serve the point of influencing the language input on the course as it "is the systematic collection and analysis" of data (Brown, 2006, p.102).

Research Methodology and Methods

The process of reviewing the professional literature has revealed a necessity of teachers' active engagement in identifying the teaching/learning context with all the peculiarities and then designing materials to promote learners' vocabulary acquisition stage. Conducting needs assessment, analyzing key factors, and then based on the obtained information designing proper materials, could be daunting tasks for teachers. Although teachers are motivated to have enjoyable and beneficial lessons, the deficit of ready-made materials and relevant materials for developing students` vocabulary skills in the classroom plays its role, and lessons become less productive. Based on the

problems mentioned above, the following research question was formulated: To what extent do contextualized, learner-interests-based materials impact vocabulary skills?. Moreover, the hypothesis that learner needs and interests-based materials will greatly impact students' vocabulary skills development has been devised. The study has been shaped in a two-tailed quasi-experimental nature. Several research instruments were used, needs analysis, surveys, and tests were used in a two-tailed quasi-experiment. To approve or disprove this hypothesis, the experiment was conducted. The experiment lasted for one semester in four groups, two control, and two experimental groups. Before the experiment, the learners filled in needs analysis as a part of the survey before the semester. Initially, 61 students were involved in the experiment, but due to their absences and maintaining gender equality and discriminating power in each group, the researchers decided to reduce the number of participants.

Consequently, 48 Georgian students were involved in the experiment, 12 students in each group. Convenient sampling was used as participants are assigned to groups using the system at the university. The administration provides some options: dates and lecturers, and the learners choose the classes themselves using the platform. All of them are from the same private university in Tbilisi, Georgia. All participants are 19 - 20 years old taking the English language course at university. All participants are at an advanced level (C1) using the same textbook, Keynote (Lansford, Dummett & Stephension, 2016). All participants are monolingual.

The research is beneficial for the learners and teachers, it did not harm learners/ teachers or any person involved in the research (non-malfeasance). To protect participants` anonymity and confidentiality, the participants filled in the informed consent before the beginning of the experiment.

To assign the groups to control and experimental status randomly and not subjectively, the researchers assigned colors to all groups in advance. On the first day of the class, the researchers provided a box of four strips of colored paper, and each group had to decide on one color. Consequently, the groups were assigned to control group 1, control group 2, experimental group 1, and experimental group 2.

All groups used the textbook Keynote advanced level (C1). First of all, learners did the TED talk activities in the textbook, focusing on comprehension. After these comprehension tasks, all participants in control groups did vocabulary in context tasks, multiple-choice tasks from the DVD using the projector in the classroom.

While experimental groups did not do the vocabulary in context but after doing TED talk comprehension activities, they did the tasks on the paper related to their interests, topics they liked, and their needs. These interests were gathered in a survey, the needs analysis part indicated above, conducted at the

beginning of the course. The tasks were contextualized and adjusted to their needs and interests. The tasks included both target language, the same language items as in the control group, and incidental language, the same items in the task in control groups. The difference between control and experimental group tasks was that experimental groups had their interest-based materials. The participants in the experimental group had a different context related to their interests.

As mentioned above, both tasks in the control and experimental groups included the same vocabulary items and the participants spent the same time on them (see samples 1 and 2). Moreover, both tasks were based on not only the same target language but also the incidental language. In control groups, in vocabulary in context activities are done through the multiple-choice task using the projector, the target language was highlighted while incidental language was in the marker sentence or in options. The researchers chose the same target language and incidental language from the marker sentence and multiple-choice options for experimental groups. Consequently, the tasks used in experimental groups included the target language in the box, from which students had to choose the target language items and insert in sentences, while incidental language was scattered in each story itself, but was not highlighted in order not to emphasize the incidental language as in control groups.

Sample 1. This sample was given to one of the participants, X, who indicated in the survey that her favourite topic is related to arts, paintings.

Task 1. Please fill in the gaps with the words from the box. You have 2:13 minutes.
Mesmerized   rippling across Shifted from   waterfront   bland
X is an outstanding painter, she got familiar with arts when she was young. She started painting power stations in front of the house using different colours in oil. First, she discovered that she could differentiate shades of colours nicely but she was uncertain how to paint with water. In order to practice more, she started painting ……………….. of the Caspian Sea. X found that all artists painted water in a different way and she started painting waves ………………………the sea. X states that the colours totally absorbed the waves without an intersection and it ……………..the oil colours to lovely scenery. Nowadays X is a famous artist and supports new talented artists, she is upset that governments do not support artists. One day X found a painting of war, where bombs were to explode easily. X was …………………………when she looked at this painting. The most interesting part of the painting was that one half of the painting was …………..and boring but the other half was thrilling. She found the painter and now they are having a joint exhibition.

<u>Sample 2</u>. This sample was given to one of the participants, Y, who indicated in the survey that her favourite topic is related to music or being a DJ.

Task 1. Please fill in the gaps with the words from the box. You have 2:13 minutes.

Mesmerized		rippling across
Shifted	waterfront	bland

Y is an outstanding DJ. She remembers she was…………………by music for the first time when she listened to techno on the radio when she and her mum passed the power station by car. All sounds merged, and she found a unique rhythm. She closed her eyes and visualized …………………of the ocean in front of her. At that moment, her feelings for techno …………….., before she didn't think techno was her favourite type of music. Nowadays, some listeners are uncertain about the sound in her music for the first 20 seconds, but after that, they are absorbed, and most of them mentioned that they visualized waves………………………the sea. Y argues that music should not have an intersection between a human being and the location, all sounds should synthesize. Y is upset that techno is not the most popular type of music, and some people think it is………………, but she thinks that this music with a unique rhythm can explode the best feelings inside a human being.

Each student in experimental groups received the sample adjusted to their interests. Each student had a different story in each unit after doing the TED talk comprehension tasks. The students were given the same time in control and experimental groups; for example, the task in control groups needed 2:13 minutes, and the participants in experimental groups had to do a gap-fill task in the same time. It should be noted that the teacher monitored the learners carefully without interference. In some units, when the learners in experimental groups asked what a particular word meant, the teacher gave a synonym or a definition from the task in control groups, the learners were exposed to the identical language items and language input. The teacher did not focus on words in-depth, the teacher only gave a synonym or a definition, i.e., focused on meaning. The form, pronunciation, and appropriacy were dropped since the task in control groups did not include any of these language foci except the meaning.

It should be noted that after doing each task, the learners had to check in pairs or groups (depending on the number of students while doing the task). Moreover, they micro-taught while working in pairs/ groups, as the participants saw that they had different answers in some gaps. The teacher monitored carefully and provided support using the definitions or synonyms if needed. The teacher saw that sometimes they smiled when doing peer assessment as they read different stories about each other`s interests and after each task different students mentioned that they found the tasks very interesting. Peer assessment and tasks, as they shared their interests, encouraged micro-teaching, enhancement of autonomous learning, and a more

friendly atmosphere, as sometimes the learners continued speaking about the topic as they got interested in the topic.

In the experiment, in all groups, an observation sheet was used as the tracker of their absences while doing the tasks or tests. Consequently, some participants did the tasks but their result was not used in data analysis due to absences.

In this experiment, the learners completed one pre-test, two while tests, and one post-test. After two units of Keynote, two TED talks, and two tasks, they completed one test. A part of their final exam from the previous semester was taken as a pre-test.

Findings and Discussion

To test the hypothesis a dependent samples t-test (i.e. paired samples t-test) was conducted. Prior to conducting the analysis and collecting the data, tests were designed: a pre-test, two while-tests, and one post-test. Each test, except the pre-test (because it was a part of the final exam not designed by the researchers), was piloted in groups, with 5-minute intervals to check reliability. In the same university of the same age group, 10 people were taken to pilot the tests. They did the tests in the morning, and after a 5-minute break, they did the same test to check reliability. Mostly they had similar answers but to prove the reliability of the test, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated using SPSS 16.0. While-test one result was 0.979, which is more than 0.8, and the significance p=0.000, which was less than 0.01. It means that the first while test was reliable (See Table 2).

Table 2. While-test One, Cronbach's Alpha result

Correlations

		VAR00001(First attempt)	VAR00002(s econd attempt)
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	.979[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	10	10
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	.979[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	10	10

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

While-test number 2 result was 0.996, which is more than 0.8, and the significance p=0.000, which was less than 0.01. It means that the second while test was reliable (See Table 3).

Table 3. While-test Two, Cronbach's Alpha result

Correlations

		VAR00001(First attempt)	VAR00002(second attempt)
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	.996**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	10	10
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	.996**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	10	10

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

The post-test result was 0.991, which is more than 0.8, and the significance p=0.000, which was less than 0.01. It means that the post-test was reliable (See Table 4).

Table 4. Post-test, Cronbach's Alpha result

Correlations

		VAR00001(First attempt)	VAR00002(second attempt)
VAR00001	Pearson Correlation	1	.991**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	10	10
VAR00002	Pearson Correlation	.991**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	10	10

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

There is a strong correlation between the two results for each test, the result is statistically significant and all tests are reliable. After receiving learners` scores for all tests, mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis were calculated to have data for the *t*-test. The mean results were used to calculate the *t*-test (See Table 5 and Table 5.1.).

Table 5. Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, Skewness, and Kurtosis Result of
Control Groups

Groups	Control Group 1				Control Group 2			
Tests	Pre-test	While-test 1	While-test 2	Post-test	Pre-test	While-test 1	While-test 2	Post-test
Mean	14.66	15.41	14.83	16.16	14.33	14.83	15.00	14.41
Median	14.50	16.50	14.50	17.50	16.00	15.50	14.00	15.00
Mode	12.00	17.00	10.00	19.00	18.00	15.00	10.00	15.00
Std. Deviation	5.44	6.05	5.44	5.32	4.99	4.60	4.51	3.20
Skewness	.590	-.718	.247	-.302	-.940	-.186	.378	-.912
Kurtosis	.303	.513	-1.08	-1.30	-.530	-.631	-1.21	.721

Table 5.1. Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation, Skewness, and Kurtosis of
Experimental Groups

Groups	Experimental Group 1				Experimental Group 2			
Tests	Pre-test	While-test 1	While-test 2	Post-test	Pre-test	While-test 1	While-test 2	Post-test
Mean	12.83	16.50	20.58	24.16	13.50	15.16	21.00	24.75
Median	10.50	15.00	19.50	24.50	13.00	14.50	20.50	25.00
Mode	8.00	13.00	16.00	19.00	10.00	10.00	25.00	25.00
Std. Deviation	4.93	4.60	4.99	3.45	4.71	4.54	3.66	2.66
Skewness	.725	.735	.464	-.342	.439	.378	.080	-.783
Kurtosis	-1.32	-.78	-1.10	-1.13	.024	-1.417	-1.732	-.043

The tables above show that the mean result in control groups in each test was
very close to each other. However, the data change when it comes to the
experimental groups. The pre-test data for each group were close to Control
Group 1 and Control Group 2 and Experimental Group 1 and Experimental
Group 2. The data changed dramatically in while-tests, especially the second
while-test. According to the tables, the experimental groups had a higher mean
in while-tests. The dramatic change was visible statistically. Mean results were
collected for statistical purposes. A paired-samples t-test (SPSS 16.0) was

conducted to compare the interest-based task usage and vocabulary skills improvement with traditional teaching. The results showed that there was a significant difference between the scores of control groups (M=16.75, SD=3.72) and experimental groups (M=1.50, SD=0.12); t=17.44, df=15, significance p=0.000<0.05, which means that the results are statistically different and important. The confidence interval of the difference was 95%. In other words, the null hypothesis that the suggested treatment does not have an impact on the students' vocabulary skills is denied, as T=17.44>1, the higher the T, the more the null hypothesis is denied. It should be noted that correlation is also significant as it is 0.49 and it is greater than 0.05 (See Table 6).

Table 6. Paired Samples Test Result

Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	VAR00001(scores in control groups)	16.7569	16	3.72771	.93193
	VAR00002(scores in experimental groups)	1.5000	16	.51640	.12910

Paired Samples Correlations

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	VAR00001 (scores in control groups) & VAR00002(scores in experimental groups)	16	.500	.049

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	VAR00001 (scores in control groups) - VAR00002(scores in experimental groups)	1.52569 E1	3.49845	.87461	13.39268	17.12107	17.444	15	.000

The data showed a significant impact. Thus, the mean result in the experimental groups was significantly higher than in the control groups. It can be interpreted that the tasks in experimental groups helped learners to memorize and retrieve vocabulary items more than the multiple-choice task done using the projector. The experiment was successful because visually and statistically, the difference is significant; the difference is statistically important.

The hypothesis was proved; learner needs and interests-based materials impact vocabulary skills.

Research Limitations

Some students missed some days when the vocabulary tasks were done and they were excluded from the experiment.

Future Research Prospects

Personalized and contextualized tasks will be used to develop the students` grammar usage.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be claimed that contextualized input is beneficial, as learners connect their interests to the language items provided in contextualized tasks. Vocabulary acquisition is successful if the items are contextualized, but the context should be related to learners` needs and interests, not to the outside world but their inner world. This experiment and collected data showed that interest-based materials impact the learners` vocabulary skills significantly. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between the scores of control groups (M=16.75, SD=3.72) and experimental groups (M=1.50, SD=0.12); t=17.44, df=15, significance p=0.000<0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis that the recommended treatment does not have any effect on vocabulary acquisition is denied. Using this approach led to the enhancement of vocabulary acquisition in experimental groups as the learners could easily retrieve vocabulary items and write tests more effectively. Interests and needs-based materials help the learners to develop vocabulary acquisition.

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Analyse des problèmes liés au parcours juridique des victimes des violences sexuelles dans la province de la Tshopo en République Démocratique du Congo

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Résumé

  Cette étude vise deux objectifs, à savoir : dégager les problèmes liés au parcours juridique des victimes de violences sexuelles dans la province de la Tshopo et, proposer ce qui doit être fait pour élaguer ces problèmes et permettre une prise en charge efficace et équitable. Pour y arriver, l'étude qui s'inscrit dans le contexte de la théorisation ancrée a mobilisé comme sources les dossiers des victimes des violences sexuelles en justice, les comptes rendus des réunions, les groupes de discussion, les récits de vie des victimes et la littérature grise. Partant, il se dégage que les problèmes identifiés sont multiples et de diverses natures. On répertorie notamment : le dysfonctionnement des services judiciaires ; l'absence des preuves par des

parties concernées (médecins, police, agents pénitentiaires, etc.) ; une pauvreté extrême des victimes ; les manœuvres dilatoires tendant à repousser perpétuellement les audiences pour freiner le procès ou bloquer l'action par des procédures irrégulières ; l'arrangement à l'amiable ; l'insuffisance et l'éloignement géographique des juridictions compétentes en matière de violence sexuelle ; l'environnement social des victimes ; et l'insécurité et la crainte de représailles. Que faire ? Le problème des violences sexuelles nécessite l'implication de toutes les communautés. Aussi, les campagnes de sensibilisation, les sessions de formations ainsi que des actions concrètes qui pourraient apporter des solutions aux problèmes répertoriés.

Mots-clés: Violence, violences sexuelles, parcours juridique, problèmes, Tshopo

Analysis of the Problems Linked to the Legal Course of Victims of Sexual Violence in the Province of Tshopo in the Democratic Republic of Congo

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Abstract

This study has a dual objective which firstly aims to identify the problems associated with the legal process of victims of sexual violence in the province of Tshopo, and followingly to share recommendations to eliminate the identified problems to ensure that victims' are dealt with effectively and fairly along the criminal proceedings. To achieve this, the study, using a Grounded Theory methodology, used the files of victims of sexual violence in the courts, the minutes of meetings, discussion groups, the life stories of

victims and grey literature as sources. The problems identified are multiple and varied and include: dysfunctional judicial services; lack of evidence from the parties concerned (doctors, police, prison officers, etc.); extreme poverty of the victims; delaying tactics that tend to perpetually postpone hearings in order to slow down the trial or block the action through irregular procedures; out-of-court settlements; the inadequacy and geographical remoteness of the jurisdictions competent in matters of sexual violence; the social environment of the victims; and insecurity and fear of reprisals. What can be done? The problem of sexual violence requires the involvement of the whole community. Given that the problem of sexual violence requires the involvement of the whole community, this research proposes awareness-raising campaigns, training sessions and concrete actions as solutions to the problems identified.

Keywords: Violence, sexual violence, legal course, problems, Tshopo

Introduction

Pendant longtemps, les gens ne voyaient aucun problème dans le comportement sexuel, présenté comme la manifestation d'un instinct monolithique, celui de la propagation de l'espèce (Duyckaerts, 1964). Toutefois, à côté de cette conception classique de la sexualité, aujourd'hui les victimes des violences sexuelles sont confrontées à plusieurs problèmes qui constituent un handicap majeur à leur parcours juridique. A cet effet, les acteurs des différents domaines (juriste, politologue, sociologue, psychologue, anthropologue, médecin,…) sont mobilisés pour la cause des victimes des violences sexuelles dans ce parcours.

Cet intérêt orienté vers les problèmes liés aux violences sexuelles pour ces différents acteurs précités, paraît être justifié par l'ampleur qu'ils ne cessent de prendre au fil des années en termes de persistance, de nombre de victimes voire des multiples conséquences collatérales négatives, notamment de points de vue psychologique, économique et social pour les victimes. Ainsi, en raison de leur ampleur, ces dernières années, les violences sexuelles font l'objet d'une attention soutenue, aussi bien des différents gouvernements que des organisations non gouvernementales, des mouvements féministes et même par des chercheurs.

Dans le monde, (OMS et al., 2021) ont affirmé, dans un communiqué, que la violence à l'égard des femmes reste terriblement omniprésente et débute très tôt dans la vie d'une femme, comme le montrent de nouvelles données alarmantes publiées par l'OMS et ses partenaires. Au cours de sa vie, d'après le communiqué, une femme sur trois est victime de violence physique ou sexuelle de la part d'un partenaire intime ou de violence sexuelle de la part de quelqu'un d'autre que son partenaire, soit environ 736 millions de femmes, un

nombre qui est resté en grande partie inchangé au cours de la dernière décennie.

Ceci est une raison pouvant justifier la mobilisation actuelle des différents dirigeants et partenaires pour tenter d'éradiquer ce phénomène dont les conséquences pour les victimes sont incalculables. Malgré cette mobilisation, l'ampleur du phénomène ne faiblit pas, bien au contraire. À titre illustratif, CVS, INSSEE-ONDRP (2013) présentent l'exemple de la France où une femme sur 5 et un homme sur 14 rapportent avoir été victimes d'agressions sexuelles au moins une fois dans leur vie. La même enquête rapporte que chaque année, 102.000 personnes adultes de 18 à 75 ans, dont 86.000 Femmes et 16.000 hommes, sont victimes de viol ou des tentatives de viol en France métropolitaine.

La situation en Afrique semble être plus difficile et complexe car, comme l'indique Ombiabo (2020), il est difficile de chiffrer la problématique des violences sexuelles avec exactitude sur le continent. Plusieurs sources (la police, les instances judiciaires, les services médicaux, les organisations non gouvernementales, les associations des femmes pour la lutte contre les violences sexuelles s'accordent à dire que celles-ci sont dues aux conflits armées. C'est particulièrement le cas en RD. Congo, pays auquel s'intéresse spécifiquement la présente recherche.

La RD. Congo fait malheureusement partie des pays qui payent le lourd tribut des violences sexuelles, avec de milliers des cas rapportés chaque année, notamment dans sa partie Est. Les guerres, les conflits armés récurrents dans cette partie du pays, ainsi que l'insécurité et le climat d'impunité qui y règne, notamment du fait de la persistance des groupes armés incontrôlés et des poches d'insécurité, sont autant des facteurs qui ont fait et qui continuent à faire le lit de cette pire forme de violation des droits humains (UNFPA, 2013).

Pour montrer la complexité des violences sexuelles en RD. Congo, Maertens de Noordhout (2013) affirme qu'elles sont particulièrement difficiles à combattre parce qu'elles sont largement répandues et qu'elles ne sont pas cantonnées à un groupe déterminé. L'auteur a regroupé les agresseurs en trois grandes catégories, à savoir 1) les milices rebelles, 2) les Forces armées de la RD. Congo et les officiers de la Police Nationale congolaise et, 3) les civils eux-mêmes. Ceci signifie que si hier les violences sexuelles étaient généralement attribuées aux premières catégories citées, la situation a beaucoup changé aujourd'hui. À cet effet, dans un rapport publié par l'UNFPA (Vasseur et al., 2019), il est clairement montré que parmi les viols commis entre 2005-2017 en RD. Congo, 58% l'ont été par les civils et les combattants, 8% par les militaires ou policiers et 34% par les miliciens.

Une autre étude menée par Peterman et al. (2011) rapporte que jusqu'à 1,8 million de femmes congolaises ont été violées au moins une fois dans leur

vie. Partant de toutes ces statistiques, il y a lieu de reconnaître que l'ampleur du phénomène est inquiétante. Les femmes adultes, comme les enfants sont violés en RD. Congo. Tremblay (2005) fait observer que l'agression sexuelle commise envers les enfants constitue un phénomène inhérent à notre société, qui existe et perdure depuis longtemps à travers de nombreuses générations.

De ce qui précède, il se dégage que les statistiques concernant l'ampleur des violences sexuelles sont alarmantes. Cet état de choses justifie actuellement la multiplicité de recherches tendant à mettre en place des mécanismes à exploiter pour contrer la propagation (l'expansion) des violences sexuelles, tout en sanctionnant sévèrement les auteurs et en protégeant les victimes. C'est dans ce contexte que les textes sont produits, les lois sont votées pour définir le cadre conceptuel et les mesures pratiques à mettre en œuvre toutes les fois que des actes relatifs aux violences sexuelles sont commis. À cet effet, les communautés en général et les femmes violées en particulier sont sensibilisées à saisir la justice, les formations sont assurées, des structures de protection et d'accompagnement des victimes sont créées, des recherches sont initiées pour identifier les causes, publier les statistiques, apprécier le vécu et la prise en charge des victimes des violences sexuelles.

En dépit de toutes les sensibilisations à saisir la justice par les victimes des violences sexuelles, à Kisangani où la présenté étude est menée, au cours d'un atelier organisé par l'ONG Centre de Documentation pour la Femme, en partenariat avec la Commission Nationale de Droit de l'Homme et la Magistrature Civile, (CDF, 2017), il a été constaté qu'il y a trop de problèmes d'arrangements à l'amiable et que la population ne dénonce pas les violences faites par crainte des représailles. Ainsi, les victimes des violences sexuelles ont été encouragées à saisir la justice pour obtenir réparation, nonobstant les problèmes liés à cette dénonciation.

Malgré tous ces efforts et en dépit de l'architecture juridique qui encadre les questions des violences sexuelles, les victimes ne dénoncent pas (CDF, 2017), prétextant qu'elles rencontrent plusieurs problèmes de nature à entraver le parcours juridique de leurs dossiers (instruction juridique) et prise en charge, entre autres. C'est dans cette veine que la société civile (Société civile, 2019) a souligné dans sa déclaration que la violence sexuelle est un sujet difficile à aborder et souvent mal compris. En général, poursuit-elle, les lois et les politiques y relatives ne reflètent pas la réalité de l'expérience vécue par les victimes et les efforts en matière de responsabilisation ne donnent que peu de résultats. Ce constat est souvent observé dans la Province de la Tshopo en ce qui concerne le traitement ou la prise en charge judiciaire des cas des violences sexuelles. Concrètement, les tracasseries décriées des services pour différents frais exigés, la lenteur dans l'instruction des dossiers, des stigmatisations de divers ordres, des discriminations, des difficultés à rassembler des preuves constituent le tableau sombre susceptible d'attirer

l'attention des personnes intéressées par cette thématique ou de tout observateur curieux. Ce constat justifie le bien-fondé de cette étude qui est menée sous l'égide de l'Agence Belge de Développement (Enabel), en partenariat avec l'Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL) et l'Université de Gand (UGENT). Aussi, cette étude se justifie-t-elle par le souci de mettre en lumière, sur base d'une analyse minutieuse des processus d'instruction des dossiers de cas des violences sexuelles, les différents problèmes rencontrés par les victimes.

Pour ce faire, l'étude exploite les récits des victimes compulsés à travers de différentes structures tant judiciaires que de la Police de la Ville de Kisangani, les contenus des échanges avec certaines victimes et leurs proches, les échanges avec des différents membres et de personnalités de la communauté (leaders), avec pour visée la possibilité que les résultats de cette étude pourraient aider à faire des plaidoiries bien ciblées et bien soutenues pour une justice plus satisfaisante. Elle se donne pour objectif d'apporter des réponses aux questions ci-après :

- Quels sont les différents problèmes que rencontrent les victimes des violences sexuelles tout au long de l'instruction en justice de leurs dossiers ?
- Quelles stratégies peut-on déployer pour élaguer ces problèmes et permettre une prise en charge efficace et équitable des victimes de ces violences ?

Méthodologie de la recherche
A.   Contexte, population et échantillon de l'étude
Cette est menée dans la ville de Kisangani, chef-lieu de la province de la Tshopo en RD. Congo. Depuis 2018 à Kisangani, l'Agence Belge de Développement, Enabel-PLVS (Programme de Lutte contre les Violences Sexuelles) en partenariat avec les universités Catholique de Louvain (UCL), de Gand (UGENT) et de Kisangani (UNIKIS), y a initié une recherche-action au Centre de Santé Alwaleed, qui utilise une approche multisectorielle comprenant une assistance médicale, psychosociale, juridique et socio-économique en faveur des victimes de viol.

Cette étude est menée auprès des victimes rétablies, suivies par le Centre Alwaleed dans la ville de Kisangani en RD. Congo. Étant donné que certaines victimes des violences sexuelles ne fréquentent, ni le Centre de prise en charge psychosociale et médicale (Centre Alwaleed), ni la justice pour le suivi de leurs dossiers, il est difficile d'accéder, au niveau des structures étatiques à des statistiques y relatives. Ainsi, cette recherche ne prend en considération que les victimes des violences sexuelles identifiées; celles qui ont été prises en charge au Centre Prince Alwaleed de Kisangani en l'occurrence. D'après les statistiques recueillies dans ledit centre pour une

période de 5 ans (2015-2020), période où les statistiques ont été rendues disponibles grâce à l'accompagnement financier d'Enabel, l'effectif des victimes des violences sexuelles ayant fréquenté le Centre Alwaleed pour une prise en charge est allé croissant, comme le révèle la figure 1:
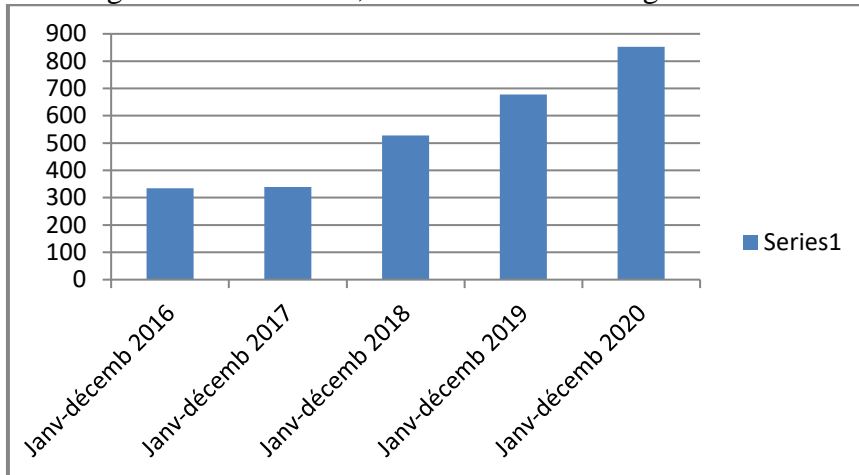

Figure 1. Effectifs des victimes prises en charge au Centre Alwaleed de 2016 à 2020

Considérant les données de la figure 1. ci-dessus, il se dégage que l'effectif total des victimes des violences sexuelles ayant consulté le Centre Alwaleed, pour cette période de cinq ans, est de 2.732 sujets. L'année 2020 a le nombre le plus élevé des victimes. Elle représente à elle seule une proportion de 31,22%, soit plus de deux quarts de l'ensemble des victimes. Ainsi, par rapport à l'évolution des cas pris en charge par le Centre Alwaleed, il s'observe que la courbe est ascendante. Ceci veut dire que l'effectif ne cesse d'augmenter au fil des années retenues.

En raison du fait que, d'une part, que tous les dossiers de ces 2.732 victimes suivies par le Centre Alwaleed ne sont passés par la justice et que, d'autre part, la conservation des archives en justice est un casse-tête ne permettant pas d'en retrouver les traces, la présente recherche est réalisée sur un échantillon de 30 dossiers tirés de l'ensemble, du fait de leur traçabilité, après des démarches auprès des archives des Tribunaux pour Enfant, Lutte Contre les Violences Sexuelles et de Grande Instance de Kisangani. Les analyses desdits dossiers sont complétées par les informations issues de diverses sources ou matériaux, à savoir les comptes rendus des réunions et les discussions sur les violences sexuelles, les archives des structures de prise en charge des victimes des violences sexuelles, l'écoute auprès des victimes et de leurs proches, ainsi que les entretiens individuels. Toutes ces sources sont décrites dans la section relative à la collecte des matériaux.

Étant donné que cette étude a eu recours à l'approche dite « Grounded theory », les victimes des violences sexuelles, les leaders communautaires, les

dossiers partis du Centre Alwaleed vers la justice, les entretiens avec les victimes et leurs proches, les structures de prise en charge des victimes des violences sexuelles constituent l'échantillon théorique. Dans ce contexte, ces matériaux permettent de construire une explication théorique du phénomène étudié. Ils permettront de dégager les différents problèmes rencontrés par les victimes des violences sexuelles. La visée n'est pas de généraliser les découvertes à des populations plus vastes que celles considérées dans cette recherche, mais de comprendre et produire des connaissances en fonction des réalités du milieu.

B.   Approche et collecte des matériaux
B.1.   Approche utilisée

Cette étude a recouru à une théorie que les Anglo-Saxons appellent « Grounded Theory » (GT) et que les francophones traduisent par : « théorisation ancrée ou enracinée ». C'est une méthode inductive développée par Glaser et Strauss (1967). Son but est de construire une théorie à partir des données, selon une approche où les données sont simultanément recueillies et analysées. Dans sa première version, elle se voulait rattachée au courant positiviste, en offrant une base solide, systématique et claire pour l'analyse des données et la construction de théories (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Au fil des années, Glaser et Strauss ont pris des chemins divergents quant à leur interprétation de la théorisation ancrée. En effet, leur position initiale soutenait que la réalité est indépendante du chercheur et des méthodes employées pour l'étudier, que l'on peut construire une théorie suffisamment générale pour être applicable à diverses situations et populations (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). La GT procède autrement : le cadre théorique est construit au contact des données. Ceci veut dire que le chercheur qui utilise la GT doit se défaire des théories, des idées préconçues, des hypothèses formulées sur un problème de société donné. Le chercheur doit affronter la réalité à travers les données récoltées, faire parler ces données en les analysant, en les comparant et de fil en aiguille se faire une idée du problème, une théorie explicative qu'il se construit tout au long de l'enquête.

La GT est une approche empirico-inductive. Elle implique pour le chercheur d'adopter une attitude compréhensive, respectueuse vis-à-vis des données, des informations (aucune donnée n'est mauvaise en soi) et de l'éthique (respect de la personne qui donne l'information ; ne pas faire apparaître un signe de rejet, de dénigrement à son égard). Pour le cas de la GT, les éléments explicatifs du phénomène (les théories) sont bien à l'état brut dans le matériau et, c'est au chercheur de les mettre à jour (par interprétation des données recueillies). En raison de l'utilisation de la TG, l'étude a exécuté trois activités, à savoir : 1) identifier les données (matériaux) et les collecter ; 2) analyser les données ; et 3) les interpréter afin de les intégrer dans un cadre

théorique qui se construit, permettant d'améliorer la connaissance et la compréhension du phénomène des violences sexuelles à l'étude.

De l'avis de Marie-Claude et al. (2014), ce qui fait la force de la TG est à situer à trois niveaux, à savoir : 1) elle comporte des étapes d'analyse détaillées qui contribuent à sa rigueur ; 2) elle vise à examiner en profondeur les processus, ce qui permet de mettre en lumière les relations entre les problématiques et les structures sociales ; et enfin, 3) elle procure un langage commun qui aide les acteurs intéressés à mieux comprendre un phénomène et à permettre la mise en œuvre des actions. Ainsi dit, la TG nous a donné la possibilité d'examiner en profondeur les problèmes rencontrés par les victimes des violences sexuelles dans la province de la Tshopo, permettant ainsi d'envisager des actions pour aider les victimes des violences sexuelles. Dans cette veine, 'étude peut réaliser une interprétation la plus plausible des matériaux analysés concernant les problèmes rencontrés par les victimes des violences sexuelles, comme l'ont montré Corbin et Strauss (2008).

La « grounded theory » favorise l'innovation à partir d'un certain nombre de procédures méthodologiques. Guillemette (2006) en cite quatre qui sont reprises par d'autres auteurs. C'est notamment : 1) la suspension temporaire du recours à des cadres théoriques existants (Glaser, 1998 ; 1995, Glaser & Srauss, 1967) ; 2) la façon particulière de préciser l'objet de recherche (Beck, 1999 ; Dey,1999 ; Glaser, 2001 ; May, 1986 ; Strauss & Corbin, 1998 ; Willig, 2001) ; 3) l'interaction circulaire entre la collecte et l'analyse des données (Mose et Richards, 2002 ; Norton, 1999), et 4) les procédures d'analyse favorisant l'ouverture à l'émergence ou l'écoute des données (Srauss & Corbin, 1998). La présente étude a tenu compte de ces démarches. À cet effet, l'étude n'a recouru à aucun cadre théorique existant. L'objet de recherche émerge des matériaux collectés. Le va-et-vient dans les matériaux est un indicateur déterminant de l'interaction circulaire.

B.2. Collecte des matériaux

Les matériaux ayant conduit aux principaux résultats présentés dans la section suivante viennent de plusieurs sources, notamment l'analyse de 30 dossiers des victimes des violences sexuelles partis du Centre Alwaleed vers la justice. Au-delà des dossiers des victimes analysés, l'étude a pris en compte plusieurs autres sources, c'est le cas :

- des Comptes rendus des réunions discussion « focus group ». Au total, 9 focus groups ont été organisés sur différentes thématiques des violences sexuelles (des questions essentiellement ouvertes). Y participaient : des garons et les filles mineurs de moins de 20 ans (élèves du secondaire), des prestataires de soins de santé, des leaders religieux et communautaires (milieux urbain et rural), des hommes et des femmes de plus de 20 ans (milieux rural et urbain), ainsi que les jeunes membres

des bandes ou de gangs ayant déjà été auteurs d'un ou des plusieurs viols ;

- des comptes rendus du GTM (Groupe de Travail Multisectoriel), un groupe composé d'un sociologue, d'un anthropologue, d'un psychologue, d'un juriste, d'un pédagogue, d'un médecin, d'un politologue, de leaders communautaires, d'une femme ménagère (une victime rétablie), d'un membre de la Division des Affaires Sociales (DIVAS), d'un représentant des groupes de jeunes gangs, et d'un enseignant de la Faculté de Psychologie et des Sciences de l'Éducation de l'Université de Kisangani considéré comme personne ressource en raison de son intérêt pour les thématiques liées aux violences sexuelles. Ce groupe a été constitué en vue de discuter des problèmes-hypothèses soulevés après l'analyse des matériaux (dossiers des victimes des violences sexuelles, récits de vie, ateliers, rapports, documents divers, etc.). Les échanges entre les membres du GTM ont tourné autour des thématiques relatives aux violences sexuelles soulevées pendant l'analyse des matériaux. Au total, dix réunions discussions ont été organisées entre les années 2018 et 2019 ;
- du compte-rendu d'un atelier sur le cadre juridique des violences sexuelles en R D. Congo. Cet atelier avait réuni : 1) quatre enseignants-chercheurs de la Faculté de Psychologie et des Sciences de l'Éducation de l'Université de Kisangani ; 2) six magistrats ; 3) trois défenseurs des Droits de l'homme qui travaillent sur les questions des violences sexuelles, tous avocats ; 4) deux personnels (un médecin et un psychologue) du Centre Alwaleed ; 5) un officier de la Police de Prévention et Lutte contre les Violences Sexuelles ; et 6) deux gestionnaires du programme PLVS/Enabel.
- des archives des structures de prise en charge des violences sexuelles (rapports et autres documents) et les travaux de fin de cycle de graduat et de licence des étudiants de la Faculté de Psychologie et des Sciences de l'Éducation de l'Université de Kisangani ;
- de l'écoute auprès des victimes des violences sexuelles et de leurs proches par les entretiens individuels (récits de vie). L'étude a analysé au total 87 récits de vie, dont 41 avec les victimes « rétablies » et 46 avec les proches des victimes ;
- des entretiens individuels (6) avec les participants des focus groups identifiés comme personnes ressources (1 garçon mineur, 1 fille mineure, 1 homme adulte, 1 prestataire de Santé, 1 leader religieux, 1 membre de gang).

B.3.   Analyse des matériaux

L'analyse des matériaux s'est déroulée dans le strict respect du principe de circularité de la théorisation ancrée, tel que décrit dans la littérature existante (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Luckerhoff & Guillemette, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Ceci est bien illustré à travers plusieurs va-et-vient dans les récits des victimes de violences sexuelles et leurs proches, les comptes rendus, les transcriptions des discussions de groups (focus groups) et des entretiens. Les discussions des focus groups, riches de sens, ont permis de générer de nouvelles idées ou des hypothèses qui ont fait l'objet de discussions entre les membres du groupe de Travail Multisectoriel (GTM).

L'étude a procédé à une comparaison constante de divers matériaux. Dans cette veine, les analyses des récits de vie et les dossiers des victimes des violences sexuelles ont été confrontés à celles des différentes sources décrites ci-haut, en vue de dégager les ressemblances et les différences éventuelles. Cette comparaison, au cœur de l'analyse dans la théorisation ancrée (Jacques et al., 2014), a permis de dégager les problèmes émergents chez les victimes des violences sexuelles. Ainsi, la crédibilité des résultats est assurée, comme l'indique la littérature existante (Charmaz, 2006 ; Laperrière, 1997; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

C.   Présentation des résultats

Les matériaux analysés révèlent que les victimes des violences sexuelles sont confrontées aux problèmes des diverses natures. Pour cette étude, ces problèmes sont regroupés en deux grandes catégories, il s'agit des problèmes d'ordre général et des problèmes liés au dysfonctionnement de la justice.

C1.   Problème d'ordre général

Ce regroupement comprend globalement cinq problèmes identifiés à la fin de cette étude. Il s'agit de la pauvreté des victimes et de l'ignorance du droit, de l'insécurité et de la peur des représailles, de statut de la femme dans les coutumes, l'atteinte à la dignité de la victime ainsi que de l'environnement social dans lequel vivent les victimes des violences sexuelles.

Considérant la pauvreté des victimes et l'ignorance du droit, la recherche a permis de comprendre qu'au plan économique, la situation des femmes congolaises en général, celle de la Tshopo en particulier, est caractérisée par une extrême pauvreté. Leur condition économique a été fragilisée bien avant les guerres par le dysfonctionnement des structures étatiques et l'absence des infrastructures économiques et sociales viables. Elles sont confrontées au paiement irrégulier des salaires de leurs maris qui travaillent dans la Fonction Publique et les entreprises étatiques. Par conséquent, pour assurer la survie de leurs familles, elles ont dû s'investir dans

l'agriculture, l'élevage et le secteur informel, à savoir : le petit commerce, la couture, la teinturerie, elles fréquentent les brousses et les forêts pour couper les bois à vendre, la poterie et la vannerie…Ceci est bien illustré par la déclaration d'une victime (***18-TSH-KAB-SS-ALW-0058-01-PS***) : « *vers 20h00, elle revenait vendre les* maïs *sur la route. Du coup, elle a vu 2 garons, l'un de petite taille et l'autre mince et géant. Ils l'ont prise de force, ils ont couché avec elle* ». Ainsi, en pratiquant ces activités pour la survie, les femmes sont exposées à la violence sexuelle. On peut donc dire que la pauvreté est un problème majeur pour le parcours juridique des victimes de violences sexuelles, non seulement parce qu'elle les expose aux violences sexuelles, mais aussi parce qu'elle ne leur permet pas de payer les frais occasionnés par la justice. Elles ne peuvent donc pas accéder à la justice pour obtenir réparation.

La présente étude atteste qu'il existe d'autres types de frais engendrés par toute action judiciaire dont il est difficile de s'acquitter pour les victimes. En effet, l'accès au tribunal nécessite de prendre en charge, à maintes reprises les frais de transport du fait des renvois répétés des audiences. Les analyses ont également montré que pour les victimes éloignées des juridictions compétentes et qui doivent effectuer des longues distances, il se pose un problème de frais de séjour lorsque celles-ci doivent se déplacer. Dans ce contexte de paupérisation, il est facile d'imaginer les difficultés financières qu'ont les femmes à avoir accès aux tribunaux. Si la victime a décidé de porter plainte en justice, elle doit payer divers coûts et frais, y compris les frais de justice, les coûts de transport, des analyses et des réquisitions médicales, ainsi que les coûts d'hébergement dans la ville où est situé le tribunal (BCNUD, 2014).

Ces résultats obtenus dans cette étude et ceux de (BCNUDH, 2014 ; Clifford et al., 2008 ; FOCOBIDERCO, 2019 ; Ordonez, 2007) sont concordants. Pour ces études, n'accèdent à la Justice en République Démocratique du Congo que les victimes qui ont les moyens financiers et n'en sort satisfaites que celles qui en tirent profit.

Au-delà de la pauvreté, l'étude a permis de se rendre compte que l'ignorance ne facilite pas aux victimes l'accès aux tribunaux. En effet, plusieurs femmes de la Tshopo, sous le joug de la coutume, ignorent leurs droits et ne connaissent pas toutes les possibilités qui leur sont offertes par la justice. Dans un rapport spécial traitant des violences sexuelles en RD. Congo, Lisa et al. (2008), s'inspirant d'une étude menée par la Berkeley-Tulane Initiative on Vulnerable Population et le Centre international pour la justice transitionnelle ont montré que seuls 27% des gens dans l'est de la RD. Congo et 28% à Kinshasa sont conscients de l'existence de la Cour Pénale Internationale. Beaucoup de victimes n'ont donc pas connaissance de cette haute juridiction internationale qui juge des crimes de guerre comprenant les

violences sexuelles. Il y a lieu d'affirmer, à ce stade qu'il se pose un problème de non vulgarisation du droit. Pire encore, l'étude permet de comprendre que certains acteurs du secteur de la justice tels que les Officiers de Police Judiciaire, ainsi que les autorités politico-administratives et coutumières ignorent également les lois édictées à cet effet. Cette ignorance du droit par la victime et certains acteurs entraîne, le plus souvent la saisie des autorités incompétentes.

Un autre problème regroupé dans cette catégorie est l'insécurité et la peur des représailles. Les résultats de cette étude ont montré que les victimes sont exposées à plusieurs exactions. À la Tshopo par exemple, les membres de certains gangs (Kata Moto, États-Unis, Bourgeois, VANDOM, Kossovo, Mexicains, Zaïrois, etc) violent impunément les droits de l'homme et menacent les populations de représailles dans le cas où ces dernières venaient d'une part à collaborer avec leurs ennemis (policiers, militaires, agents de justice) et d'autre part à dénoncer ou assigner en Justice l'un de leurs membres dans les cas des violences sexuelles. Ainsi, les victimes assoiffées de justice ont peur des représailles pour quitter leurs villages et traverser les zones d'insécurité à de longues distances pour atteindre les juridictions en majorité éloignées de leurs domiciles. Celles qui arrivent à saisir la Justice rencontrent leurs agresseurs une fois de retour chez elles et, faute de protection, elles sont l'objet des représailles. Il en est de même lorsque l'agresseur condamné s'échappe de la prison et va retrouver sa victime. Il multiplie alors les stratégies pour se venger. Il en découle que les victimes confrontées à ces des situations hésitent à saisir la Justice. Pour se protéger et protéger les leurs, elles adoptent une attitude consistant à se taire ou à trouver les solutions locales évoquées plus haut.

Le statut de la femme dans les coutumes est un troisième problème dans ce regroupement. En effet, les coutumes de la RD. Congo qui, pour certaines, ont subi l'influence arabo-musulmane, considèrent la femme comme un être faible qui ne peut revendiquer ses droits. Du point de vue sexuel, elle est considérée comme sacrée. Il est interdit de découvrir sa nudité. Une femme dont la nudité a été découverte en garde des blessures intérieures dont toute réparation s'avère difficile. À cet effet, il faut comprendre pourquoi une femme violée préfère se taire car la divulgation d'une telle information jetterait le discrédit sur elle, sa famille ou son foyer. Une jeune fille non mariée verrait ses chances de mariage complètement amoindries, tandis que la femme mariée risquerait de perdre son mari qui la répudierait ou lui reprocherait de « s'être laissée violer ».

Le statut d'être inférieur assigné à la femme par les coutumes ne lui permet pas de faire valoir ses droits en Justice. Par exemple, il n'est pas permis à la femme ménagère de s'absenter pour se rendre à un procès pour une longue période, d'où le fait que la question est généralement réglée par la coutume

sous la directive des personnes de sexe masculin. La victime a rarement droit à la parole et doit se contenter de l'arrangement fait entre les familles, à savoir le paiement d'une amende dont la nature est fixée par la coutume et que l'agresseur est censé payer. Cette dernière peut être constituée de chèvres et d'argent liquide à remettre à la famille de la victime. Les familles peuvent également s'entendre et pousser l'agresseur à prendre la victime comme épouse.

L'atteinte à la dignité de la victime est le quatrième problème identifié dans ce regroupement. A cet effet, l'étude permet d'observer que les victimes des violences sexuelles ont du mal à déclarer ce qui leur est arrivé, car ceci est un affront qui leur a été fait et qui porte atteinte à leur dignité. Recourir aux Cours et Tribunaux signifierait pour elles exposer leur intimité et raconter à tous les atrocités qui leur ont été infligées. Cet acte n'est pas facile, ce d'autant plus que pour les coutumes, le sexe est un sujet tabou. Dans le même ordre d'idées, il faut mentionner que l'idée d'affronter les multiples visages du public lors d'un procès effraie la femme (la victime) qui appréhende un procès public, en raison de son potentiel destructeur pour sa réputation.

Il est à noter que les nouvelles lois sur les violences sexuelles autorisent le juge à déclarer un huis-clos à la demande du Ministère Public ou de la victime. Il existe aussi le système de codification et d'habillement de façon à cacher la personne qui parle et changer sa voix. Malheureusement, faute d'information sur ces nouvelles lois et dispositifs, certains juges continuent de ne pas décréter un huis-clos. Ils invoquent comme raison à ce refus la nécessité que tout le monde suive la procédure pour dissuader le public de commettre de tels actes. Cette attitude incompréhensible du juge qui viole la loi ferme le prétoire aux femmes désirant garder leur dignité.

Quant à l'environnement social de la femme comme un autre problème, il peut également constituer un frein d'accès à la justice. En effet, les femmes rurales connaissent des difficultés à accéder à la justice à cause des milieux sociaux dans lesquels elles vivent et de nombreux stéréotypes qui les accompagnent au quotidien. Les activités de survie leur prennent la majeure partie de leur temps. Elles éprouvent des difficultés à quitter leur foyer pour effectuer de longues distances afin d'atteindre les Cours et Tribunaux et se résignent à vivre avec leurs blessures. L'étude a révélé que ceci n'est pas toujours le cas pour la femme urbaine. Cette dernière, possédant une certaine instruction, accède à l'information et connaît l'attitude à adopter lorsqu'elle est victime de viol sexuel. Ceci la rend plus apte à saisir les Cours et Tribunaux situés non loin de son domicile. En outre, les organisations non gouvernementales tant locales qu'internationales qui pullulent dans son milieu viennent à son aide pour la défense de ses droits.

Outre la difficulté d'accéder à la justice, l'étude a également montré que les femmes victimes sont objet de rejet dans leurs milieux d'origine. Ceci

est relevé dans le rapport du CICR (2009) qui a montré qu'entre 10% et 15% des victimes identifiées via les maisons d'écoute soutenues par le CICR font face à des problèmes de rejet. Pour favoriser leur réintégration, le CICR (2009) propose de reconstruire en priorité l'estime de soi et le sentiment d'indispensabilité de chaque victime dans sa propre communauté. Ces personnes ont été humiliées, atteintes au plus profond de leur dignité et ont souvent le sentiment d'être seules face à ces souffrances. Cette solitude peut les entrainer dans une spirale de rupture de la communication et des relations sociales.

C2.   Dysfonctionnement de l'appareil judiciaire

A ce niveau, six problèmes sont regroupés et constituent un handicap majeur au parcours juridique des victimes des violences sexuelles. L'étude a révélé le dysfonctionnement de l'appareil judiciaire, l'insuffisance et l'éloignement géographique des juridictions destinées à instruire les dossiers des violences sexuelles, la plainte déposée contre les inconnus, le manque de confiance à la justice par les victimes et leurs familles, l'établissement des preuves par le personnel de la justice ainsi que les problèmes relatifs à la poursuite des agresseurs par les instances judiciaires. Tous ces problèmes sont décrits dans les lignes qui suivent.

Le dysfonctionnement de l'appareil judiciaire entraine ainsi un recours fréquent au règlement à l'amiable ou coutumier. L'étude a révélé que la justice de la Tshopo est sujette, de façon générale, à un dysfonctionnement dont les causes sont nombreuses. On peut répertorier, entre autres, la lenteur excessive du système judiciaire, le report des audiences, le coût élevé des frais en justice, les mauvaises conditions de travail des agents engagés dans ce service, le mauvais traitement salarial des magistrats, le manque des infrastructures et des ressources en quantité suffisante, etc. Ces résultats liés au dysfonctionnement de l'appareil judiciaire que cette étude a permis d'identifier rejoignent ceux du Bureau Conjoint des Nations Unies aux Droits de l'Homme (BCNUDH, 2014). Celui-ci avait révélé comme caractéristiques de la justice en RD. Congo le manque criant des ressources et des capacités, de nombreuses lacunes dans son fonctionnement, le manque des infrastructures et des ressources, le nombre insuffisant des magistrats, le manque des tribunaux et/ou des autorités judiciaires ainsi que des infrastructures judiciaires en mauvais état.

Partant de ce dysfonctionnement, Lubua (2005) a proposé dans sa recherche d'équiper les tribunaux afin que les autorités judiciaires puissent commencer à constituer des dossiers sur les cas des violences sexuelles et entamer des actions en justice au nom des victimes.

À cause de tous ces problèmes, les victimes n'ont pas confiance à la Justice, d'où le fait qu'elles recourent aux tribunaux coutumiers (à travers les

arrangements à l'amiable) qui sont proches d'elles et qui utilisent une procédure connue par elles, car puisée dans la coutume. C'est le cas du « Lobé » dans le milieu traditionnel « Topoké », traduit par « Isonga Songa » dans le milieu urbain. Ainsi, le recours à la coutume permet aux parties d'obtenir une réparation du préjudice qu'il est difficile d'obtenir par voie judiciaire du fait de l'inexécution des jugements pour des causes diverses. Ainsi, l'étude a révélé que dans la Tshopo, le personnel judiciaire est buté à plusieurs problèmes dans l'exercice de son métier. Ceux-ci entravent la bonne marche de l'appareil judiciaire dans son ensemble. Comme conséquence, la voie du recours à l'arrangement à l'amiable devient fréquente.

Dans le même ordre d'idées, le BCNUDH (2014) avait conclu que dans de nombreuses régions de la RD. Congo, de nombreux cas de violence sexuelle font l'objet de règlement à l'amiable souvent perçus comme la plus efficace des procédures judiciaires. Malheureusement, celui-ci ne tient pas compte des intérêts de la victime. D'après la même source, dans beaucoup de cas, la famille de la victime, les agents de la Police Nationale Congolaise (PNC) et certaines autorités judiciaires encouragent la victime à trouver un arrangement avec l'agresseur, même lorsque celui-ci est un agent de l'État. Dans ce contexte, ce sont les chefs des familles des victimes et des auteurs qui mènent le règlement, écartant ainsi les victimes du processus. Dans certains cas, les agresseurs acceptent d'épouser les victimes pour leur éviter la stigmatisation dont elles seraient l'objet. Ainsi, ils peuvent échapper à des poursuites qui aboutiraient au paiement des amendes.

L'autre problème est celui de l'insuffisance et de l'éloignement géographique des juridictions. En RD. Congo, l'infraction de violence sexuelle est de la compétence des Tribunaux pour Enfants et de Grande Instance. Ainsi, la compétence matérielle des tribunaux s'étend à toute infraction punissable d'une peine de 5 ans de servitude pénale à la peine de mort. Pour rappel, l'infraction de violence sexuelle est punissable de 5 à 20 ans de prison. Lorsque cette dernière a entraîné la mort de la victime, elle est punissable d'une peine de servitude pénale à perpétuité (Article 170, loi sur les violences sexuelles en RD. Congo, 2006).

Cette étude a permis de comprendre que les Tribunaux pour Enfants et de Grande Instance habilités à instruire les dossiers des violences sexuelles sont insuffisants dans la Tshopo. Ils sont éloignés des justiciables qui habitent les milieux ruraux. En effet, les victimes des milieux ruraux qui désirent porter plainte en Justice doivent parcourir de longues distances, souvent à pied, pendant plusieurs jours et traverser des zones à haut risque d'insécurité. Ceci entraine un accès difficile des victimes aux tribunaux. La conséquence en est qu'elles sont découragées et se complaisent à des solutions coutumières, notamment les arrangements à l'amiable qui ne leur profitent pas.

Les victimes ne bénéficient que d'un accès limité aux services juridiques, aux réparations et à l'indemnisation. Partant, il faut comprendre que si les soins complets (assistance médicale, psychologique, juridique et économique) sont disponibles dans certaines zones urbaines, ils demeurent cependant insuffisants et inadaptés ailleurs. Dans les zones isolées, où le système judiciaire est absent, les accords à l'amiable financier ou autres (y compris le mariage avec les agresseurs identifiés) sont des pratiques courantes, sans que la victime ne soit rétablie dans ses droits.

En troisième lieu, apparaît le problème de la plainte contre inconnu. Les résultats de l'étude ont révélé que certaines victimes des violences sexuelles ne connaissent pas leurs agresseurs, le cas des violences collectives et nocturnes. Si on ne connaît pas l'agresseur ou les agresseurs, on est obligé de porter plainte contre des « inconnus ». Il est vrai que le Parquet et la Police ont l'obligation de mener des enquêtes en cas de plainte contre des « inconnu », il se fait que, dans la plupart des cas, les plaintes contre des « inconnus » aboutissent rarement. Ceci n'encourage pas les victimes qui préfèrent garder silence, entrainant ainsi un impact négatif sur leur santé.

Un autre problème est le manque de confiance dans le système judiciaire et le recours fréquent au règlement à l'amiable ou coutumier. L'étude a permis de comprendre que le personnel judiciaire est buté à plusieurs difficultés qui ont entrainé le manque de confiance au système judiciaire par les victimes et leurs familles. Comme difficultés, l'étude cite les problèmes des infrastructures, l'irrégularité des salaires et le manque de formation nécessaire. Au-delà de celles-ci, il y a également l'insuffisance des magistrats. Par exemple, en 2013, le pays comptait environ 3.700 magistrats, ce qui équivalait alors à un magistrat civil pour 17.000 habitants (OSF, 2013). Ceci est aussi démontré par BCNUDH (2014) qui a révélé que le système judiciaire dispose d'un nombre insuffisant de magistrats et d'infrastructures capables de couvrir le vaste territoire de la RD. Congo.

Dans le même ordre d'idées, l'établissement des preuves par le personnel de la justice est un autre problème identifié. En matière pénale, la charge de la preuve revient à l'Officier du Ministère Public qui dispose des services des auxiliaires de la justice que sont les officiers de Police Judiciaire et les différents experts (psychologue et médecin) pour mener à bien sa tâche et obtenir la condamnation du prévenu.

En effet, l'établissement de la matérialité de l'infraction des violences sexuelles relève d'un véritable parcours du combattant, car les moyens de preuve en cette matière sont difficiles à obtenir. À titre d'exemple, pour les violences sexuelles commises loin du centre-ville, les Officiers de Police Judiciaire chargés de l'enquête ont souvent du mal à se rendre sur les lieux de l'infraction afin de procéder aux investigations. Les raisons avancées sont, entre autres, l'inaccessibilité à certains territoires et districts à cause des

distances, de l'insécurité, de l'absence des infrastructures routières ou des moyens de déplacement.

En outre, la victime de la violence, habitée par un sentiment de honte et d'humiliation, hantée par la peur d'être rejetée par sa famille ou sa communauté, a tendance à se réfugier dans un silence faussement protecteur. Ce silence ne permet pas à l'Officier de Police Judiciaire de récolter les preuves dont il a besoin. Il est important de noter que la non féminisation du Corps des Officiers de Police Judiciaire crée une barrière pour la femme étant donné qu'elle a du mal à saisir la justice du fait que certaines victimes se sentent gênées de raconter la violence sexuelle subie aux personnes de sexe masculin. Ces femmes se sentent souvent incomprises, surtout lorsque l'Officier de Police Judiciaire, l'Officier du Ministère Public ou le juge l'interroge de manière assez brutale et directe, doutant même du fait qu'elle n'ait pas consenti aux relations sexuelles.

La collecte des preuves en matière des violences sexuelles pose également problème lorsqu'il s'agit de requérir l'avis d'un médecin pour constater les faits ; les médecins légistes étant absents et/ou peu nombreux. Du fait de cette carence, les victimes sont dirigées vers des médecins ordinaires qui les examinent et établissent, moyennant paiement, un certificat médical. Parfois, ces certificats sont incomplets et ne donnent donc pas tous les éléments dont le Juge a besoin pour déterminer s'il y a eu effectivement violence sexuelle. Devant cette situation, le Juge est contraint de classer le dossier sans suite ou d'envoyer le dossier incomplet en fixation au tribunal. À toutes ces difficultés s'ajoute parfois le fait que la situation est dénoncée trop longtemps après les faits ; ce qui profite au suspect, qui ne peut être condamné faute des preuves.

Le problème suivant est relatif à la poursuite des agresseurs par les instances judiciaires. Même si la poursuite des agresseurs est une tâche qui concerne directement la Police, les analyses faites ont montré que ce problème concerne particulièrement la victime. En effet, si l'agresseur n'est pas arrêté et traduit en Justice, la victime risque d'en souffrir, au risque d'impacter sa santé mentale et physique. En effet, la poursuite des agresseurs est réalisée par les instances judiciaires, après un premier travail d'arrestation réalisé par la Police Nationale Congolaise et le Parquet/Auditorat. Tout cas des violences sexuelles est dénoncé d'abord à la Police et au Parquet/Auditorat qui se saisissent du dossier et mettent sur pied un mécanisme pour arrêter l'auteur (ou les auteurs) de l'agression. Après l'analyse des matériaux, il est constaté que le premier obstacle ne facilitant pas le travail de la Police est la famille de l'agresseur qui le fait fuir.

Au-delà de cette attitude de la famille, l'étude a révélé qu'il y a des situations où c'est la communauté dans son ensemble qui fait face à la famille de la victime. Cette dernière se sentant dans l'insécurité, car vivant elle-même

dans cette communauté, préfère se taire pour exploiter les pistes conduisant à des arrangements à l'amiable. Parfois, c'est la famille de la victime qui souhaite garder le secret car dans sa communauté, la violence sexuelle est considérée comme une malédiction ou un acte honteux. Ainsi, ces situations sont gérées en famille pour ne pas attirer l'attention du public.

Un autre problème est que la Police travaille et vit dans les conditions très difficiles. Ne disposant pas de moyen de transport adéquat, elle doit effectuer des longues distances à pieds, au besoin à l'aide des motos, recourant ainsi au service de taximans. Le paiement de ces derniers leur pose problème. Ce qui rend l'arrestation (la poursuite) de l'agresseur difficile.

Au vu de la misère dans laquelle les policiers sont plongés, certains agresseurs utilisent des astuces conduisant à des arrangements à l'amiable. Partant de ces arrangements, les agresseurs ont l'occasion de s'enfuir. Donc, dans la poursuite des agresseurs, les Policiers exposent également leur vie. Ainsi, il se dégage une certaine complicité (Policiers/agresseurs) ne permettant pas à certaines victimes de dénoncer les faits.

Discussion des résultats

Que retenir de l'analyse des résultats de cette étude qui a planché sur les problèmes liés au parcours juridique des victimes des violences sexuelles dans la province de la Tshopo ? Comme affirmé plus haut, les résultats de l'étude ont permis de comprendre que les problèmes rencontrés par les victimes des violences sexuelles lors de leur parcours juridique sont nombreux et de diverses natures. Tous ces problèmes décrits ci-haut, non seulement affectent la santé et la vie de la victime, mais aussi empêchent cette dernière à obtenir justice et réparation. Cette section va confronter les résultats obtenus dans cette étude, à ceux d'autres recherches menées sur la même thématique.

En effet, l'étude a montré, partant des résultats décrits ci-haut que les activités auxquelles les victimes des violences sexuelles se livrent les amènent à rentrer tardivement à la maison, à sillonner la ville et à fréquenter les lieux tels que les champs, les brousses et les forêts pour couper les bois, etc. Ces endroits constituent des lieux de prédilection pour le viol. Ces résultats concordent avec ceux qui sont obtenus par le Ministère du Genre, de la Famille et de l'Enfant de la RD. Congo (2013) qui confirment le fait que tous ces endroits exposent les femmes à la violence.

Cette étude a également révélé que la pauvreté est l'un des problèmes majeurs auxquels sont confrontées les victimes des violences sexuelles. C'est également ce qu'avait affirmé le Ministère du Genre, de la Famille et de l'Enfant de la RD. Congo (2013). Dans cette étude, il est fait mention de la pauvreté des femmes comme l'un des problèmes majeurs auxquels sont confrontées les victimes des violences sexuelles. Dans le même ordre d'idées, Lubua (2005) avait conclu que les victimes mènent une vie matérielle

mauvaise ou médiocre. Comme si cela ne suffisait pas, l'éclatement des guerres successives à Kisangani a aggravé leur pauvreté.

Les résultats ont également relevé le rôle joué par les coutumes dans l'accroissement des violences sexuelles. En effet, dans une conférence de presse (MONUSCO, 2013), il a été clairement démontré que l'enracinement des coutumes, le silence de la plupart des victimes des violences sexuelles, la tendance au règlement à l'amiable des cas de viol et l'ignorance de la loi sur les violences sexuelles sont autant de facteurs qui ont favorisé l'ampleur de ces violences dans le district.

Un autre problème trouvé est la discrimination dont les victimes sont l'objet. Ceci rejoint la conclusion du rapport d'Amnesty International (2004) qui a montré que les victimes des violences sexuelles vivent dans une exclusion sociale et économique. Ce rapport a clairement dit que la discrimination à l'égard des victimes de viol est très répandue et que celles-ci sont souvent rejetées, voire insultées et menacées par leur entourage. Un grand nombre d'entre elles ont été brutalement abandonnées par leur mari et doivent, donc s'occuper seules de leurs enfants.

L'étude a démontré la lourdeur de la justice congolaise entrainant ainsi les procédures judiciaires coûteuses pour les victimes et le recours excessif aux coutumes par les communautés en cas des violences sexuelles. Ces résultats apparaissent également dans le rapport produit par le Réseau National des ONG pour le développement de la Femme (RENADEF, 30 Août 2019). En effet, celui-ci a révélé une certaine lourdeur dans l'appareil judiciaire. Ceci crée de la méfiance dans la population qui trouve que la Justice est très coûteuse et longue et que c'est mieux de recourir à la coutume pour les arrangements à l'amiable. D'après la conclusion dudit rapport, à cause de la lourdeur dans le fonctionnement de la Justice et faute des moyens financiers suffisants pour payer à la fois le service d'un avocat et les frais de procédures judiciaires, les familles des victimes préfèrent soit procéder aux arrangements à l'amiable, soit à l'abandon des causes à mi-chemin.

Parmi d'autres problèmes auxquels sont confrontés les victimes des violences sexuelles, l'étude a insisté sur le manque de confiance dans le système judiciaire, la carence ou l'insuffisance de juges et de magistrats femmes, l'inefficacité des tribunaux causée par le dysfonctionnement de ces derniers, le poids des frais en justice, les longues distances à parcourir par les victimes des violences sexuelles ainsi que la difficulté à apporter la preuve. Ces problèmes ont été également soulignés dans un rapport spécial présenté par Clifford et al. (2008).

Tel est le cas pour la présente étude, le BCNUDH (2014) avait permis d'identifier d'autres problèmes auxquels sont confrontées les victimes en RD. Congo, c'est notamment l'éloignement et l'insuffisance des Tribunaux, les représailles, le recours à l'arrangement à l'amiable et la pauvreté des victimes,

les nombreuses lacunes dans les institutions judiciaires, le mariage forcé avec les agresseurs ainsi que la stigmatisation des victimes. Comme réponse à la première question soulevée à l'introduction, il y a lieu de retenir que les problèmes liés au parcours juridique des victimes des violences sexuelles sont à la fois d'ordre général et liés au dysfonctionnement de l'appareil judiciaire.

Concernant le manque de confiance dans le système judiciaire et le recours fréquent au règlement à l'amiable identifié parmi les problèmes des victimes des violences sexuelles, il y a lieu d'affirmer, partant des résultats de cette étude que la procédure coutumière basée sur l'arrangement à l'amiable ne privilégie pas l'intérêt de la victime. Ceci fait dire à Botima (2006) que la vie sexuelle de la femme est banalisée par la pratique coutumière, tout en spécifiant que la victime des violences sexuelles est discriminée par le recours aux pratiques coutumières. Azama (2006) avait conclu que les victimes sont stigmatisées. Au-delà de ces résultats concordants, les analyses réalisées dans cette étude ont permis de conclure que le recours à la coutume permet aux parties plaignantes d'obtenir une réparation du préjudice qu'il est difficile d'obtenir par voie judiciaire du fait de l'inexécution des jugements.

Le poids des coutumes, traditions et cultures comme un problème auquel sont butées les victimes des violences sexuelles est aussi souligné par Eca-Widnet (1999). Dans le même ordre d'idées, le recours aux pratiques coutumières comme favorisant les violences sexuelles est fustigé par plusieurs auteurs. Si Musafiri (2011) avait conclu que les violences sexuelles sont favorisées par les pratiques culturelles (coutumières) et que la femme est une victime passive qui n'a pas à s'opposer au diktat de la coutume, Mopongo (2006) a montré que la coutume a permis de mettre en relief certaines violences soutenues par la tradition dans le domaine de la vie sexuelle. Pour sa part, Kabasele (2006) a conclu que la pratique coutumière telle que l'initiation des filles et des garçons à la vie sexuelle est une dose du sadisme car, l'acte sexuel destiné à fournir du plaisir apparaît comme une douleur infligée à la femme.

La problématique des violences sexuelles étant complexe, l'étude l'a abordée dans une approche de la théorisation enracinée qui est l'une des approches indiquées pour étudier les phénomènes complexes. Les matériaux sont analysés de manière à minimiser les principaux reproches adressés à cette approche, notamment le manque de rigueur dans l'analyse des données, la mauvaise restitution du travail du chercheur dans sa recherche et la tension constante entre la créativité et la scientificité (Garreau & Bandeira-De-Mello, 2008 ; 2011). Pour dépasser cette tension, l'étude s'inscrit dans le cadre proposé par Alversson et al. (2008) selon lequel la créativité et la scientificité peuvent se compléter, voire se renforcer dans la théorie enracinée.

Cette étude a des limites certaines. Il est vrai que les résultats obtenus, à travers les matériaux analysés ont permis de rendre compte des problèmes

liés au parcours juridique des victimes des violences sexuelles dans la province de la Tshopo en RD. Congo. Cependant, il faut reconnaître que les résultats de cette étude ne sont pas à extrapoler à l'ensemble des provinces pour un pays à dimension continentale et qui regorge plus de 450 tribus. Ainsi, les résultats concernent essentiellement les populations impliquées et sur lesquelles les matériaux ont été collectés. En attendant les conclusions d'autres études dans d'autres contrées, retenons tout de même que les analyses faites dans cette étude ont permis de rendre compte de l'ampleur des principaux problèmes rencontrés par les victimes des violences sexuelles, aussi bien dans leur parcours juridique que dans leur vie quotidienne.

Partant de différents problèmes évoqués dans cette étude, il y a lieu de retenir que les résultats obtenus permettent à la fois une sensibilisation et un plaidoyer auprès de toutes les personnes de bonne volonté et de différents partenaires qui travaillent en faveur des victimes. Les actions concrètes, notamment celles que le CICR (2009) mène dans les provinces de Nord et Sud-Kivu, à savoir les campagnes de prévention et de réduction des risques en sensibilisant les autorités et les communautés à la problématique des violences sexuelles, doivent s'intensifier et être encouragées. La Justice devait être redynamisée de manière à lui permettre de décourager les auteurs des violences sexuelles, par l'application stricte et rigoureuse des lois en cette matière. De même, il est impérieux d'impliquer les communautés en général et en particulier les leaders communautaires dans le processus de lutte contre la stigmatisation des victimes des violences sexuelles et les préjugés qui sont souvent à l'origine de ces violences.

Le message de sensibilisation et de conscientisation devait se recentrer autour des thèmes en lien direct avec la problématique des violences sexuelles. Il est souhaitable de diversifier les méthodes en fonction du public cible et de sélectionner celui-ci en tenant compte de son degré de vulnérabilité aux violences sexuelles. L'étude se termine en disant qu'une bonne façon d'aider les victimes, c'est d'intensifier les cliniques juridiques qui seraient prises en charge financièrement par l'État congolais et par d'autres partenaires. Toutes ces implications issues des résultats de cette étude permettent de répondre à la deuxième question soulevée à l'introduction.

Conclusion

L'objectif majeur de cette étude était d'analyser les problèmes liés au parcours juridique des victimes des violences sexuelles dans la province de la Tshopo en RD. Congo. Pour atteindre cet objectif, plusieurs sources d'informations ont été prises en considération. À ce stade, il faut retenir que l'étude a identifié, à la fois des problèmes d'ordre général et des problèmes liés au dysfonctionnement de l'appareil judiciaire. Ces problèmes constituent dans leur majorité une entrave majeure au parcours juridique des victimes des

violences sexuelles. La recherche a soulevé deux questions, à savoir 1) quels sont les différents problèmes que rencontrent les victimes de violences sexuelles tout au long de l'instruction en justice de leurs dossiers et, 2) quelles stratégies peut-on déployer pour élaguer ces problèmes et permettre une prise en charge efficace et équitable des victimes de ces violences ?

Parmi les problèmes d'ordre général que la recherche a identifié, il convient de mentionner le manque de moyens pour les victimes et leurs familles (une pauvreté ne leur permettant pas d'entreprendre une action en justice) et l'ignorance du droit, l'insécurité et la peur des représailles, le statut de la femme dans les coutumes, l'atteinte à la dignité de la victime et, l'environnement social dans lequel vivent les victimes des violences sexuelles. D'autres problèmes relevant du dysfonctionnement de l'appareil judiciaire et qui entravent le parcours juridique des victimes des violences sexuelles restent le dysfonctionnement des services judiciaires (les manœuvres dilatoires, c'est-à-dire le fait pour les juges et les magistrats de repousser perpétuellement les audiences pour freiner le procès ou bloquer l'action par des procédures irrégulières, la lenteur ou la lourdeur des procédures dans l'instruction des dossiers, l'ignorance de la loi en matière des violences sexuelles par certains magistrats), le fait que pour certains dossiers, la procédure judiciaire donne difficilement la réponse en ce qui concerne la réparation civile, bien que le prévenu ait été condamné pénalement, l'injustice ou la partialité de certains juges, l'insuffisance et l'éloignement géographique des juridictions compétentes en matière des violences sexuelles, la plainte contre des inconnus et la non-exécution des jugements existants, sont autant des problèmes entravant le parcours juridique des victimes des violences sexuelles dans la province de la Tshopo en RD. Congo.

Pour terminer, retenons que l'accès à la Justice dans la province de la Tshopo en RD. Congo est très difficile pour les victimes des violences sexuelles du fait de leur statut socio-économique défavorable. Confrontées à la crainte de leurs bourreaux, au manque de connaissance des voies de recours, au paiement de certains frais en justice que les victimes considèrent comme étant exorbitants et aux difficultés de transport pour atteindre les Tribunaux compétents, ces dernières éprouvent d'énormes difficultés pour que justice leur soit rendue. Même si elles y parviennent, les décisions de justice prononcées ne sont pas appliquées. Que faire ? Il faut donc une sensibilisation et une implication de tous, tout en menant des actions concrètes pour effrayer les agresseurs. Donc, la solution passe obligatoirement par une action conjuguée de tous.

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Genre et pouvoir de prise de décision du type et de l'heure de repas: implications pour la sécurité alimentaire des ménages au Nord-Bénin (Afrique de l'Ouest)

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Résumé

Le genre se trouve au centre des débats sur l'insécurité alimentaire des ménages. La présente étude vise à analyser l'influence de la participation des deux sexes au processus de prise de décision de l'heure de prise de repas et du type de repas consommé dans les ménages. Elle a été réalisée au Nord-Bénin auprès de 295 ménages aléatoirement sélectionnés. Les données collectées à l'aide d'un questionnaire digitalisé ont porté sur les caractéristiques socioéconomiques, le sexe du preneur de décision de l'heure de prise de repas et du type de repas consommé, les huit questions de l'échelle d'expérience de l'insécurité alimentaire des ménages. La statistique descriptive et la régression linéaire ont été utilisées pour analyser les données. Les résultats révèlent que

la prise de décision unilatérale de l'heure de prise de repas par l'homme ou la femme a affecté négativement le niveau de sécurité alimentaire des ménages par rapport aux ménages dans lesquels la décision est prise par les deux sexes. Le choix du type de repas par l'homme a amélioré le niveau de sécurité alimentaire des ménages plus que les ménages où la décision est bilatérale. La dépense alimentaire de l'homme a négativement affecté le niveau de sécurité alimentaire des ménages alors que celle de la femme a contribué à son amélioration. La taille de ménage a influencé positivement le niveau de sécurité alimentaire des ménages. La promotion du genre doit être renforcée pour faciliter les décisions bilatérales de l'heure de prise de repas et responsabiliser les hommes face aux dépenses alimentaires.

Mots-clés: Genre, sécurité alimentaire, dépense alimentaire, prise de décision, Afrique de l'Ouest

Gender and Decision-Making Power of Meal Type and Time: Implications for Household Food Security in North Benin (West Africa)

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Abstract
       Gender is at the center of the debate on household food insecurity. This study aims to analyze the influence of gender participation in the decision-making process of mealtime and type of meal consumed in households. A sample of 295 households was randomly selected to be surveyed in North-Benin. Data collected using a digitized questionnaire included socioeconomic characteristics, gender of the decision-maker of mealtime and type of meal

consumed, the eight questions of the Household Food Insecurity Experience Scale,, etc. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and linear regression. The results reveal that unilateral decision-making on mealtimes by either the man or the woman negatively affected the level of household food security more than households in which the decision is made by both sexes. Man's choice of meal type improved household food security more than households where the decision is bilateral. Man's food expenditure negatively affected the level of household food security, while women's expenditure has contributed to its improvement. Household size positively influenced the level of household food security. Gender promotion should be strengthened to facilitate bilateral decisions of mealtime and empower men to take responsibility for the food expenditures of their households.

Keywords: Gender, food security, food expenditure, decision-making, West Africa

1.   Introduction

L'insécurité alimentaire constitue un phénomène qui sévit dans le monde entier. La sécurité alimentaire d'un ménage est assurée lorsque ce dernier a matériellement, socialement et économiquement accès de façon permanente, à une nourriture suffisante, saine et nutritive pour satisfaire ses besoins et préférences alimentaires afin de mener une vie saine et active (FAO et al., 2020). Ces organisations ont déclaré qu'environ 8,9% de la population est sous-alimentée dans le monde. Cette prévalence de l'insécurité alimentaire est élevée en Afrique subsaharienne où environ 22% de la population souffre des formes graves de la sous-alimentation et de l'insécurité alimentaire (FAO et al., 2020). Le Bénin, l'un des pays de l'Afrique de l'Ouest, constitue un épicentre de l'insécurité alimentaire. En effet, selon l'Analyse Globale de la Vulnérabilité et de la Sécurité Alimentaire, environ 1,09 millions de personnes, soit 9,6% des ménages, vivent en insécurité alimentaire au Bénin (Institut National de la Statistique et de l'Analyse Economique (INSAE) et Programme Alimentaire Mondial (PAM), 2017). Aussi, 42,9% des ménages vivent-ils dans des conditions de sécurité alimentaire limite. En effet, l'économie du Bénin est fortement liée à l'agriculture qui emploie plus de 50% de la population active (Bayé, 2018). Selon INSAE (2016), environ 55% de la population vit en milieu rural et 50% des femmes vivent dans les ménages agricoles. La contribution de l'agriculture au Produit Intérieur Brut (PIB) est près de 20%. Près de 75% des recettes d'exportation viennent de l'agriculture (Bayé, 2018).

Face à l'insécurité alimentaire des populations, surtout rurales, le Gouvernement du Bénin, à l'instar des communautés internationales, a initié des actions de lutte contre la faim et l'insécurité alimentaire dans toutes ses

formes. Ces actions s'inscrivent des documents stratégiques tels que le Plan Stratégique de Développement du Secteur Agricole (PSDSA) et le Plan d'actions d'Alimentation et de Nutrition dans le secteur agricole à l'horizon 2016-2020. Ces documents visent à opérationnaliser le Plan Stratégique de Développement de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition (PSDAN) pour contribuer aux piliers de la disponibilité, de l'accessibilité et de l'utilisation alimentaire. Dans ces documents politiques, un accent particulier a été mis sur l'importance de la prise en compte du genre dans la mise en œuvre des politiques de développement. De plus, depuis 2017, selon la FAO et la Commission de la CEDEAO (2018), des actions et mesures pour l'amélioration de l'accès des femmes aux ressources (terre, intrants agricoles, accompagnement pour la valorisation des productions agricoles et emplois rémunérateurs), le renforcement des capacités d'actions des femmes rurales et le développement d'un environnement institutionnel et juridique favorable ont été prévues dans le Plan National d'Investissement Agricole, de la Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle (PNIASAN) 2017-2021. En juillet 2021, le Gouvernement a adopté, en Conseil des Ministres du mercredi 21 juillet 2021, la création de l'Institut National de la Femme au Bénin pour l'épanouissement des femmes et leur participation à la prise de décision. Ces différents engagements du Gouvernement du Bénin doivent être accompagnés par la recherche pour résorber le problème d'insécurité alimentaire.

À cet égard, plusieurs études ont montré que le revenu, la production agricole, etc. influencent la sécurité alimentaire (Dury et al., 2017). La gestion des ressources à l'intérieur des ménages en faveur des femmes constitue un important facteur pour lutter contre l'insécurité alimentaire des ménages en Haïti (Pauzé, 2015). Felker-Kantor et Wood (2012) ont montré que les femmes investissent plus que les hommes dans les besoins sociaux, y compris l'alimentation des membres de leurs ménages. Lourme-Ruiz et al. (2016) ont révélé que l'accès des femmes au revenu du ménage garantit une meilleure diversité alimentaire de leurs ménages. Malgré ces rôles cruciaux de la femme dans la lutte contre l'insécurité alimentaire, les femmes continuent de subir une injustice sociale ou une discrimination qui ne leur permet pas de participer au processus de décision en matière d'alimentation dans leurs ménages (Verschuur, 2011). Elles ne jouissent pas de la parité homme femme pour participer efficacement à la lutte contre l'insécurité alimentaire de tous les membres de leurs ménages (Oussou et al., 2017). Aboubakar (2017) notifie que les femmes continuent de subir des discriminations et heurtent des barrières socioculturelles telles que le poids des préjugés, les perceptions culturelles concernant le rôle des femmes, etc.

À ce propos, il s'avère indispensable de questionner la participation des femmes au processus de prise de décision dans les ménages, notamment en ce qui concerne le choix des types de repas à consommer et l'heure de prise

de repas dans les ménages. C'est donc l'objectif de cette étude qui vise à analyser les effets de la participation des femmes au processus de prise de décision relative à l'alimentation et aux dépenses alimentaires dans les ménages ruraux du Bénin.

2.   Matériels et méthode
2.1.   Présentation de la zone d'étude
        L'étude a été menée spécifiquement au Nord-Bénin dans les Communes de Sinendé et de Bembèrèké, fortement agricoles dans le département du Borgou (Figure 1). Ces communes appartiennent au pôle de développement agricole N°2. Au niveau de ce pôle, la culture de coton est la culture locomotive alors que les filières de diversification sont le maïs, le sorgho, le soja, les bovins, les petits ruminants et les volailles (Bureau d'études et d'Appui au secteur Agricole (B2A), 2016).
        La Commune de Sinendé est limitée au sud par la Commune de N'Dali, au nord par la Commune de Gogounou, à l'ouest par les Communes de Ouassa-Péhunco et de Djougou et à l'Est par la Commune de Bembèrèkè. Elle occupe 8,85% de la superficie du département du Borgou, avec une superficie de 2 289 km². Elle est caractérisée par un relief de plateaux et de collines sur le prolongement ouest de mont Bembéréké. La Commune de Sinendé est arrosée par un climat de type soudano- guinéen qui lui confère une saison pluvieuse de six mois (mai à octobre) et une saison sèche (novembre à avril). La hauteur d'eau annuellement enregistrée varie entre 1 000 mm et 1 200 mm avec le maximum de précipitations aux mois d'août et de septembre. La population de Sinendé est de 91 672 habitants dont 61,5% résident en zone rurale et 50,2% sont des femmes. Quant à la Commune de Bembéréké, plus vaste que Sinendé, elle couvre 12,94% de la superficie du département du Borgou avec une superficie de 3 348 km². Elle est limitée au sud par la Commune de N'Dali, au nord par la Commune de Gogounou, à l'ouest par celle de Sinendé et à l'est par les Communes de Kalalé et de Nikki. Elle est marquée par une vaste pénéplaine granito-gnésique avec une rupture sporadique de l'existence de chaînons de collines communément appelées « Monts de BEMBEREKE ». La Commune est arrosée par un climat de type soudano-guinéen avec une grande saison de pluies (avril à octobre) et une grande saison sèche (novembre- mars). La pluviométrie moyenne annuelle, comme à Sinendé, se situe entre 1 000 et 1 200 mm. L'effectif de la population de Bembèrèké est de 131 255 habitants dont 59% vivent en milieu rural et 49,5% sont de femmes (INSAE, 2016).
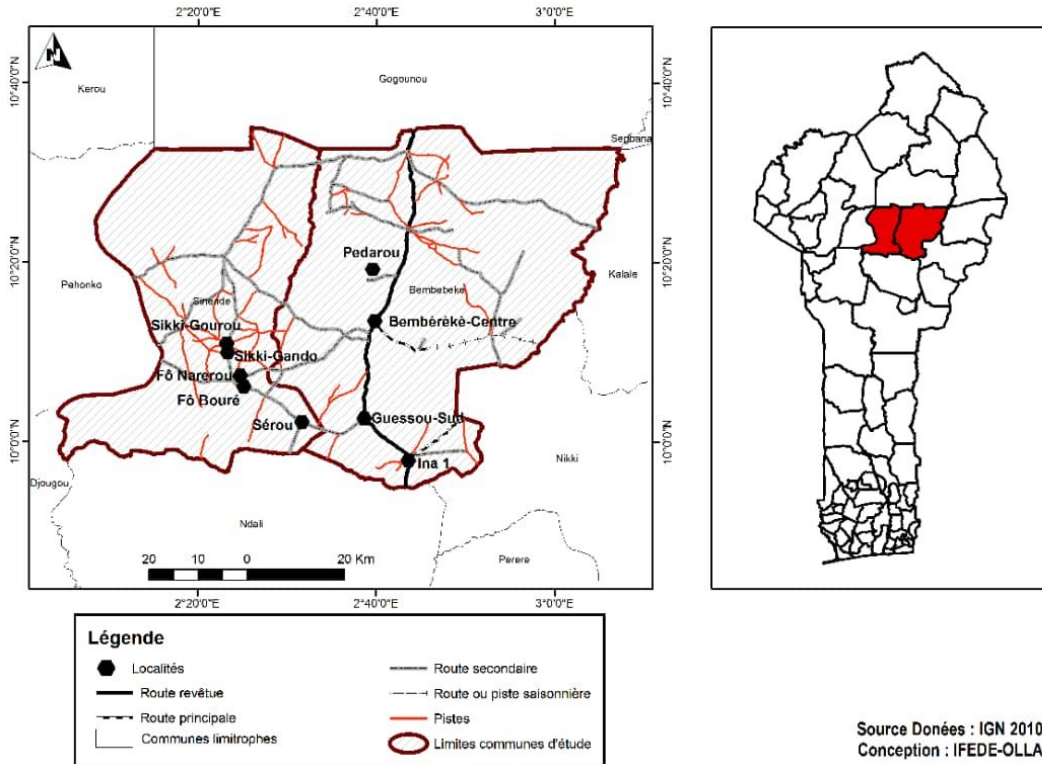
Figure 1 : *Carte de la zone d'étude*

2.2.   Unités de recherche et échantillonnage

L'étude s'est inspirée de l'approche quantitative en socioéconomie de développement. Ainsi, une démarche quantitative a été utilisée pour l'échantillonnage et la collecte des données. L'échantillonnage aléatoire simple a été effectué choisir les villages et les ménages (Tableau 1). Les ménages ont été les unités d'investigation de cette étude. Dans chaque ménage, les entretiens ont eu lieu avec l'homme et la femme (ou les femmes) du ménage. Au total, 295 ménages ont été enquêtés de façon aléatoire simple. La différence de la taille de l'échantillon entre les deux Communes est due à la non validité des données collectées auprès de 5 ménages de la Commune de Bembèrèké.

Tableau 1 : Villages d'étude et taille d'échantillon

Commune	Villages	Total des enquêtés
Bembèrèkè	Bembèrèké centre	9
	Guessou-Sud	50
	Ina 1	45
	Pedarou	41
	Sous-total	**145**
Sidendé	Fô Bouré	43
	Fô Narerou	7

	Sérou	50
	Sikki Gando	25
	Sikki Gourou	25
	Sous-total	**150**
Zone d'étude		**295**

Source : Enquête de terrain, Mars 2020.

2.3. Collecte de données

Les données collectées ont porté sur les caractéristiques socioéconomiques des ménages enquêtés telles que l'âge du chef de ménage, la taille du ménage, le sexe du décideur de type de repas consommé, le sexe du décideur de l'heure de prise de repas, les dépenses alimentaires annuelles effectuées par l'homme et par la femme au profit des membres des ménages, les huit questions standards de l'échelle d'expérience de l'insécurité alimentaire des ménages (HFIES) mise au point par la FAO (2016) pour mesurer le niveau de sécurité alimentaire des ménages (Tableau 2).

Les données ont été collectées à l'aide d'un questionnaire lors des entretiens individuels avec l'homme et la femme (ou les femmes) dans les ménages.

2.4. Analyse de données

L'analyse des données a été faite à l'aide de la statistique descriptive et de la régression linéaire. L'HFIES a été calculée en faisant la somme des réponses affirmatives. La prévalence des ménages à l'insécurité alimentaire a été appréciée selon les classes de niveau de sécurité alimentaire (Tableau 2).

Tableau 2 : Classification de l'HFIES

Niveau de sécurité alimentaire	Classe de HFIES
Sécurité alimentaire	0
Insécurité alimentaire légère	1-3
Insécurité alimentaire modérée	4-6
Insécurité alimentaire sévère	7-8

La statistique descriptive a permis de calculer les paramètres tels que la moyenne et l'écart-type des variables quantitatives (âge du chef de ménage, taille du ménage, dépense alimentaire effectuée par chaque sexe) et les fréquences des décideurs du type de repas et de l'heure de prise de repas selon le sexe. Quant à la régression linéaire, le test de corrélation a permis d'identifier les variables explicatives autocorrélées pour lever les cas de multicolinéarité. Pour des raisons de parcimonie, les variables n'ayant pas de coefficients significatifs ont été exclues du modèle et le modèle a été repris. Ainsi, l'âge et le niveau d'éducation du chef de ménage ont été exclus du modèle. Les variables retenues dans le modèle sont présentées dans le tableau 3. L'HFIES, étant un indicateur de mesure d'insécurité alimentaire des

ménages variant de 0 à 8, il a été inversé pour faciliter les interprétations des résultats. Ainsi, plus l'HFIES est élevé, plus le ménage est en sécurité alimentaire.

Tableau 3 : *Spécification du modèle de régression linéaire*

Variables	Nature de variable	Modalités	Signe prévu	Source
Variable dépendante				
Niveau de sécurité alimentaire HFIES	Variable discontinue			
Variables indépendantes				
Définition de l'heure de prise de repas par l'homme	Variable nominale	1= oui ; 0= non	+/-	Barou et Verhoeven, 1997
Définition de l'heure de prise de repas par la femme	Variable nominale	1= oui ; 0= non	+	Le Pape et Plessz, 2017 ; Mohamed-Katerere et Smith, 2013
Choix du type de repas par l'homme	Variable nominale	1= oui ; 0= non	+/-	Barou et Verhoeven, 1997
Choix du type de repas par la femme	Variable nominale	1= oui ; 0= non	+	Le Pape et Plessz, 2017 ; Mohamed-Katerere et Smith, 2013
Dépense alimentaire de l'homme	Variable continue		+	Barou et Verhoeven, 1997
Dépense alimentaire de la femme	Variable continue		+	Le Pape et Plessz, 2017 ; Mohamed-Katerere et Smith, 2013
Taille du ménage	Variable continue		-	Farzaneh et al., 2017

3.   Résultats et discussions
3.1.   Caractéristique des ménages

Les chefs de ménages enquêtés ont un âge moyen de 37 ans (+/-10,57 ans). Ils ont un niveau moyen d'éducation primaire. La taille du ménage est de 4 personnes en moyenne. La dépense alimentaire effectuée par l'homme dans le ménage est en moyenne de 217 008 FCFA/ an alors que celle de la femme est de 103 015 FCFA/ an. Ainsi, les femmes ont moins dépensé que les hommes pour l'alimentation des membres de leurs ménages. Ces résultats sont contraires aux assertions de Felker-Kantor et Wood (2012) qui ont montré que les femmes contribuent plus aux dépenses alimentaires que les hommes. Cette différence pourrait s'expliquer par le niveau de revenu des femmes comparativement à celui des hommes.

Tableau 4*: Caractéristiques des ménages*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Moyenne	Ecart type
Age	295	11,0	80,0	37,01	10,57
Niveau d'éducation	295	0,0	3,0	0,66	0,90
Taille du ménage	295	0,0	18,0	3,97	3,20
Dépense alimentaire de l'homme	295	0,0	1224000,0	217008,33	178658,96
Dépense alimentaire de la femme	295	0,0	624000,0	103014,59	153282,03

3.2.   Prévalence de l'insécurité alimentaire

Les ménages enquêtés ont un niveau moyen de sécurité alimentaire de 4,8 (+/- 3.2). L'étude a révélé qu'environ 34% des ménages enquêtés sont en sécurité alimentaire. Par contre, environ 26% des ménages enquêtés sont en insécurité alimentaire sévère (Tableau 4). Ce résultat montre que la prévalence de l'insécurité alimentaire dans la zone d'étude est supérieure à celle obtenue au niveau national en 2017 (INSAE et PAM, 2017). En effet, l'analyse globale de la vulnérabilité et de la sécurité alimentaire a révélé qu'environ 9,6% des ménages sont en insécurité alimentaire et 42,9% des ménages vivent dans des conditions de sécurité alimentaire limite (INSAE et PAM, 2017).

Tableau 4: *Prévalence de l'insécurité alimentaire*

Niveau de sécurité alimentaire	Effectif	Fréquence (%)
Sécurité alimentaire	100	33,9
Insécurité alimentaire légère	78	26,4
Insécurité alimentaire modérée	39	13,2
Insécurité alimentaire sévère	78	26,4
Total	295	100,0

3.3.   Décideurs du type de repas et de l'heure de prise de repas

Dans la majorité des ménages enquêtés (55%), le choix du type de repas à consommer par les membres du ménage est fait bilatéralement par l'homme et la femme. Par contre, l'homme a décidé du type de repas consommé dans 17% environ des ménages enquêtés (Tableau 5). Ainsi, on peut dire que la décision du type de repas consommé par les membres du ménage est faite par l'homme et la femme.

En ce qui concerne l'heure de consommation du repas, elle est décidée bilatéralement par l'homme et la femme dans la majorité des ménages enquêtés (70%). Toutefois, l'homme a décidé de l'heure de prise de repas dans 8% des ménages. La femme a décidé de l'heure de prise de repas dans environ 22% des ménages enquêtés.

Tableau 5 : Décideur du type de repas consommé et de l'heure de prise de repas

	Modalités	Effectif	Fréquence (%)
Décideur du type de repas	Homme	50	16,9
	Femme	83	28,1
	Les deux	161	54,6
Décideur de l'heure de repas	Homme	23	7,8
	Femme	64	21,7
	Les deux	207	70,2

3.4. Influence du sexe du décideur sur la sécurité alimentaire des ménages

La régression linéaire effectuée est globalement significative au seuil de 1%. Le pouvoir explicatif R² du modèle est de 24% (Tableau 6). Ainsi, 24% de la variation de HFIES sont expliquées par l'ensemble des variables explicatives introduites dans le modèle.

Tableau 6 : Influence du sexe de décideur et des dépenses alimentaires sur la sécurité alimentaire des ménages

Variables explicatives	Coefficients	Erreur standard	T	Sig.
Constante	4,469	0,362	12,352	0,000
Décision de l'heure de prise de repas par l'homme	-3,805	0,709	-5,369	0,000
Décision de l'heure de prise de repas par la femme	-1,923	0,581	-3,311	0,001
Choix du type de repas par l'homme	1,277	0,528	2,420	0,016
Choix du type de repas par la femme	0,604	0,530	1,140	0,255
Dépense alimentaire de l'homme	-2,170E-06	0,000	-2,251	0,025
Dépense alimentaire de la femme	2,480E-06	0,000	1,956	0,051
Taille du ménage	0,227	0,060	3,772	0,000
Test de régression	R²= 24% ; ddl= 7 ; p= 0,000			

De l'analyse du tableau 6, il ressort que la décision de l'heure de prise de repas par l'homme ou par la femme a négativement influencé le niveau de sécurité alimentaire des ménages par rapport à la décision bilatérale de l'heure de prise de repas au seuil de 1% car les coefficients de ces variables sont négatifs et significatifs au seuil de 1%. En effet, il a été prouvé par plusieurs études que les heures de prise de repas sont aux mains des femmes (Mohamed-Katerere et Smith, 2013 ; Le Pape et Plessz, 2017). Ces auteurs ont montré que les femmes consacrent collectivement près de 8 milliards d'heures de travail y compris la cuisine. Le Pape et Plessz (2017) ont montré que les femmes influencent surtout l'heure de prise de repas du matin et s'attachent à la qualité des repas que leurs enfants prennent avant d'aller à l'école. Mais cette étude vient de montrer que le choix bilatéral des heures de prise de repas est plus bénéfique en termes de sécurité alimentaire des ménages que le choix unilatéral par un sexe.

Quant au choix du type de repas consommé, lorsqu'il est effectué par l'homme, le coefficient est positif et significatif au seuil de 5%. Par contre, le choix du type de repas par la femme n'a pas influencé le niveau de sécurité alimentaire des ménages car son coefficient n'est pas significatif au seuil de 5%. Ainsi, le choix de l'homme en ce qui concerne le type de repas consommé a positivement influencé le niveau de sécurité alimentaire du ménage comparativement à un choix bilatéral des deux sexes. Ce résultat suggère que lorsque l'homme décide du type de repas consommé dans son ménage, il met les moyens pour garantir une alimentation équilibrée et diversifiée. Ce résultat contrarie celui de Le Pape et Plessz (2019), qui ont montré que les femmes assurent un contrôle rapproché ou à distance de la qualité des repas consommés dans les ménages. La différence peut s'expliquer par le fait que ces femmes prennent en charge le petit-déjeuner des enfants ; ce qui n'est pas le cas dans cette étude.

En ce qui concerne la dépense alimentaire, la dépense alimentaire effectuée par l'homme au profit du ménage a un coefficient négatif et significatif au seuil de 5%, alors que celle de la femme a un coefficient positif et significatif au seuil de 10%. Ce constat pourrait être expliqué par le fait que les hommes achètent plus les aliments de base tels que le maïs, le sorgho et l'igname. Par contre, les femmes, lorsqu'elles ont l'accès aux revenus dans les ménages, elles achètent des aliments complémentaires pour diversifier les repas (Lourme-Ruiz *et al.,* 2016). Ces auteurs ont montré dans une étude que les femmes développent des stratégies culinaires pour capter l'attention de leurs maris. L'une de ces stratégies consistent à acheter les légumes (gombo, épinard, épices, etc.) pour agrémenter les repas de leurs maris et de leurs enfants (Barou et Verhoeven, 1997). Les femmes consacrent plus leur revenu aux compléments alimentaires du ménage, notamment les légumes, les espèces halieutiques, etc. qui sont très essentielles pour l'alimentation (Barou et Verhoeven, 1997; Weiant et Aswani, 2006). Ainsi, elles contribuent à une meilleure diversité alimentaire de leurs ménages. Par contre, les hommes ravitaillent leurs ménages en aliments de base (manioc, mil, etc.) qui ne permettent pas aux ménages de diversifier leurs alimentations (Barou et Verhoeven, 1997).

Dans cette étude, la taille du ménage a influencé positivement le niveau de sécurité alimentaire car son coefficient est positif et significatif au seuil de 1%. Ce résultat sous-entend que dans des ménages de grande taille, il existe plusieurs actifs agricoles qui contribuent à la production agricole vivrière. Ces actifs agricoles assurent, la disponibilité alimentaire dans les ménages. Ainsi, ils contribuent à la diversification des sources de nourriture, favorisant ainsi l'accès à des aliments sains, équilibrés et variés. Ce résultat rejoint l'assertion de Weiant et Aswani (2006) selon lesquels les ménages ayant une taille importante jouissent des emplois réguliers et ont une meilleure diversification

des aliments. Toutefois, le résultat contredit celui rapporté par une étude menée en Iran et qui a montré que l'insécurité alimentaire avait une corrélation significativement positive avec le nombre de membres du ménage (Farzaneh et al., 2017). Cette différence pourrait se justifier par le fait que l'indicateur utilisé par ces auteurs est la fréquence alimentaire basée sur 18 questions alors que cette étude s'est axée sur l'HFIES de la FAO (2016).

Conclusion

L'étude a montré l'importance de la participation des deux sexes au processus de prise de décision des types de repas et des heures de prise de repas dans les ménages. La prise de décision bilatérale des heures de prise de repas garantit la sécurité alimentaire. Lorsque le choix unilatéral du type de repas consommédans les ménages est effectué par les hommes, les ménages sont plus ensécurité alimentaire. Toutefois, les dépenses alimentaires effectuées par l'homme sont plus axées sur les aliments de base, et ne participent pas à la diversité alimentaire. Par contre, les femmes dépensent plus dans les aliments de complément tels que les produits maraîchers, laitiers, etc. Ainsi, les femmes assurent une meilleure diversification alimentaire dans leurs ménages. Les recherches futures pourront se pencher sur le fonctionnement et le partage des dépenses alimentaires entre l'homme et la femme dans les ménages.

Conflits d'intérêts

Les auteurs ne déclarent aucun conflit d'intérêts en relation avec cet article.

Contributions des auteurs

Janvier Egah: recherche bibliographique, collecte et traitement des données et rédaction du manuscrit. **Ibrahim El Ghazi**: rédaction et relecture du manuscrit. **Mohamed Nasser Baco**: relecture du manuscrit. **Marie-Paule Kestemont**: supervision de l'étude et validation du manuscrit.

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