

# AJAL

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# **AJAL** **Argentinian Journal of Applied Linguistics**



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### **Editorial introduction**

The present issue is released at a time when most countries in the world are undergoing an unprecedented crisis. The impact of coronavirus on our hyper-connected societies cannot be overstated, since its effects are unbelievably disruptive on all levels of our very social fabric. The number of COVID-19 cases continues to increase, governments create and impose new measures to mitigate the pandemic until a vaccine or an effective cure are developed, schools and shops remain closed, many of us have lost our jobs or are learning to work from home, a lot people are stranded away from home, travelling is banned, scholarships interrupted, funding postponed. All this has a tremendous toll on the global economy and on our life plans.

The pandemic has had a major impact on research and on education, two of the activities in which our authors are engaged. In the same way coronavirus experts are intensifying their research in response to the outbreak, educators and linguists find themselves in new scenarios that also demand inquiry. As teachers engage in the design of online classes directed to students who may have limited or no access to the internet, educational institutions are adapting to current conditions as fast as possible, both technologically and in terms of new e-learning strategies. In poorer communities, the possibility of resorting to new apps that would allow teachers and students to continue learning clashes against the material limitations of costs and bandwidth.

In order to respond to these new circumstances, we are launching a call for articles on **Teaching languages in unprecedented contexts**, for a **Special Issue** to be published in November 2020 and May 2021 alongside with our regular Applied Linguistics articles. Through those articles we intend to offer proposals and highlights about new ways of working during this time. We invite prospective authors to read our updated guidelines to become familiar with the many different genres included in AJAL and choose the one that best suits the content they wish to communicate.

This issue is especially rich precisely in genre variety. In the research article “The Use of Legal Cases as a Way to Enhance Law Students’ Cognitive and Communicative Competences in the English Classes”, Gladis Arias Rodríguez and Eliana Roberto Flórez show the results of a descriptive case study in language teaching designed to encourage students taking Legal English to analyze legal cases to foster their communicative skills. Their results show how the use of legal cases “made students improve their English

communication skills, expand and appropriate knowledge of their own field of study, which are all relevant aspects in the training of future lawyers.” In our second research article, “Collocations and phrasal verbs: A way to improve EFL learners’ writing skill with a focus on attitude,” Laya Heidari and Seyedeh Mousavi investigate the effect of the teaching of collocations and phrasal verbs as language chunks in the development of the writing skill in Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Their findings show a positive impact on the students’ writing skill and on learners’ attitudes in the course of their research.

This issue also includes a reflective article, “Including poetry in the language classroom: advantages and a lesson plan proposal,” in which Juan José Santillán and Fabián Rodas analyze the advantages of including poetry in lessons at all levels and make a lesson plan proposal. As the authors say, their article “attempts to answer the following questions: a) What are the advantages of the inclusion of poetry in language-learning contexts? c) What are the stages and features of a lesson plan that incorporates such practice?” No doubt they make a valuable contribution to present day teachers working in different contexts who may still be doubtful about whether and how to include poetry in their foreign language lessons.

Readers will also find two book reviews of two very different publications. Santiago Sedrán shares his reading of *Raise Up!*, a coursebook with a strong political positioning which includes lessons visibilizing processes of historically forsaken non-hegemonic groups. About this book, the author states: “Not only do the authors teach by example showing English teachers ways to become critical and active social players, but also they contribute to remove prejudicial labels surrounding ELT practice.”

As editors, we were honoured to review *Content Knowledge in English Language Teacher Education*, edited by former AJAL editor Darío Luis Banegas, a book addressed to teacher educators which offers brilliant insights into how teachers may make it possible for their students to acquire proficiency in language use and build knowledge about the language and its pedagogy as part of the same educational programme.

We are proud to publish our first **academic event report**, an article contributed by Eugenia Carrión Cantón and Lidia Casalini on *Towards curriculum diversification of English teaching at higher education in Argentina*, a three-day seminar sponsored by the British Council Argentina and held at Universidad Nacional de La Plata from February 26 to 28, 2020. This publication starts a new section in our journal: with these reports we intend to share views about the many activities that are organized and developed in Latin America in the field of Applied Linguistics, highly relevant academic gatherings showcasing new perspectives and proposals in diverse contexts. Prospective contributors may read about these reports in our guidelines for authors.

We wish to thank Darío Banegas for his work as editor of this journal since the moment it was founded in 2013 until its second 2019 issue, and to María Alejandra Soto and María Laura García for their invaluable work as materials review editors during that same period. No doubt their talent and their commitment to this publication have made it what it is

today, and they deserve to take a well-earned rest after so many years of disinterested collaboration, for which this journal will always remain grateful. Our thanks also go to Estela Braun and Leonor Corradi, who have extensively collaborated with AJAL as reviewers in previous issues and offered insightful feedback to our authors, and to Claudia Naom, who proofread some of our articles.

Finally, we hope the perspectives we share in this issue will help our readers better navigate their work during this unusual time.

María Susana Ibáñez and Flavia Bonadeo

## **The use of legal cases as a way to enhance law students' cognitive and communicative competences in the English classes**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper shows the results of a descriptive case study in language teaching, carried out in a Colombian private university. Its main aim was to encourage sixteen students from legal English 1 and 2, ninth, and tenth semesters, to analyze legal cases within the communicative approach, by motivating their cognitive competence development (making inferences, reasoning, considering different alternatives, building meanings and critical thinking). Data were gathered through researchers' journals, an unstructured questionnaire and the students' oral and written production. Results showed how the use of legal cases made students improve their English communication skills and their knowledge of their own field of study, which are all relevant aspects in their training as future lawyers.

**Keywords:** English teaching, legal cases, EFL, ESP, communicative and cognitive competences.

### **RESUMEN**

Este artículo muestra los resultados de un estudio de caso descriptivo en la enseñanza de idiomas llevado a cabo en una universidad colombiana privada. Su principal objetivo fue alentar a los estudiantes de inglés legal 1 y 2, noveno y décimo semestres de derecho para analizar casos legales dentro del enfoque comunicativo, motivando el desarrollo de la competencia cognitiva (hacer inferencias, razonar, considerar diferentes alternativas, construir significados y pensamiento crítico). Los datos se recopilaban a través del diario de los investigadores, un cuestionario no estructurado y la producción oral y escrita de los estudiantes. Los resultados mostraron cómo el uso de casos legales hizo que los estudiantes mejoraran sus habilidades comunicativas en inglés y expandieran conocimiento de su propio campo de estudio; todos estos son aspectos relevantes en la formación como futuros abogados.

**Palabras clave:** enseñanza de inglés, casos legales, EFL, ESP, competencias comunicativa y cognitiva.

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## Introduction

Nowadays students need to develop different competences not only in their own field of study but also in areas that help them maximize their learning opportunities related to their field of study; thus, developing communicative competence in English as a Foreign Language helps students interact with speakers of other cultural backgrounds and have access to a great variety of information from different sources.

Law students require the development of some specific qualities that make of them great lawyers. They are required to be in constant communication in oral or written way; besides, they need to be good listeners to understand and analyze daily life situations; in this sense; this research procedures seek to strengthen students' communication skills in English through the use of legal cases; it was carried out with last semester law students because the case analysis needed some background in legal issues as well as in the English language.

Data was gathered using three sources: students' questionnaires, students' artifacts (students' written and oral production) and researchers' journals. This study was guided by the following *main research question*: can undergraduate law students' communicative and cognitive competences be enhanced through the use of legal cases in an ESP (English for Specific Purposes) context? *specific questions*: How do law students analyze legal cases in English within their communicative competence? Furthermore, in what way do legal cases promote students' cognitive competence through the analysis of legal case studies in English? Additionally, findings show the way English teachers implemented different strategies that contributed to improving students' use of English when analyzing legal cases in Legal English courses. Hence, students were able to interpret, argue, discuss and propose solutions to real situations based on legal issues; at the same time, this project presents academic arguments and analyses related to English teaching and learning processes in an ESP class.

## Statement of the problem

In order to increase students' proficiency in the English language, focusing on legal aspects, the Santo Tomás University offers different courses as follows: five general English courses (from first to fifth semester), two reading comprehension courses (in sixth and seventh semesters), and two legal English courses (in ninth and tenth semesters); thus, while the first courses are General English ones, the later courses are ESP based on students' specific and professional needs and interests.

As teachers of legal English for some years, we have observed how difficult it is for law students to communicate their thoughts and argue in their major using English as a foreign language. In order to improve teaching strategies and students' knowledge acquisition, we decided to use research procedures in order to encourage students to develop their cognitive and communicative competences which include interpreting legal issues, providing arguments in their analysis, and critical thinking.



In this way, we designed a diagnostic activity in which students watched the movie “Philadelphia”, which discusses homosexuality and homophobia from a legal perspective. Students had to identify and analyze the arguments (see Appendix 1) of the different parties (Andrew Becker and the law firm). Next, they analyzed the decision of the court based on the evidence of the case. Only few students were able to recognize and explain the main arguments of the parties in English. Most of the students could not express their ideas because they just used single words, incomplete sentences and their discourse lacked coherence. This research project was designed and implemented to find a solution to this problem, i.e. to satisfy the students’ learning needs in their field of study and language improvement.

English classes with legal topics have been a challenge for teachers and students alike. Teachers have to confront legal themes that include national and international standards, legal procedures, legal cases and legislation, among others; on the other hand, students must be able to read, understand, analyze, discuss, and argue about legal aspects in the English language; it is easy for neither party, but it is also an opportunity for both to do collaborative work and to explore methodologies in favor of effective learning.

### **Theoretical framework**

The current study is supported by the following theoretical foundations: the use of legal cases in law students’ training, the use of legal cases in an ESP class, the development of students’ cognitive competence, and the communicative approach to teaching EFL.

#### **The use of legal case in law students’ training**

For some time, L1 lectures or law professors (most of them lawyers) have been using legal cases in order to teach and evaluate their students; most of this material is taken from real cases or adaptations they have made for teaching. Ariffin (2014) states that law students require to get experience in subject knowledge and language competence; besides, reading legal cases is of great importance due to the complexity of the legal language students need to acquire. Hence, legal cases give students the opportunity to analyze them in detail and also get knowledge and experience in their own field of study; it has potential to be effective since students bring previous knowledge to class and also receive the guidance of teachers. Sources??

When law faculties include legal cases in their syllabuses, they focus on preparing students to solve real life problems. Katz & O’Neill (2009) argue that legal cases allow one to work with legal rules, cases and arguments; this academic exercise introduces students to legal practice. Thus, role playing in L1 classes allow students to have different views on the cases as well as facilitate their analysis and argumentative skills through the performance of roles as attorneys, counselors, lawyers, advocates, solicitors, judges, clients, criminals, among others.

A legal case provides material that includes a brief background of the topic, an explanation of the context and details about particular situations; for instance, Greene and Thomson (2011) proposed case studies on human rights as part of the contents of the law program: “Case studies on human rights were developed by Liberty Victoria to help students to understand the diversity of civil liberties and human rights, the value of such liberties and rights, and the ways in which they are protected under the Commonwealth Constitution” (p. 2). Similarly, Applegate (2000) asserted that “All court cases are potential case studies. It is often overlooked by reformers of teaching methods that cases are often the best case studies” (p. 221). Using legal cases, therefore, is considered to be meaningful for teaching because they provide students with a great source of factual and policy material; additionally, they enable checking regulatory disputes from different participants, in real contexts.

### **The use of legal cases in an ESP class**

Teaching English in Law programs (Legal English) requires specific strategies and materials to motivate students' knowledge and foster language improvement. Hence, the use of legal cases for teaching, or the use of ESP materials, have many advantages for students; they are mainly represented in the motivation students gain because the topics are inherent to their profession; students can acquire knowledge and analyze it from different perspectives as future lawyers. Arias (2014) points out that reading about topics related to students' degrees makes them gain knowledge of their own interest and feel empathy for the class. Furthermore, Jabeen (2012) argues that the use of legal cases to teach English helps law students step into their practical profession with more confidence. Thus, legal cases are relevant ESP materials and should be included in English classes as part of daily activities.

Moreover, there are some important aspects to take into account while working with legal cases in English; students require knowledge of general English because they need to understand and explain legal issues; this material usually contains complex structures students must comprehend and use in real life contexts or in English classes; Berardo (2006) states: “Authentic materials should be the kind of material that students will need and want to be able to read when traveling, studying abroad, or using the language in other contexts outside the classroom” (p. 62). Thus, these kinds of texts enable students to interact with real language and real situations of language use rather than the form.

Keeping in mind that globalization involves the management of knowledge around the world; it implies not only that people can access information coming from varied sources but also that teachers implement it in their classes. Even though law is a field that changes from one country to another, there are international laws that are necessary for countries' relationships. Regarding this, Green (2011) argues: “With the recent increased pace of globalization, and the resulting profound changes in the kinds of connections that exist between nations and peoples in different parts of the world, English has become even more of a world language” (p. 6). Thus, students who use legal language in English have the

advantage to understand a variety of contexts and communicate their own thinking with no language barriers.

### **The development of students' cognitive competence**

Cognitive competence involves the capacity to think and take decisions according to the rules that govern society; it also involves knowledge acquisition, because it is important in decisions making, problem solving and learning procedures. Winterton, Delamare and Stringfellow (2006) assert: "The cognitive competence is the ability to think and act in an insightful and problem-solving way". (p. 54); additionally, Sun & Hui (2012) argue that cognitive competence is related to the ability to internalize, self-regulate, construct knowledge and make sense of the surrounding environment; in this logic, this competence is inherent to people's lives and helps them develop skills that let them proceed in community. Therefore, its development should be emphasized in undergraduate training in general, and in law training in particular.

Cognitive competence involves *the interpretive, argumentative and propositive competences* which are considered for the development of this project, in which law students have to solve legal cases and do a complete analysis. For example, they need to understand problematic situations, investigate information related to the case, identify the processes, recognize the different parts of the cases and argue the possible solutions based on the latest legal regulation, jurisprudence and the appropriate context.

*The interpretive competence* is related to the ability and capacity to understand and comprehend a situation, the processes of construction and reconstruction of meanings (Vélez, 2011). It involves the ability to identify and understand fundamental ideas in different contexts such as communication, messages, pictures, texts, and others; it also includes comprehension and relations among ideas; it requires memory, comprehension and applications in problematic situations.

The *argumentative competence* is the capacity to argue, analyze, decode and give explanations about things or events (Botero, Ayala, Perdomo, Arango, Betancur, Naranjo, and Llano, 2003). It includes the justification of ideas, being able to give reasons, defend viewpoints and maintain communication among people. It involves reasoning, explaining the parts and processes, arguing the effect and drawing conclusions, giving reasons and exchanging knowledge.

*The propositive competence* constitutes the highest development of thought (Vélez, 2011) because it requires the synthesis of knowledge, the change of paradigms, the transformation of ideas and problem solving. It gives origin to new ideas and theories, which are transformed or changed under new patterns.

When working with legal cases and law students, their cognitive competence develops as follows: first, the interpretive competence is exercised when students understand and describe events in their context; second, the argumentative competence is used when

students are able to explain the situations with their own words; finally, the propositive competence is developed when students create their own arguments and theories based on facts. They also make use of their personal knowledge and experience when needed.

### **The communicative approach to teaching EFL**

The communicative approach has changed language teaching; it began as a way to criticize the audio-lingual and audio-visual methodologies; however, it started to be widely applied especially in the 1990s; it proposes the creation of authentic communicative scenarios where students can practice the language through real situations. Plocková (2010) argues that due to communicative activities, students can see the relationship between their classroom tasks and the ability to communicate in the real world; she also asserted that language teaching should be thought of not only in terms of structure but also in terms of function. Thus, the main purpose of the communicative approach is to promote students' communication and involve them with their own learning process.

The communicative approach provides meaningful tools for language teaching in terms of strategies and activities, and also allows students to communicate about ESP topics which are valuable for their learning processes. Richards (2006) proposed some implications for methodologies according to the communicative approach in order to provide meaningful learning opportunities as follow:

- Make real communication the focus of language learning.
- Provide opportunities for learners to experiment and try out what they know.
- Be tolerant of learners' errors as they indicate that the learner is building up his or her communicative competence.
- Provide opportunities for learners to develop both accuracy and fluency.
- Link the different skills such as speaking, reading, and listening together, since they usually occur so in the real world.
- Let students induce or discover grammar rules. (p. 13)

In accordance with the previous statements, the communicative approach introduced important changes in language teaching; the teacher takes the role of a guide, he/she proposes the communicative situations and gives the students the opportunity to experiment and live their own experiences for practicing and learning the language. The students' role in this approach is to be the protagonists in their own learning, Ahmad & Rao (2013). The communicative competence is the goal of language, Brown (2001); however, he highlights the correct use of the language, considering the adequate use of grammar, pronunciation and intonation, and the function of the language according to the different contexts.

### **Methodological design**

This is a Descriptive Case Study (Yazan, 2015), because it allows for the observation and detailed analysis of what happens in a particular group of students. Regarding this type of research, Baškarada (2013), among other authors, says: “case studies provide an opportunity for the researcher to gain a deep holistic view of the research problem, and may facilitate describing, understanding and explaining a research problem or situation” (p.1). Additionally, Merriam (1999) recommends this research method in education because it contributes to the understanding of a specific phenomenon, which helps the reader to extend their experience, discover new meaning or confirm what is known.

### **Setting and participants**

This study was developed at Universidad Santo Tomás Seccional Tunja (USTA-Tunja) which has other branches in Colombia such as Bogotá, Bucaramanga, Villavicencio and Medellín. The law program has 5 basic academic English courses in the first semesters, 2 English reading courses in sixth and seventh semesters and 2 Legal English courses (Legal 1 and Legal 2) in the ninth and tenth semesters; for the development of this study, two Legal English groups were taken into account due to the purpose of this research. Data was collected only from 14 students who were randomly chosen, 6 men and 8 women; they were young adults with similar socioeconomic conditions who showed basic command of the English language.

### **Instruments**

#### **Students' artifacts** (students' production, Appendix 4)

The implementation of artifacts is a way to gather the students' English production in the completion of the different activities; these allow the researchers to have evidence of students' work, learning problems, difficulties and advances; Le Compte & Preissle (1994) say that artifacts are things people make and do during a research process; thus, they can be represented in written and in oral performance, in specific contexts.

### **Journal**

This study implements the researchers' journal (Appendix 7) in order to record the relevant events during the different activities in the classroom. It was completed through a written format and was focused on observing and recording the students' communicative skills and their legal knowledge and practice; Burns (1999) states that journals provide detailed descriptions and interpretations of specific events such as students' reactions, attitudes, feelings, progress, likes and dislikes, among others.

## Unstructured Questionnaire

The unstructured questionnaire (Appendix 2) is used in this study in order to collect data related to the students' opinions about the progress and development of the different activities in the English classes. It was administered orally at the end of the semester. The Office of National Statistics (2010) recommends this kind of instrument because the respondents are free to answer the questions with their own opinions. Thus, this instrument contributes a wide range of answers and arguments that help to answer the questions.

## Pedagogical Intervention

This study aimed at enhancing students' cognitive and communicative skills when reading, comprehending, analyzing and proposing arguments based on legal cases under the parameters of the communicative approach, having in mind that law students need to develop these skills for working on topics in their own field of study.

The researchers constructed the project, designed and implemented four (4) workshops based on the same number of legal cases, throughout the semester; the workshops included specific activities to promote students' analysis and English use as follows:

**First workshop:** Students read the case "Becoming a political refugee" (Appendix 3), using different reading strategies (analyzing the function of words in the text, skimming, scanning, analysis of headings and sub-headings and oral brainstorming); then, they identified the main problem and the legal issues (documents, laws and arguments) in Beatriz' case; students focused on the conditions and laws that allow refugees to stay in USA; moreover, they analyzed the situation of refugees during Donald Trump's government and presented reasonable arguments about it. Finally, they discussed the decision of the court in the case, and presented their own argument and viewpoint about it. First, they wrote a paper draft (Appendix 4), next they presented it orally.

**Second workshop:** students read the case "Banning neighborhood noise" (Appendix 2), using different reading techniques (skimming, scanning, analyzing vocabulary, and oral brainstorming), in order to discuss general and specific ideas. Students described a problem among neighbors in a US neighborhood, they analyzed some legal effects and the police officers' advice; in this respect, they also compared US and Colombian's regulations; students analyzed the various positions (the neighbors and the band) as well as the court's decision; additionally, they defended their position regarding the problem, analyzed a possible penalty (pay a fine, develop social work, go to jail, etc.) and compared it with the Colombian context problems (according to the Colombian National Police Code); students analyzed the case in small groups (three people) but each student presented a final analysis face to face with the teachers. The report was made in writing and orally.

**Third workshop:** students watched the movie "Lincoln lawyer" (Appendix 5), in order to analyze the legal case through audiovisual materials; they analyzed the main

problem as well as the lawyer's morals and behavior, the position of lawyers in front of guilty people, the influence of wealthy people on justice, the nature of evidence and its possible manipulation; furthermore, students studied the Colombian law in similar situations. Students prepared a paper with their own viewpoints about the case and presented it orally in a round table with the whole group.

**Fourth workshop:** Students read and analyzed a "Contract law case" (Appendix 6) by using different reading techniques (analysis of vocabulary, cognates, making inferences), in groups of four (4); after that, each student adopted a role (district attorney, deep blue pools' lawyer, Gainsborough construction's lawyer and judge), they prepared their own script and performed the different roles in the case, constructing their own understanding and position as future lawyers; thus, the students exercised their own roles by using legal arguments and reasoning about the problem.

Feedback was a constant element during the development of the different workshops, especially when students were writing their drafts about the analysis of the cases, and also while preparing their oral presentations; feedback was given individually or in groups, according to the students' needs and difficulties.

## **Results**

The process of data analysis was as follows: the researchers collected the students' artifacts (students' production) in order to have evidence of their English communication. The researchers' journals contained descriptions of the main events that happened in the English class such as the students' work, their attitudes, progress, difficulties, and others. The unstructured questionnaire was given to students at the end of the semester; it provides evidence of students' impressions about the development of research. After analyzing all the gathered information, it was necessary to triangulate data in order to identify similarities. Fusch, Fusch and Ness (2018), state that in qualitative research, triangulation adds depth to the collected data. After analyzing data, two categories emerged in order to answer the research questions:

### **First category: Students' development of the communicative skills while analyzing legal cases**

During students' academic and professional life, they must develop their communication skills (listening, reading, speaking and writing) as part of their academic training; in language learning, these skills should be integrated in an effective way and addressed in order to help students meet the requirements in the gradual development of their communicative competence.

This research project implemented some specific conditions, throughout the workshops, to encourage the development of their communicative competence; the first contact students made with the law cases was through reading; thus, the use of different



reading techniques (analyzing the function of words in the text, skimming, scanning, analyzes of headings and sub-headings and oral brainstorming) helped them comprehend the information. Arias (2014) asserts: “Reading about topics related to the students’ intended career paths allowed them to gain a broad view of the world with regard to their own field of study, so they could appropriate, relevant knowledge according to their own interests” p. (113). While reading, students could understand some general aspects of the texts but they could not comprehend them fully; the researchers perceived that they had some difficulties because they did not recognize some vocabulary; thus, the first task students completed was to identify the meaning of some specialized terms and acquire it, bearing in mind that it was important to express their ideas and understand some other cases, as it was shown in the students and teachers’ opinions:

*For me, the most important benefit was the acquisition of vocabulary in the law context because it was the main problem I have had for speaking in English. (Student 4, Questionnaire<sup>1</sup>)*

*In fact, one of the main difficulties, we, as teachers of the university have been observing is that in the higher levels of English (legal English 1 and 2 – ninth and tenth), many students usually show lack of vocabulary and expressions, necessary to express ideas in their own field of study in English. Besides, students realized they have the legal knowledge but they do not have the necessary legal vocabulary to communicate their own thinking and understanding about different topics. (Researcher 2, journal)*

In this sense, the students’ acquisition of technical vocabulary (about law), helped them gain the ability to understand the different cases and also improved their reading comprehension skills about topics of their own field of study or ESP. Authors such as Nădrag and Buzarna-Tihenea (2017) agree that everyday classroom activity has revealed students’ problems in fields like efficient reading and understanding overall meaning; therefore, it is imperative to expose students to authentic learning situations because students can make connections with the real world, and also practice the language by using authentic materials.

Working with legal cases provided appropriate input to develop students’ lexical repertoire, it motivates the development of their writing and oral communication skills; students incorporated legal terms to their opinions and judgments; it also helped them to construct longer and coherent texts that facilitated the expression of their own thinking, as seen in the following excerpt:

Fourth Workshop: Gainsborough construction lawyer:

*According to the contract on September 15<sup>th</sup>, of 2015 with the Deep Blue Pools, my client is **claiming** to do the fulfillment of that contract, because the accused didn’t do their work as my client contracted, with the specifications the agreed.... Doing*

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1) Students’ written production (artifacts) is reproduced verbatim.

*application from the civil law, in our civil code, we are going to use the 1545 article to **fulfill the contract** with a **compensation** that costs \$ 312.680. (Student's written artifact)*

In the development of this research, a movie was included (Appendix 5). This was done to include audiovisual material where students could listen, watch and understand the main legal issues of the case. In general, during this activity, students were expected to develop the different aspects of the workshop and help each other to understand it better.

This study provided the necessary conditions for making students practice what they have learnt in their law course and also in their English classes within a communicative approach. Radzi, Azmin, Zolhani, & Latif (2007) state about one of their research studies: "The use of CLT (Communicative language teaching) approach enhances oral competency among students as the approach encourages students' participation, promotes confidence, prepares students for real-life communication, and develops communication strategies through the activities carried out" (p. 11). Thus, students could realize the importance of their education, make connections between previous knowledge and new one and put into practice their cognitive competence; all these elements contributed to building awareness about learning and improving their communicative skills.

### **Second category: Students got legal experience in arguing, justifying, and proposed viewpoints, based on the different legal cases in English**

As part of their academic training, law students have to develop the cognitive competence because they must be able to identify, analyze and solve people's daily life problems, they must discuss legal issues and propose alternatives to find solutions to different situations according to the law and obtain justice; besides, they have to propose laws in favor of people's good coexistence, protect the vulnerable and defend their clients as needed, according to the norms.

This research project created specific conditions for students to develop their labor skills as lawyers as well as their English language performance through the analysis of legal cases. First, students had to interpret the case in order to adopt a legal position; for example, in the first workshop (Appendix 3: Becoming a political refugee), it was not easy for students to identify different legal issues, but through teamwork with students and teachers they were able to do it, as shown in the following:

*There was an activity in which students had to identify documents<sup>2</sup>, laws and arguments in Beatriz' case (annex 3). I realized that for my students it was not easy because they mixed everything, they got confused about laws and documents, and students did not go in depth with the case; about it, the teacher had to help them to*

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2) Legal documents and institutions related with migratory acts: The Immigration and Naturalization Service document (ISN). The Immigration and Naturalization Act, a reasonably specific information declaration and a warm statement.

*identify the different aspects and also guided them to do the analysis. Finally, they were able to interpret and analyze the case. (Teacher 2, journal)*

The analysis of the previous case (Appendix 3) was very interesting because it allowed students to face one of the most important problems of countries nowadays, which is migration. They analyzed the case of Beatrice, an African woman who had to study in the US because her family was threatened by the government. Thus, with the guide of the researchers, students could identify the different legal issues, they analyzed the conditions required by US to allow refugees to stay there and they studied President Donald Trump's current position on immigration; it was a real life situation that made students feel they were in contact with the real use of the language and allowed them to present personal viewpoints. Berardo (2006) recommends exposing students to real information to support teaching and make students respond to daily life contexts. Thus, this case made them face the problem of refugees from a critical view, bearing in mind the national and international legal standards, as follows:

*This is a clear example about how immigrants are treated in foreign countries because they are not allowed to have equal conditions like the native people. For this reason, it is difficult for them to travel, study and progress abroad; in many cases, they are stereotyped and mistreated. Thus, all countries have to create Public policies to protect immigrants; for example, in USA, refugees can stay with the conditions to learn English, work and contribute with the economy and development of the country, and not to commit crimes against the American people; on the contrary, they are forced to return to their country of origin. (Student 9, written artifact, first workshop)*

About the second case (Appendix 2. Banning neighborhood noise) students analyzed other common problems people face in cities or towns in relation to loud noises; hence, they identified the main characteristics of the problem, looked for the latest Colombian laws about this topic and formulated their own arguments. One of the researchers mentioned:

*Students worked in small groups and identified the different moments and legal issues of the "Banning neighboring noise" case; they identified the problem of noise this band was generating in a neighborhood; students identified the different positions of the parts, their particular arguments, and also interpreted the final decision of the court. (Teacher 2, journal)*

Additionally, about the analysis of this case (Appendix 2) one of the students wrote his own interpretation:

*There was a musical group which used to play loud music in a USA neighborhood, they were named "Darien Mann's rock and roll band". The neighbors called the police, the police officer persuaded the boys to stop playing loud music, and they had to look for another place or get a soundproof garage to practice... From my point of view, there is a real problem between the band and the neighbors, it is necessary that*

*they mediate and look for a right solution; in fact, if a community is affected for loud noise, they have to stop playing in favor of the peace and quiet of the neighborhood. (Student 8, written artifact)*

The previous analysis shows that students were able to apply their expertise as future lawyers in order to judge and propose solutions to the case, skills related with the development of their cognitive competence, as proposed in this study. Additionally, about the same case (Appendix 2), the court ruled in favor of the neighbors and based its arguments on the Los Angeles Municipal code “noise ordinance”. According to the text, “It is against the law for any person to make any loud unnecessary and unusual noise which disturbs the peace and quiet of any neighborhood” (p. 29); about this, one of the students argued:

*I agree with the decision of the court because the band was disturbing the peace of people, especially at night, when they are resting at home. Likewise, in a similar situation in Colombia, we have the National Police code, here, the offices can go can go into people’s houses and turn off the music when they consider necessary, the punishment is the 50% of a minimum wage. In cases like this, as a future lawyer, I think the law is clear and it was created to protect the people’s rights, people must respect each other; besides, there are spaces where bands can practice and people can go to listen to music. (Student’s written artifact)*

The previous sample shows how students were able to identify the problem and the different positions of the parts. Additionally, they analyzed the decision of the court and adopted a clear position in front of it. They also used their expertise as law students to argue and to compare American and Colombian laws in order to support their arguments. This shows the relevance of legal cases in promoting students’ learning as well as in the development of abilities necessary for their own field of study, such as analyzing, arguing, explaining situations, proposing their own viewpoints. Chur (2011) states that cognitive competences are effective for teaching because they are needed to deal with daily life challenges as well as with students’ professional lives. Thus, they are crucial in today’s education.

In the development of the fourth workshop, the case was related to “Contract law” (Appendix 6). It was about a contract between two parties: Deep Blue Pools Ltd. was hired by the Gainsborough Construction to build some pools in a residential sector but the building company changed the size of the swimming pools, for which reason it was sued. In this case, students were divided into groups and each had to stage a trial; thus, students adopted different roles (District attorney, Deep Blue Pools’ lawyer, the Gainsborough Construction’s lawyer and the judge); then, based on the information students got about this case, each one argued and defended their position in front of the group. It was a meaningful activity that submerged students in their roles of future lawyers; additionally, acting out the

situation in English was a challenge for them because they needed to appropriate the necessary legal expressions to communicate with one another.

*The study of legal cases allowed me to develop multiple competences at the same time, for example reading, performing specific roles as lawyer, analyzing, solving problems and arguing my opinions. (Student 14, questionnaire)*

One way of empowering law students, in their role of future lawyers, is through role playing; it not only develops their communicative but also their cognitive skills. The researchers created those academic conditions, which one of them described during the development of this workshop (Appendix 6):

*In workshop four, when students had to perform a role according to the case; they met in order to discuss about the different legal issues of the case, they agreed about the arguments and possible solutions; In fact, all of them were involved in their role, they helped each other in order to improve their final performance; in general, I think they did a good exercise. (Teacher 1, journal)*

Taking into account that the students who participated in this study were in their last semester (tenth semester), the use of legal cases was totally appropriate in the ESP class because they took advantage of their prior knowledge in their field of study (political and economic, private, labor, and criminal law) in order to develop the different activities of the four workshops. An (2006) argues that topics related to students' degree motivate them to use their prior knowledge<sup>3</sup> as a relevant source to defend their ideas in front of their partners. Additionally, Alhaisoni (2017) argues: "EFL teachers expressed strong agreement on the teacher's role in fostering text comprehension with the use of students' prior knowledge" (p. 38). Thus, in order to analyze each case, students always met and shared their understanding from their knowledge and perspective as lawyers; sometimes they agreed, and sometimes they disagreed and looked for additional legal information when necessary with the purpose of solving the situation and reaching an agreement.

Therefore, the analysis of the cases along this study were effective for students to develop the interpretive, argumentative and propositive competence which involve necessary skills for law students. An (2016) argues in one of his research projects: "Through this research, students gained an acquisition of knowledge and had the ability to discuss law topics using reading as the main vehicle of this process which is practice that contributes to their lives as students and as professionals" (p. 6). Additionally, the different workshops generated activities that permitted the students to be involved in the permanent study of legal aspects about national and international legal issues and laws; it also boosted their self-confidence to face the topics, and motivated their writing and speaking skills; about this one of the researchers said:

*Students got familiar with the legal issues in English, having in mind that they had previous knowledge about them because it was their major, but the most important*

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3) In the students' questionnaire, question 5 is related with students' prior knowledge and academic experience.

*was that they could use the English language as the mean of communication to analyze those aspects, in the perspective as future lawyers. (Teacher 2, journal)*

Additionally, students could gain knowledge (Sun & Hui, 2012) from each topic, which is a condition of the cognitive competence. For example, in the first workshop, “Becoming a political refugee”, students identified relevant legal issues such as documents, laws and arguments, and tackled the current regulations of the American government, bearing in mind that the topic of refugees is a worldwide problem. About the second topic, “*Banning neighborhood noise*” apart from the legal issues, students investigated the local guidelines regarding the production of loud noise in houses and neighborhoods; they also reviewed the latest Colombian Police Code and its implications for the society. In the third workshop, “Lincoln lawyer” (a movie), students reflected about their personal role as lawyers and also their responsibility in front of the corruption of the institutions and the law. In the fourth workshop: “*Deep Blue Pools*”, students had to investigate and use information related to Contract law according to the national and international rules.

Furthermore, the topics and the development of the different workshops made students reflect about their own role as professionals, their responsibility with society, and the possibility to express their own analysis and perceptions when facing social problems in a communicative way.

### **Conclusions**

The implementation of legal cases in the ESP class contributed to strengthening students’ development of communicative and cognitive competences.

This lexical development had a positive impact on their productive, both oral and written, communicative skills, as shown in the results; likewise, the students’ language exposure through the development of the different workshops made them feel self-confident to communicate their ideas in the foreign language.

To guide students to practice and improve their communicative skills, different activities were proposed, such as reading comprehension activities (analyzing the function of words in the text, skimming, scanning, analysis of headings and sub-headings and oral brainstorming), the analysis of the cases among students (in small groups or the whole group), the identification and analysis of the exhibits in the different cases, the analysis of courts decisions, the search for information when necessary in order to look for arguments to defend the different positions, among others.

The ESP class was effective because most of the time students were engrossed and interested in working on this kind of topics, they showed a positive attitude during classwork, they liked to participate with their prior knowledge and personal experience, which also motivated students’ collaborative work.

Students developed their cognitive competence while comprehending and analyzing the different cases; then, they applied their argumentative competence to argue, discuss, answer questions, debate ideas, justify statements, give reasons, and defend personal points of view; their propositive competence was evidenced when students employed legal arguments to support their analysis and proposed possible solutions, for example, in the contract law case (Appendix 6). Finally, they issued judgments according to their own viewpoints as future lawyers.

Considering the advantages of using legal cases to teach in law groups, based on this academic experience, we propose including this kind of material in the last semesters. Some difficulties are that, especially at the beginning, students struggled with the methodologies and with their lack of vocabulary to understand the cases; for further research in this field we suggest adding lists of vocabulary (presented with listening support or in a creative way) in the initial stages when they receive the input and also as a way to support their output.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Students' paper

Día: 15 Mes: febrero Año: 2017

English class

Legal 1.

Exercise

» Based on the movie "Philadelphia", answer the following questions.

1) Analyze the arguments of the parties in the case.

no accordin the parties.  
have evidences, Backer health problem, he is a lawyer good, he die.

2) What's your opinion about the decision of the court?

I think is good  
Backer mosent  
Backer have many money  
with the case.

### Appendix 2: Questionnaire

**UNIVERSIDAD SANTO TOMAS SECCIONAL TUNJA**  
**DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS**  
**CUESTIONARIO**

**RESEARCH:** Legal case studies for teaching English under the communicative approach.

**OBJETIVO:** Evidenciar las opiniones que los estudiantes de derecho tiene al finalizar el semestre, respecto a su desempeño con el manejo del Inglés y el trabajo realizado con estudios de casos legales.

1. ¿El trabajo con casos legales, le permitió a Usted desarrollar habilidades para entender las ideas principales y secundarias de un texto?

SI	NO

De qué manera? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Los ejercicios de comprensión lectora de casos legales, le permitieron a Usted desarrollar la capacidad de entender y relacionar las ideas presentes en los textos?

SI	NO

De qué manera? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Cuáles de las siguientes habilidades desarrollaste MAS, durante el trabajo con casos y de qué manera?

HABILIDAD	
Argumentar	✓
Justificar	
Dar razón de	
Analizar desde diferentes puntos de vista	
Razonar	
Explicar partes y procesos	

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Crees que el trabajo con casos motivó tu capacidad de expresar tus propios argumentos o teorías con base en los hechos?

SI	NO

De qué manera? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Crees que tu conocimiento y experiencia previa, contribuyó en tu trabajo al desarrollar los diferentes talleres sobre casos?

SI	NO

De qué manera? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Explica cuál es tu opinión sobre el trabajo con estudios de casos legales, como material central, dentro de la materia de inglés legal, de acuerdo a la experiencia que tuviste a lo largo de este semestre.

### Appendix 3: First workshop

“Becoming a political refugee”, taken from Davis (1996, p. 558-559)

**UNIVERSIDAD SANTO TOMAS SECCIONAL TUNJA  
DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS  
FIRST WORKSHOP**

**RESEARCH:** Legal case studies for teaching English under the communicative competence.

**Objective:** To encourage law students to analyze legal case studies in English under the communicative competence.

1. Apply different reading strategies (skimming, scanning, analyzes of images, headings and sub-headings, brainstorming about the main topic, etc.) in order to understand the case: “BECOMING A POLITICAL REFUGEE”
2. Identify the relevant legal issues (documents, laws and arguments) in Beatrice’s case.
3. What law did Beatrice depend on to allow her to remain in the United States? What is it about?
4. Why does the law say that an alien requesting refugee status must provide “reasonably specific information” showing a real threat of personal harm?
5. Do you think the INS should always make it difficult for an alien to remain in the United States as a refugee, as it did in Beatrice’s case and in the current government (Donald Trump)? Support your answers.
6. Do a personal analysis about the case and also the decision of the court. Considering your background as a law student.

### Appendix 4: student’s papers, draft

Nombre: Hany Dayana Garcia dillon  
Código: 2114347

Day	Month	Year

The case is based on the conflict between Beatrice and the Government of Ghana. taking into account that Beatrice is an african citizen who is going to study to the United States and for lack of documentation conflicts if she can stay in the United States or if on the contrary she should be deported to her native country.

The conflict rests on the fact that Beatrice's family is politically persecuted for which reason they demand their deportation.

In my opinion, I think so, the USA is a independent state and many people are trying to get into this country just to have a quality life different to the quality life that they have in the native country.

for this is necessary that the united States of America use law that limits the reason for a alien remain in the

## Appendix 5: Lincoln lawyer workshop

### UNIVERSIDAD SANTO TOMAS SECCIONAL TUNJA DEPARTAMENTO DE IDIOMAS THIRD WORKSHOP

**RESEARCH:** Legal case studies for teaching English under the communicative competence.

**Objective:** To encourage law students to analyze legal case studies in English under the communicative competence.

1. Watch the movie "Lincoln lawyer - El inocente," in order to analyze a legal case through audiovisual materials.
2. After watching and understanding the movie, students analyze the following aspects (individual work):
  - Analyze Mick Haller's moral and behavioral to face his job as a lawyer of guilty people.
  - Analyze how the real estate moguls (Louis Roulet's family) are involved in criminal activities and their attitudes in front of the law. Identify the proofs and the possible manipulation of them during the case.
  - Self-analysis: As a future lawyer, what do you consider are the most relevant aspects to have in mind when you decide to defend a guilty person?
  - Bearing in mind different cases about murder or attempted murder happened in Colombia, where poison people finally are recognized like innocents. What do you think of the Colombian Law? Does it take into account money or moral aspects? Support your answers going in deep with this issue.

## Appendix 6: Contract law case

**CASE ANALYSIS:** By pairs, according to the case bellow, answer the following aspects:

1. Identify the legal issues of the case.
2. Take a position in the case, list the strengths arguments and documents that would help you to support the case.
3. Propose a negotiation from the side you chose in number 2. Report the results of the negotiation.

Two years ago, Alex and Leslie Ballentine decided to sell their company, Solaris Energy (America), Inc., by public offering. A statutory registration statement (a carefully prepared set of documents, including a prospectus) was filed with the US Securities and Exchange Commission. However, the public sale did not go ahead, and the company was sold privately to Cordeaux Gabelle, Inc.. The purchase price included a payment reflecting an estimated increase in the company's net worth from the end of the previous financial year. Because hard financial data was unavailable, the contract stated that if a year-end audit and financial statements showed a difference between the estimated and actual increased value, the amount paid would be increased or decreased by the appropriate amount to reflect the actual value.

An audit completed six months after the sale revealed that the value of the company had been overestimated by approximately \$1.2m. The buyers were therefore entitled to recover an adjustment. However, Cordeaux Gabelle has been advised that it may be entitled to a remedy under 12a (2) of the Securities Act 1933, which gives buyers an express right of rescission against sellers who make material misstatements or omissions 'by means of a prospectus'. They have also been advised that an alternative remedy may be available under section 11 of the act.

Cordeaux Gabelle is claiming damages of \$14.6m. The Ballentines argue that section 11 is only relevant in the case of a public offering. They also argue that a contract between a private buyer and seller is not a 'prospectus' as the term is used in section 12(a)(2) of the Securities Act, therefore section 12(a)(2) also only applies to public offerings, and not to private sales.

## Appendix 7: Researchers' journal format

<b>RESEARCH PROJECT:</b> Legal case studies for teaching English under the communicative approach. Instrument: researchers' journal Population: Legal English 1 & 2	
<b>COGNITIVE COMPETENCE</b> Check the skill (s) students are developing through this workshop the most.	
Interpretative	
Argumentative	
Propositive	
CASE N° _____: _____ DATE: _____	
Describe difficulties, weaknesses, strengths, facts, issues, legal vocabulary and expressions acquisitions and use, group work, individual work, oral performance, written performance, problem solving abilities.	
<b>English communicative approach</b>	<b>Legal Knowledge and practice</b>



## **The effect of collocations and phrasal verbs on EFL learners' writing skill with a focus on attitude**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study sought to investigate the effect of collocations and phrasal verbs as language chunks on the writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Moreover, the researchers intended to find out the attitude of learners towards writing after they learned collocations and phrasal verbs. To achieve the objectives, 30 Iranian EFL learners whose age ranged between 18 and 26 and who were all native speakers of Persian were selected. The instruments used for data collection included: Quick Placement Test (QPT), writing pretest and posttest and an attitude questionnaire. Findings revealed that collocations and phrasal verbs had effects on the writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Furthermore, it was indicated that the learners' attitude increased in the course of this experimental study, indicating that learning collocations and phrasal verbs had significantly positive impacts on the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners towards writing skill. The findings of this study have implications for EFL teachers and learners as well as translators.

*Keywords:* attitude; collocations; language chunks; phrasal verbs; writing skill

### **RESUMEN**

Este trabajo busca investigar los efectos de la enseñanza de colocaciones y verbos preposicionales como fragmentos en la habilidad de la escritura en alumnos de inglés como lengua extranjera de nivel intermedio en Irán. Asimismo, se investiga la actitud de los estudiantes hacia la escritura después de aprender colocaciones y verbos preposicionales. Para lograr este objetivo, se seleccionaron 30 estudiantes iraníes de inglés como lengua extranjera entre 18 y 26 años, todos hablantes nativos de persa. Para recolectar datos se recurrió a pruebas rápidas de nivel, a escritura pre y post evaluación y a cuestionarios de actitud. Los resultados revelan que la enseñanza de colocaciones y de verbos preposicionales tuvo una incidencia significativamente positiva en la actitud de los estudiantes iraníes de inglés como lengua extranjera hacia la habilidad de la escritura. Este descubrimiento es de importancia tanto para docentes de inglés como lengua extranjera como para traductores.

*Palabras clave:* actitud; colocación; fragmentos; verbos preposicionales; escritura

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## Introduction

Vocabulary knowledge plays a vital role in second/foreign language learning to the extent that without sufficient vocabulary, successful communication does not occur (Min, 2013). Additionally, Nation (2011) claimed that vocabulary is an essential tool in the development of all language skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, particularly in the formation of written texts (Gu, 2003; Marion, 2008).

The lexical chunk is regarded as a significant part of second language learning by more and more linguists. Wei (2007) claimed that the prefabricated chunk is a language structure with both lexical and grammatical characteristics, usually multi-word units that have a linguistic function with specific characteristics of discourse function. Lexical bundles are widespread in any language. It might be supposed that they will naturally and easily be obtained. Nevertheless, as Biber & Barbieri (2007) and Cortes (2006) stated, acquiring these expressions is very difficult and their appropriate use does not naturally and easily happen.

Comparing vocabulary and grammar in language acquisition, vocabulary learning plays the main role, while grammar is ordered as a second factor (Krashen, 1989; Wilkins, 1972). Thus, for more than half a century, linguists have taken into account phraseology, the study of the structure, meaning, and use of word combinations (Cowie, 1998). According to Lewis (2000), teaching collocations, as multi-word units, constitutes the central part of vocabulary teaching; hence, it should not be devalued. He maintained that, when learners are able to analyze the language into lexical 'chunks', they can acquire a language. Differently put, learning collocations would make foreign language learners' speech and writing sound native-like.

Collocations and phrasal verbs, as language chunks, seem to be difficult for EFL learners to learn (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Lewis, 1997; Namvar, 2012; Nation, 2003) and this has caused researchers to focus more on grammar as a key element in the writing skill (Fatemi, 2008; Shen, 2012) and thus research on collocations and phrasal verbs has not been paid enough attention. Moreover, this learning difficulty has presumably made EFL learners develop a fear of learning collocations and phrasal verbs. It is well-known that lack of positive attitude towards language learning may result in lack of motivation and thus in quitting it (Domyei, 1998; Gardner, 1988; Gardner & Clement, 1990). Furthermore, since the contemporary education community has focused on the improvement of writing, research which explores writing performance and attitudes towards it are of paramount importance (Kear, Coffman, McKenna, & Ambrosio, 2000). Concerning this problem, the current study sought to investigate the effect of collocations and phrasal verbs on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill as well as their attitude towards writing after learning such language chunks.

### **Theoretical background**

The use of the Lexical Approach (hereafter LA), which was put forward by Lewis (1993), is widely acknowledged in EFL teaching and lexical teaching and is a very important improvement in the progress of language teaching. The lexical approach focuses on improving learners' proficiency with lexis or words and word combinations. Lewis' lexical approach concentrates on students' improvement on lexis and word combinations. In this approach, the emphasis is on language learning which takes place through the comprehension and production of lexical phrases as unanalyzed entities, or chunks, and that "these chunks become the raw data by which learners perceive patterns of language traditionally thought of as grammar" (Lewis, 1993, p. 95).

Firth (1957), who was considered to be the father of collocation, propounded the idea of separating lexis and semantics since collocation was the core of a word's meaning. Collocation can be defined as words which associate with one another and are more often than not used in spoken and written English. For Nattinger and deCarrico (1992, p. 1), they are "multi-word phenomena that exist somewhere between the traditional poles of lexicon and syntax, conventionalized form/ function composites".

According to Sinclair (1991), collocations have long-lasting connections. He found syntagmatic (*chain*) as well as paradigmatic (*choice*) relations in the connection between lexis and meaning. He further illustrates, "language is organized according to semi-preconstructed phrases that constitute single choices, that is, words do not occur at random in a text, even though they might appear to be analyzable into segments" (1991, p. 110), e.g. the meaning of the phrasal verb *log out*, is not found by dividing and analyzing its respective parts *log* and *out*, but rather in its full meaning as a phrase or chunk. Thus, according to Aitchison (1996, p. 109) collocations and phrasal verbs "can be regarded as integrated into a single whole, the lemma".

Attitude is an essential factor in language learning. Chambers (1999) provides the following definition:

Attitude is taken to mean the set of values which a pupil brings to the foreign language learning experience. It is shaped by the pay-offs that she expects; the advantages that she sees in language learning. The values which a pupil has may be determined by different variables, such as experience of learning the target language, of the target language community, experience of travel, the influence of parents and friends and the attitudes which they may demonstrate and articulate. (p. 27)

Considering the definition above, to succeed in learning English, students' attitude toward English in general, and to collocations and phrasal verbs in particular, should be of concern. As a result, lecturers and educators should pay more attention to language learners' attitude when preparing English language training and pedagogy.

### **Empirical background**

A plethora of studies (Ashouri & Mashhadi Heidari, 2015; Ghonsooli, Pishghadam, & Mohaghegh Mahjoobi, 2008; Hsu, 2002; Marton, 1977; Mousavi & Heidari Darani, 2018; Seesink, 2007; Zhang, 1993) have been conducted in recent years exploring the effects of collocations on ESL/EFL writing skill and found that collocations were effective in improving this skill. Marton (1977), in an earlier study, found that collocations included problems at the level of production. This lack of collocational competence often causes learners to create longer utterances/paraphrases because they do not know the collocations which express precisely what they want to say; thus, they produced sentences which seemed odd, albeit correct.

Zhang (1993) measured the relationship between EFL learners' writing fluency and their use of lexical collocations among English native speakers and non-native speakers. He observed that native English writers were better than non-native writers on the collocation test, and native writers did better than non-native writers in writing. Moreover, Hsu (2002) studied the relationship between use of English lexical collocations and online writing among Taiwanese college English majors and non-English majors. The results showed that there were a positive relationship between EFL learners' frequency of lexical collocations and their writing. Additionally, Seesink (2007) studied vocabulary teaching and collocations in order to find how it can help to promote writing ability of Arab, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean students. He realized that focus on collocations had a positive effect on the students' writing.

In the Iranian context, Ghonsooli, Pishghadam, and Mohaghegh Mahjoobi (2008) investigated the effect of teaching collocations on Iranian EFL learners' English writing. The results demonstrated that subjects' vocabulary and fluency increased considerably as a result of collocation teaching at the process stage. Furthermore, Ashouri and Mashhadi Heidar (2015) explored the impact of corpus-based collocation instruction on intermediate Iranian EFL learners' writing ability and the findings indicated that there is a significantly positive correlation between the participants' use of various lexical collocations and their writing proficiency. Mousavi and Heidari Darani (2018) also explored the effects of collocations on the writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. They found that the participants' writing skill improved after the treatment which was concerned with teaching collocations.

Although the above-mentioned studies showed that teaching collocations was beneficial for ESL/EFL learners, when Adelian, Nemati, and Falahati Qadimi Fumani (2015) investigated the influence of knowledge of collocation on writing ability of advanced EFL learners their results indicated that knowledge of collocation did not have positive effects on the production of collocation in free writing by EFL learners but it had positive effect on the comprehension of collocation by EFL learners and there was a significant relationship between the receptive knowledge and productive knowledge of collocations.

As far as phrasal verbs are concerned, several studies (Barekat & Baniasady, 2014; Liu, 2011; Mahmoud, 2015; Sung, 2012) have mainly explored the underuse or avoidance of phrasal verbs by ESL/EFL learners. Among these studies, only Barekat and Baniasady (2014) investigated EFL learners' writing improvement in addition to phrasal verbs avoidance. The rest of the studies indicated that lack of sufficient knowledge as to which phrasal verbs are appropriate caused language learners not to use them in their writing or speaking.

In 2014, Barekat and Baniasady sought to investigate the impact of phrasal verb avoidance on the writing ability of Persian learners of English. To accomplish this, three elicitation tests were administered, eliciting preference for either a phrasal verb or an equivalent one-word verb. The participants were divided into two groups: Group A (participants with higher amount of avoidance) and Group B (participants with lower amount of avoidance). Then, the participants were then asked to perform a writing task. The results revealed that the participants in group B had a better performance than those in group A.

Other studies concern learners' preference for using single verbs or the pertinent phrasal verbs (Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Hulstijn & Marchena, 1989; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004; McCarthy & O'Dell, 2004). These studies demonstrated that language learners found learning phrasal verbs demanding and thereby preferring to replace phrasal verbs with their equivalent single verbs.

Akkaya and Kirmizi (2010) investigated the relationship between attitudes to writing and the time spent for writing among 4th and 5th year primary school students. According to the result, it can be expressed that there is a significant positive relationship between attitudes to writing and time spent for writing, that is to say, attitudes to writing can be considered as a predictor of time allocated to writing. Setyowati and Sukmawan (2016) conducted a study on EFL Indonesian students' attitude towards writing in English. The findings revealed that nobody has low attitude in writing, while fifty eight percent of them has moderate attitude to writing, and the rest of them have positive attitude to writing.

In the Iranian context, Tahriri, Shabani and Zokaei (2016) and Fathali and Sotoudehnama (2015) investigated EFL learners' attitudes toward writing. The results showed that at the end of the studies, the participants had a positive attitude towards writing, the sort of attitude that they did not adopt at the beginning of the studies.

Reviewing the previous studies, it was found that learning collocations and phrasal verbs is a demanding task for ESL/EFL learners (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Lewis, 1997; Namvar, 2012; Nation, 2003) and the effect of phrasal verbs was not directly investigated on writing skill improvement (Barekat & Baniasady, 2014; Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Hulstijn & Marchena, 1989; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004; Liu, 2011; Mahmoud, 2015; McCarthy & O'Dell, 2004; Sung, 2012). Additionally, to the best knowledge of the researchers, no study has investigated so far the attitude of language learners towards writing

after learning collocations and phrasal verbs. Thus, this study was an attempt to explore the effect of collocations as well as phrasal verbs on the writing skill of Iranian EFL learners and to investigate their attitudes towards writing. In this regards, the following research questions were raised:

1. Does learning collocations and phrasal verbs, as language chunks, improve the writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners?
2. Do Iranian intermediate EFL learners have positive attitude towards writing skill after learning collocations and phrasal verbs?

### **Methodology**

This study was experimental. It included random selection of subjects as well as pretest-posttest activities. A brief description of the participants of the study, of the instruments used for data collection including the Quick Placement Test (QPT), of the writing pretest and posttest activities, and of the attitude questionnaire, data collection procedure, and data analysis are presented below.

The first group of participants in the present study consisted of 30 Iranian EFL learners who were studying English as a foreign language in a language institute in Isfahan, Iran. The participants' age ranged between 18 and 26 years old and they were all native speakers of Persian. The participants were female and their level of English proficiency was intermediate. To select the participants, 50 Iranian EFL learners were randomly selected and the Quick Placement Test was administered to them. Those students whose scores on the test fell one standard deviation above or below the mean score were selected as the intermediate level EFL learners and formed the experimental group.

The second group of participants was composed of two non-native English-speaking raters who were Iranian. They were English language teachers who had IELTS certificates and whose overall band scores were 8.0. They were 30 and 42 years old at the time, and had obtained Master's degrees in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and had 8 and 15 years' experience in the teaching of English. They were female, their mother tongue was Persian and they were recruited to rate the pretests and posttests taken by the participants.

A Quick Placement Test (QPT) was used to select the intermediate EFL learners. The QPT (UCLES, 2001) included three parts. Parts one and two were of multiple-choice type and included 40 (Questions 1-40) and 20 questions (Questions 41-60), respectively. Questions 1-5 were visual comprehension questions, while questions 6-60 were a mixture of grammar and vocabulary.

The pretest and posttest measured the participants' writing skill before and after the intervention. The topic which was given to the learners was related to the collocations and phrasal verbs which were taught during the lesson. The students were required to write a paragraph (~200 words) on each topic as pretest and posttest.

An attitude questionnaire developed by Elbow & Belanoff (2000) was used to measure the attitude of the participants towards writing skill before and after learning collocations and phrasal verbs. It was composed of 6 parts and altogether 30 items. It attempted to identify the attitudes toward writing, generating, revising, feedback, collaboration, awareness and control of the writing process. It was a 3-point Likert scale questionnaire. These three points were: Yes, Sometimes, and No. The English version of the questionnaire was used because it included very simple statements and three experts in the field confirmed it in terms of difficulty. Thus, we got ascertained that the participants would complete it easily. Furthermore, one of the researchers who was the teacher was present when the participants were responding to the questionnaire and if they had problems with comprehension of the items, she explained and, if required, translated the items for them. The items were scored from 1 to 3; thus, the maximum and minimum total scores were 30 and 90, respectively.

The teaching materials used during the lesson were two books on collocations and phrasal verbs: *English Collocations in Use* (Michael McCarthy & Felicity O'Dell, 2005) and *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* (Michael McCarthy & Felicity O'Dell, 2004). Four chapters of these books were taught to the students. In chapter one of the two books, collocations and phrasal verbs are introduced. Chapter two of *English Collocations in Use* is about finding, recording and learning collocations, while chapter two of *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* is about what phrasal verbs mean and the most common phrasal verbs. Chapter three of *English Collocations in Use* concerns using a dictionary for collocations and types of collocation. Chapter three of *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* concerns particles in phrasal verbs. Chapter 14 of *English Collocations in Use* and Chapter 62 of *English Phrasal Verbs in Use* pertain to travel and any kind of collocations and phrasal verbs which can be applied while writing or speaking about travel. These four chapters of each book were taught during the 10-session treatment.

Data collection began with the administration of the Quick Placement Test (QPT). Fifty students who were studying English at a language institute were randomly selected from three classes and the QPT was administered to them one afternoon when the three classes were held. The teachers of the three classes helped one of the researchers administer the placement test. Based on the results of this test, 30 students who had an intermediate level of English proficiency were selected and formed the sample of the study. An attitude questionnaire was distributed to the selected participants on the first session of the class. Then, at the same session, they took the pretest: the topic (Traveling to America) was written on the board and they were asked to write a paragraph of about 200 words. The topic related to collocations and phrasal verbs which would be taught to the students during the treatment. The pretest was followed by the intervention, which lasted for ten 45 minute sessions. After the treatment, on the final session, the participants took the posttest, which was writing on another topic (Traveling to England) related to collocations and phrasal verbs which would

be taught to the students during the treatment. After the posttest, the same attitude questionnaire was distributed to the participants.

On the first session of the intervention, collocations and phrasal were briefly introduced and it was highlighted that these combinations sounded natural to native speakers, and that students of English had to make a special effort to learn them because their meanings sometimes seemed to be difficult to guess. Some combinations just sound “wrong” to native speakers of English. For example, the adjective “fast” collocates with “cars”, but not with “a glance”. Combinations such as “fast cars, fast food”, “a quick glance, a quick meal” were written on the board and it was explained that combinations like ~~quick~~ cars, ~~quick~~ food or a ~~fast~~ glance, a ~~fast~~ meal are not used by native speakers of English. Moreover, it was clarified that such combinations are known as collocations. Continuing with the explanations, the teacher explained phrasal verbs as verbs that consisted of a verb and a particle. A few phrasal verbs of the most common verbs including come, get, give, and go which can come along with particles such as about, (a)round, at, away, and back were written on the board as examples and their meanings were explained. At the end of this session, the significance of collocations and phrasal verbs was presented.

While highlighting the importance of collocations and phrasal verbs, the teacher accentuated that learning collocations is a good idea because they can give you the most natural way to say something. In addition, they can give you alternative ways of saying something, which may be more expressive or precise. To put it differently, collocations and phrasal verbs can improve your writing style. It was particularly emphasized that such language chunks probably give your text more variety and make it read better. Also, they were encouraged that learning collocations and phrasal verbs was not so different from learning any vocabulary items.

During the rest of the intervention, the teacher began the class with a warm-up, then she started teaching by using a collocation/phrasal verb in a sentence. As the collocation/phrasal verb was unknown to the students, she wrote it on the board followed by the sentence in which the collocation/phrasal verb was employed. Subsequently, the meaning of the language chunk was explained and the teacher was assured that all students learned its meaning. Afterwards, students were asked to write an example of their own and two or three students were volunteered to read their examples. Each session, 3 collocations and 3 phrasal verbs relevant to “travel” were taught to the students. Examples of such collocations are: business travel, safe journey, camping trip, travel brochure, window seat, charter flight, luxury hotel, budget accommodation, make a reservation, fully booked; and examples of phrasal verbs are: get away, set off/out, start off, get on, stop off, check in, check out, get in, pull out, take off, stop over. Finally, for homework, they were required to do the pertinent exercises in the two books—English Collocations in Use and English Phrasal Verbs in Use.

After the participants took the posttest and post-experiment questionnaire, the questionnaires as well as the pretest and posttest were scored. The pretest and the posttest



were scored by the two raters and the questionnaires by the researchers. As for the pretest and posttest, the mean scores of the two ratings were regarded as the data for the statistical analyses.

### Results

Before running the statistical analyses on the data so as to answer the research questions, writing pretest and posttest normality as well as pre- and post-experiment questionnaires should be checked. To this end, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were run on the respective data. The results of such tests used for the writing pretest are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Kolmogorov-Smirnov Results for the Writing Pretest*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pretest	.34	30	.002	.86	30	.007

As shown in Table 1, the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality are reported. Since the sample size was lower than 50, according to Yap and Sim (2011), the Shapiro-Wilk results are used. As the  $p$ -value was lower than the significance level ( $.007 < 0.05$ ), the data were not normally distributed and thus the non-parametric test should be run on pretest data. Similar steps were taken to check whether the distribution of data of the posttest was normal. The results are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2. *Kolmogorov-Smirnov Results for the Writing Posttest*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Posttest	.23	30	.001	.79	30	.003

In Table 2, the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality are shown. The sample size for the posttest data was also lower than 50; therefore, according to Yap and Sim (2011), the Shapiro-Wilk results are used. Since the  $p$ -value was lower than the significance level ( $.003 < 0.05$ ), the data were not normally distributed and the non-parametric test should be run on the posttest data, as well.

To check the normality of data distribution of the pre-experiment attitude questionnaire, the relevant data were subjected to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. The results of these tests are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3. *Kolmogorov-Smirnov Results for the Pre-experiment Attitude Questionnaire*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-experiment	.19	30	.323	.91	30	.623

As shown in Table 3, the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality are reported. Since the sample size was lower than 50, according to Yap and Sim (2011), the Shapiro-Wilk results are used. As the  $p$ -value was greater than the significance level ( $.623 > 0.05$ ), the data were normally distributed and thus the parametric test should be run on pre-experiment data. Similar steps were taken to check whether the distribution of data of the post-experiment data was normal. The results are depicted in Table 4.

Table 4. *Kolmogorov-Smirnov Results for the Post-experiment Attitude Questionnaire*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Post-experiment	.15	30	.246	.90	30	.598

In Table 4, the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality are shown. The sample size for the post-experiment data was also lower than 50; therefore, according to Yap and Sim (2011), the Shapiro-Wilk results are used. Since the  $p$ -value was greater than the significance level ( $.598 > 0.05$ ), the data were normally distributed and the parametric test should be run on the pertinent data.

### Addressing the First Research Question

To answer the first research question, stating whether learning collocations and phrasal verbs, as language chunks, improve the writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners, Wilcoxon signed rank test was run on the data as the writing pretest and posttest data were not normally distributed. The descriptive and inferential statistics are demonstrated in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5. *Descriptive Statistics of the Writing Pretest and Posttest*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	30	15.69	2.335
Posttest	30	19.53	1.912

Table 5 indicated that the mean score of the writing pretest ( $M = 15.69$ ,  $SD = 2.335$ ) was lower than the mean score of the writing posttest ( $M = 19.53$ ,  $SD = 1.912$ ) and thus there is a

difference between the EFL learners' writing skill before and after the treatment. To see if this difference was statistically significant, Wilcoxon signed rank test was run on the data. The results are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6. *Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test Results Comparing the Learners' Writing Pretest and Posttest*

	Pretest – Posttest
<i>Z</i>	-5.69
<i>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.001

Based on the results depicted in Table 6, the Wilcoxon Signed-ranks test indicated that the writing skill of the EFL learners was higher in the posttest ( $M = 19.53$ ) than in the pretest ( $M = 15.69$ ),  $Z = 5.69$ ,  $p < .05$ . It was found that teaching collocations and phrasal verbs as language chunks had significant effects on EFL learners' writing. It also shows the superiority of the posttest scores over those of the pretest, indicating the effectiveness of collocations and phrasal verbs in the EFL learners' writing skill.

### Addressing the Second Research Question

To answer the second research question, stating whether Iranian intermediate EFL learners have a positive attitude towards writing after learning collocations and phrasal verbs, paired-samples t-test was run on the data since the pre- and post-experiment data were normally distributed. The descriptive and inferential statistics are denoted in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7. *Descriptive Statistics of the Pre- and Post-experiment Attitude Questionnaires*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-experiment	30	56.89	6.347
Post-experiment	30	75.98	5.235

As indicated in Table 7, the mean score of the pre-experiment attitude questionnaire ( $M = 56.89$ ,  $SD = 6.347$ ) was lower than the mean score of the post-experiment attitude questionnaire ( $M = 75.98$ ,  $SD = 5.235$ ) and thus there is a difference between the EFL learners' attitude towards writing before and after the treatment. To see if this difference was statistically significant, paired-samples t-test was run on the data. The results can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8. *Results of Paired-Samples T-test of Pre- and Post-experiment Attitude Questionnaire*

	Paired Differences			<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)
	Mean	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>			
Pre-post	-19.09	5.791	1.76	-9.75	29	.001

Table 8 demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the pre-experiment and post-experiment attitude questionnaires  $t(29) = -9.75, p = .001$ . These results suggest that the attitude of the participants in the post-experiment questionnaire ( $M = 75.98$ ) outperformed that of the pre-experiment questionnaire ( $M = 56.89$ ). It was revealed that there was a difference between the attitude of the EFL learners towards the writing skill before and after learning collocations and phrasal verbs; accordingly, improvement was observed in the attitude of the participants before and after the treatment.

### Discussion

The current study intended to shed more light on the effectiveness of the teaching of collocations and phrasal verbs in the improvement of Iranian EFL learners' writing skill. The results of the data analysis showed that teaching collocations and phrasal verbs as language chunks was effective in improving the overall writing performance of Iranian intermediate EFL learners. Given this research question, our findings support the results of Ashouri & Mashhadi Heidari, 2015; Barekat & Baniasady, 2014; Ghonsooli, Pishghadam, & Mohaghegh Mahjoobi, 2008; Hsu, 2002; Marton, 1977; Mousavi & Heidari Darani, 2018; Seesink, 2007; Zhang, 1993).

Contrary to the results of this study, Adelian, Nemati, and Falahati Qadimi Fumani (2015) did not reveal any improvement in EFL learners' writing through learning collocations. Moreover, several studies (Liu, 2011; Mahmoud, 2015; Sung, 2012; Dagut & Laufer, 1985; Hulstijn & Marchena, 1989; Laufer & Eliasson, 1993; Liao & Fukuya, 2004; McCarthy & O'Dell, 2004) also allude to the EFL learners' lack of interest in the use of phrasal verbs. In effect, the language learners avoid the use of verbs in their written or spoken communication.

One plausible justification for such improvement is that the learners realized the importance of collocations and phrasal verbs through the teacher's explanations and understood that increase in vocabulary knowledge may lead to better writing and thus should be taken into consideration in the process of language learning (Thornbury, 2002). Moreover, this improvement in the writing skill can highlight the fact that language is learned faster and easier through chunks (Ellis, 2001; Schmitt, 2000).

Although many researchers have claimed that collocations and phrasal verbs, as language chunks, are difficult to learn (Bahns & Eldaw, 1993; Lewis, 1997; Namvar, 2012; Nation, 2003), the findings of this study indicated that such chunks seemed to be

remembered and used more easily as they contributed to the learners' writing improvement. The interpretation behind such easy remembrance and use might be grounded in the probable links between the particles. This connection is assumed to be more long-lasting in the learners' mind in comparison to single words. Aitchison (1996) stated that such links are powerful and long-lasting. This power is to the extent that in aphasic children, collocational abilities were not impaired, whereas other language abilities were significantly impaired (Bates, Friederici, Wulfeck, & Juarez, 1988). Given this, Hong (2011) also suggested that ideas are expressed more efficiently through collocations and phrasal verbs. In second language acquisition, Gleason (1982) as well as Conklin and Schmitt (2008) revealed the preference of language chunks over single vocabulary.

Concerning the results of the second research question, it was discerned that the learners' attitude towards writing skill increased in the course of this experiment, indicating that using collocations and phrasal verbs had a significantly positive effect on the attitudes of Iranian EFL learners towards writing skill. In line with this finding, Akkaya and Kirmizi (2010), Setyowati and Sukmawan (2016), Tahriri, Shabani and Zokaei (2016) and Fathali and Sotoudehnama (2015) showed that language learners had positive attitude towards writing skill.

The reason for the increase in the participants' attitude towards writing can probably be that when language learners recognize that through using collocations and phrasal verbs, they can communicate with native and non-native speakers of English with more success, this pleasant feeling affects their attitude towards collocations and phrasal verbs. Such attitude, in turn, helps them use such word combinations in their writing so as to have great achievements. As Gardner, Smythe, and Clement (1979) also claimed, a positive psychological atmosphere is required for language learning to occur. Thus, students' achievement can depend to a large extent on their attitude and a change in attitude will result in a change in motivation as these two are closely related (Dornyei, 1998; Gardner & Clement, 1990; Ramage, 1990; to name a few).

As far as writing is concerned, it is assumed to be a problematic skill for most foreign language learners (Belkhir & Benyelles, 2017; Hyland, 2003). They sometimes find it a difficult and stressful task; therefore, such difficulty may cause negative attitudes towards writing itself and language learning in general and it may demotivate students in the long run. The findings of this study revealed that collocations and phrasal verbs not only improved the learners' writing skill but they also affected their attitude towards writing. It is presumably interpreted that the teacher's explanations on the first session of the class, bringing their attention to the significance of collocations and phrasal verbs, had influence on the students so as to consider these language chunks as important and helpful as other vocabulary items to learn and thus not to have fear of them in language learning.

### Conclusion

The study aimed at exploring whether collocations and phrasal verbs could have any effects on Iranian EFL learners' writing skill and whether learning collocations and phrasal verbs could affect attitudes of the learners towards writing. Taking the findings of the study into account, the first conclusion that can be drawn is that the learners discerned the prominence of collocations and phrasal verbs. This understanding, then, helped them do their best to learn and use them in their writing. The second conclusion concerns the improvement of writing through collocations and phrasal verbs. There is no doubt that vocabulary plays a crucial role in writing improvement. The use of collocations and phrasal verbs as vocabulary items in writing may make writing sound more native-like. Simply put, lack of collocational and phrasal verbs knowledge can considerably affect the writing skill and thus ameliorate their writing to a great extent. This, in turn, leads to the last conclusion. When the writing looks more native-like, the students feel satisfied with themselves. Feeling close to native speakers, thereby being more accepted by the native community, results in a positive attitude towards writing and high motivation in language learning. All in all, highly motivated students make their utmost effort to succeed in the language learning process.

The findings of this study can have certain pedagogical implications. Considering the importance of collocations and phrasal verbs in ESL/EFL learning, teachers can use such language chunks in the class to motivate their students to learn them and even to encourage them to learn more collocations and verbal phrases outside of the class. Furthermore, since increasing collocational and phrasal verbs knowledge helps improve oral proficiency, listening comprehension, and reading speed books (Brown, 1974), books containing collocations and phrasal verbs may be introduced to students to learn two or three collocations and phrasal verbs each day and to share these word combinations with their classmates. Making students aware of the prominence of collocations and phrasal verbs in native speakers' speech and writing, teachers can require students to make use of these word combinations in their speech. In addition, teachers can also apply collocations and phrasal verbs to help students develop self-learning strategies like guessing (Laufer, 1988). For instance, the teacher can say a word and ask the students to guess what it combines with or they can be asked to guess the meaning of a phrasal verb. This guessing can aid the development of self-learning strategies and in the long run change the students to autonomous learners.

Another implication which is of concern targets translators. They can also profit from the results of the present study. Lack of collocational as well as phrasal verbs knowledge may probably make serious problems for the translators; on this account, it is necessary for them to lend attention to collocations and phrasal verbs and try to consider the very equivalents in both L1 and L2 so as to ameliorate the quality of their translations.

The preliminary purpose of this study was to explore the effect of collocations and phrasal verbs as language chunks on the writing skill of Iranian intermediate EFL learners.

However, since increasing learners' collocational and phrasal verbs knowledge can develop their communicative competence and serve communicative needs, in order to complement the findings of the present study, the effects of collocations and phrasal verbs on the speaking skill can be studied. Likewise, inasmuch as Nation (2001) stressed "all fluent and appropriate language use requires collocational knowledge" (p. 318), such effects are likely to be compared with native speakers' use of collocations and phrasal verbs in their spoken communication as another recommendation.

As for translation, studies are recommended which explore the effectiveness of collocational and phrasal verbs knowledge in the translation of a variety of written texts such as literary, political, economic, business, press, and so on so forth as well as oral translation. Related to this line of research, comparison of such texts can be done to see which texts are more likely to be positively susceptible to collocations and phrasal verbs. That is to say, in which genre, collocations and phrasal verbs are used more.

Another line of research in addition to productive skills is to explore the use of collocations and phrasal verbs in the improvement of the receptive skills including reading and listening comprehension skills. Comparative studies are also recommended, in which the use of collocations and phrasal verbs are compared with the use of single verbs to augment listening and reading comprehension abilities of the EFL learners.

As the final suggestion for further research, investigation of the attitude of both EFL teachers and learners towards collocations and phrasal verbs in the four language skills and translation can be conducted.

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## **Including poetry in the language classroom: advantages and a lesson plan proposal**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The use of poetry in the language classroom is, to say the least, a controversial issue. The medium has been traditionally excluded from ESL/EFL contexts on the basis of generalized beliefs regarding its complexity and actual benefits. Nevertheless, this position disregards potential advantages, which have been reported in the pertinent literature, that poetry-based tasks can have on the learning process of a second or foreign language. Under these circumstances, this paper aims at describing the reported advantages of incorporating poetry-based tasks in several areas of language learning. Additionally, a proposal for an EFL lesson plan that includes poetry composition is provided.

*Keywords:* poetry, language instruction, advantages, approaches.

### **RESUMEN**

El uso de la poesía en el aula de idiomas es, por decir lo menos, un tema controvertido. Este tipo de texto ha sido tradicionalmente excluido de los contextos de enseñanza del inglés, a razón de creencias generalizadas con respecto a su complejidad y beneficios reales. Sin embargo, esta posición no toma en cuenta las potenciales ventajas, reportadas en la literatura pertinente, que las actividades basadas en poemas pueden tener sobre el proceso de aprendizaje de una segunda lengua o lengua extranjera. Bajo esta perspectiva, este artículo pretende describir las ventajas de dicha incorporación de actividades basadas en poesía en varias áreas del aprendizaje de idiomas. Adicionalmente, una propuesta de plan de clase que incluye composición de poesía (es presentada) para contextos de enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera.

*Palabras claves:* poesía, enseñanza de idiomas, ventajas, enfoques.

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## Introduction

Poetry has traditionally been shunned from the language classroom. Khatib (2011) reports that, for the last twenty or thirty years, literary texts have been excluded from ESL/EFL environments. Panavelil (2011) explains that many language teachers believe that the inherent features of poetry make it too challenging for language learners. Moreover, this reluctance to use poetic texts can be linked to the teacher's experience with this literary medium. Maldonado (2015) claims that the performance of a teacher is significantly influenced by the person's mental models about education, which are forged on the basis of experience and cultural context. In fact, Scrivener (2011) states that many language teachers are reluctant to use poetry because they themselves feel insecure when it comes to reading and writing poetic texts. Povey also reports that "one of the most difficult things about teaching poetry to foreign students is handling the teacher's own deeply wrought unhappiness with verse, the result of experiences he or she has suffered" (as cited in Khatib, 2011, p. 165). Aside from these assertions, sprung from practitioners' experience, the relative lack of empirical evidence (Hall, 2005) does not allow for an in-depth analysis of this issue. However, negative attitudes towards poetry in students are frequently reported (Bloemert, Paran, Jansen & van de Grift, 2017; Iida, 2012; Hanauer, 2012). Khatib (2011) links this rejection to the inadequate selection of texts and their use through traditional methodologies that do not take into account the students' reactions to the literary pieces included in the lesson. Nevertheless, opposing the use of poetry written in the target language (TL) because of generalized beliefs and personal experiences can keep students and teachers from taking advantage of the benefits that have been reported about the use of poems in the language classroom. As a point of fact, Bloemert et al. (2017) argue that, notwithstanding modern attempts, literary texts have not been efficiently integrated into the language-learning curricula.

The discussion that ensues contributes to the field of ESL/EFL instruction through the vindication of a traditionally neglected resource. This attempt is of special significance in a teaching-learning practice that is currently marked by an overemphasis on the development of easily-measured observable skills. Hence, language learners are often reduced to passive reproducers of linguistic conventions that are imposed to them (Kramsch, 2009). This situation has been identified as an important cause of deficiencies in real-life performance (Iida, 2012; Hanauer, 2010). The intrinsic characteristics of poetry and its capacity to awaken the intra-personal potentialities of learners bring forth several advantages in various dimensions of ESL/EFL communicative competence. This paper, therefore, attempts to answer the following questions: *a) What are the advantages of the inclusion of poetry in language-learning contexts? c) What are the stages and features of a lesson plan that incorporates such practice?*

### **Advantages of the use of poetry in the language classroom**

Providing a straightforward definition of poetry is unquestionably challenging, as there are innumerable perspectives and points of view as to what makes a text poetic. However, as this paper does not deal with literary theory, it is appropriate to use W. H. Auden's characterization, as cited in Burroway (2011), and define poetry as *memorable speech*. The same source explains that, since its origins, poetry has had the purpose of being read aloud and remembered by its audience. Therefore, poetic texts reflect an unbreakable and everlasting connection between sound and meaning. To this, it has to be added that one of the most important features of poetry is figurative language; consequently, poetic texts transmit a message that goes beyond the literal meaning of its constituent words. Hence, a text is poetic when, independently of the formal aspects it subjects itself to, it conveys meaning beyond the denotational level, stimulating oral reproduction and recollection.

Once these general considerations about poetry have been discussed, it is time to address the advantages of its use in the language classroom.

Bobkina and Dominguez (2014) assert that advocates of the use of literature in the EFL/ESL environments consider literary texts to be providers of authentic language manifestations with significant variety regarding style, text type, and register; thus, there is exposure to real-life language use which promotes familiarity with TL's formal structures and functional communicative elements. In relation to poetry, Panavelil (2011) claims that the use of this literary medium in the language classroom facilitates acquaintance with real-life uses of TL. Additionally, Brumfit and Carter argue that poems can constitute themselves in contextualized models of language as used by native speakers (as cited in Panavelil, 2011). It is important to remember that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), a language teaching/learning approach widely accepted and appreciated in modern days (Brown, 2015), encourages employing authentic materials in the foreign and second language classroom. Larsen-Freeman (2011) states that CLT advocates promote the use of authentic materials as a way of helping students apply what is learnt in class in real situations outside teaching-learning environments. The author also emphasizes the need to select texts that are suitable for the students. Furthermore, Lazar (1993) mentions that in EFL environments learners might find it difficult to gain access to authentic spoken language; as a result, written English attains preeminent significance for the process of acquiring or learning a foreign language. Consequently, literary texts can become a source of valuable contexts to assist the analysis and interpretation of TL. The same author also addresses the alleged issues that arise from the unconventional use of language in poetry, and argues that the language teacher can employ this unique feature of poetic texts as a means of improving the learners' linguistic responsiveness and attentiveness, along with their interpretative skills, through contrasting what is found in a poem with the linguistic conventions and norms dealt with in class. For his part, Kırkgöz (2008) suggests that poetry-based activities allow language learners to effectively and meaningfully practice and

reinforce their grammatical knowledge. It is imperative, however, to remember that all of this must arise from an effective selection of texts that takes into account the students' level.

Another element of the linguistic aspect of the advantages of using poetry in the EFL/ESL classroom relates to vocabulary. Nation (2005) claims that vocabulary acquisition ought to be seen as a process of accumulating knowledge through repeated and diverse encounters with the lexical element, that is, the word. In association with Nation's assertion, the use of poems when teaching/learning a foreign or second language can be promoted on the basis that poems stimulate vocabulary enrichment; the reason for this claim is that, in a poem, words are meaningfully contextualized; and therefore more likely to be remembered (Panavelil, 2011). Scrivener (2011) also highlights this feature of poetry and asserts that, to more efficiently recall a language item, the person needs to be startled by an innovative and peculiar idea or lexical choice. The author also mentions that one should bear in mind that children acquire many L1 elements in this fashion. The linguistic features of poetry described above address Nation's and Scrivener's assertions. In fact, Kırkgöz (2008) asserts that the inclusion of poetry in the classroom stimulates retention, as "the repetitive nature of the words and patterns can promote learning of phrases and lexical items that can be transferred to not only writing but also to everyday use" (p. 104).

In addition to the abovementioned assertions, it is appropriate to briefly explain how poetry can be used to foster the development of writing and reading skills. Authors such as Collie, Slater, and McKay maintain that creative writing endeavors can be stimulated in language students through the use of poetry, as they can be inspired and thus emulate the texts with which they work (as cited in Panavelil, 2011). In the same line of thought, Harmer (2010) asserts that writing poetry is a suitable and beneficial activity for both young and adult learners, since it encourages creativity in a way other written expressions do not. Pushpa and Savaedi (2014), moreover, remark that poetry-based tasks allow language learners to relate to universal issues and topics, while providing opportunities for self-expression which foster creativity and genuine communication.

In relation to reading, Kong (2010) asserts that, when efficiently applied in the classroom, poetry is a valuable tool towards the development of the students' reading skills. The author links this claim to the fact that poetry can enhance motivation, stimulate imagination, increase experience, and improve self-cultivation. In accordance with these ideas, Silberstein (1994) states that, because of its special features, poetry allows learners to practice the totality of reading aspects. Complementarily, Hammer (2010) and Lazar (1993) empathize on the fact that poetry can also promote the development of listening and speaking skills; this is explained by the fact that, as described in the first section of this paper, poetry is originally meant to be read aloud and heard by an audience.

Furthermore, it is important to mention that, as Panavelil (2011) explains, poetry has the quality of significantly motivating language learners. Scrivener (2011) states that the teaching-learning process of a foreign/second language can become monotonous and

uninteresting if the teacher and the students exclusively use course book materials and examples. Additionally, Lazar (1993) makes reference to the fact that learners might find working with literary texts to be a very rewarding activity. Since it is considered that literature has a high level of complexity, adequately performing an activity that involves a literary text can bring forth authentic feelings of success. Moreover, and dealing specifically with poetry, the author considers that poems are likely to stimulate intense emotional responses in the learners.

To finalize this section, a table summarizing the reported advantages of the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom, which was compiled from research studies, is presented below:

Table 1. *Reported advantages of the use of poetry in the language classroom*

Study	Aspect of research	Participants	Data collection	Results
Kırkgöz (2008)	Benefits of poetry-based reading and writing activities	28 Turkish university students	Journal entries and informal feedback.	Grammar practice. Vocabulary acquisition. Incorporation of personal experiences in the learning process. Benefits on retention.
Khatib (2011)	Advantages of reader-centered approaches to poetry use.	200 Iranian university EFL students	Control experimental group / Pre and post test	Significant differences in performance.
Pushpa and Savaedi (2014)	Influence of poetry on autonomous EFL courses (performance and attitude)	60 Iranian university students	Control experimental group / Pre and post test	Positive impact on performance. Motivation improvement.
Hanauer (2001)	Poetry reading promotes the development of linguistic and cultural awareness.	20 – 10 dyads – Hebrew teacher trainees	Protocol analysis	Advanced learners are capable of reading and interpreting poetry. Attention to meaning construction and linguistic form
Bjelland (2016)	Experience towards Frost's "The Road"	39 tenth-grade Norwegian	Qualitative analysis of	Successful interpretation of figurative language and



	Not Taken”	EFL students	responses	poetic devices.
				Departure from own experience.
Hanauer (2010)	Whether writing poetry is too hard.		Analysis 844 L2 poems	Writing poetry is not a difficult task for well-stimulated students.
Liao (2012)	Relationships between the reported writing experiences and the perceived values of poetry writing	18 TESOL graduate students in the U.S.	Interviews and a rating scale to collect data	Positive attitudes Self-expression, self-discovery, and emotional release Vocabulary enrichment Ownership of TL.
Chamcharatsri (2013)	Experience when expressing love through poems	4 Thai ESL students	Writing prompts Interviews	Overcome initial difficulties. Shift from form to meaning.
Iida (2011)	Influence of haiku on academic writing	20 Japanese EFL students	Essay-based tests Interviews Six-week intervention	Positive influence on academic writing (textual analysis) Most participants consider haiku as valuable. Vocabulary enrichment. Self-expression. Skill transfer.
Iida (2012)	Influence of haiku writing on EFL learning	20 Japanese EFL students	Analysis of poems and interviews.	Positive attitudes. Development of linguistic awareness. Vocabulary enrichment.
Iida (2016)		1 Myanmarese EFL student in Japan	Analysis of poems and interviews	Self-discovery. Making learning personal

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### **A proposal for the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom**

In this section, a succinct description of a lesson plan that incorporates poetry composition practices in the language classroom is presented. The activities are thought for young adult (20 – 30 years old) EFL students at an intermediate proficiency level. The lesson plan encompasses two one-hour sessions.

#### **Stage 1: Introducing the topic (10 minutes)**

This stage includes short opening activities that aim at awakening the students' attention and interests. The lesson opens with a brief conversation about loss. The teacher starts by relating a personal loss of an object that he has recently experienced, stressing the reason why this event has had an effect on him. An example could be a withered plant that he had been nursing. Students are invited to share similar experiences. The discussion should close with a reflection about the diversity of ways in which people experience loss.

#### **Stage 2: Engagement (25 minutes)**

During this stage, students read and discuss a published poem, preferably by an author of renown. This endows the whole lesson with importance and provides a pertinent model for the tasks to follow. For this example, the title of the poem "One Art" by Elizabeth Bishop is projected or written on the whiteboard. The teacher asks students to try to predict the general message of the poem. Answers should not be challenged.

Then copies of the poem are handed-out, and the text is read aloud by the teacher, with the students silently following. The teacher addresses some problematic vocabulary such as *intent*, *fluster*, *shan't*, and any other item that the students might bring up. Additionally, the problematic structure of the last section of line eight and the beginning of line nine – *and where it was you meant / to travel* – should be dealt with. The teacher can simply present an alternate construction.

Next, the teacher draws the students' attention to certain formal features of the poem, which is a villanelle. It is not advisable to dwell in the meter – iambic pentameter – or rhyme scheme of the poem, but rather in the skillful and systematic repetitions of the words *master* and *disaster*, which are known as refrains.

The teacher organizes students in small groups (3 – 4) and asks them to discuss their impressions and interpretations of the poem for five to seven minutes. Then the teacher asks members of each group to report on the discussion. Again, answers and opinions should not be challenged.

#### **Stage 3: Sensorial stimulus (25 minutes)**

As Iida (2010) suggests, given poem composition relies on imagery, it is imperative to activate the students' senses in a pre-writing activity. Thus, the teacher can write the following questions on the whiteboard: When was the last time you remembered losing

something? Where were you? Were you alone? Was it cold or hot? Did you hear anything? Did you smell something in particular? What color can you connect the event with? Why?

If possible, students should be allowed to leave the classroom and find a place of their preference where they can individually reflect on the posed questions. The teacher encourages students to write down their answers. This stage provides opportunities for language study; hence, students may be required to use specific vocabulary and/or language structures in their answers.

After 15 minutes, students are called back inside and paired up; preferably, students are allowed to choose their partner. Each pair discusses their answers to the questions.

#### **Stage 4: Composition (homework + 20 minutes)**

As homework, students are required to write a first version of their poems. The topic can be, but is not restricted to, the event on which students reflected when answering the questions during the previous stage. The teacher asks students to write at least 12 lines of poetry that include refrains. Specific metrical requirements are not advisable.

The following session, students are given 20 minutes to finish their drafts. The teacher should provide assistance when asked. Students are required to write their poems in a single piece of paper with no name.

#### **Stage 5: Publication (40 minutes)**

The teacher should encourage, but not force, sharing these creations; doing so provides the activity with real and practical value.

The teacher collects the poems and hangs all of them on one wall of the classroom. Then the whole class is asked to stand up and read the compositions. Each student is asked to select a specific poem that he or she would like to discuss more thoroughly with the author. In a whole-class activity, students are to look for the author of the poem they have selected. Students are then allowed to work in pairs (reader and author) to discuss the interpretations that the reader might have about the poem he or she has chosen. Students continue pairing up until all poems have been discussed.

Finally, the teacher asks all authors to write their names in their compositions and hand them in. The personal and intimate value of poetry should cause instructors to carefully consider the strategies that they use to provide feedback. This provision should by no means be detrimental to the students' motivation. Teachers ought to always bear in mind that poetry-based tasks are especially challenging for language learning; thus, inappropriate provision of feedback can be interpreted as harsh criticism. As a result, inaccurate use of language in a composition should be addressed individually, providing, but not imposing alternate language items and constructions.

### Conclusions

The inclusion of literary texts in the language classroom through traditional assumptions and procedures that are based on the texts and/or an imposed interpretation is not likely to bring forth much benefit to foreign or second language teaching-learning processes. However, language learners can certainly profit from the inclusion of tasks that, vindicating the crucial role of the reader, exploit literary texts to promote language proficiency along with personal and expressive growth. Literature in general and poetry in particular have the capacity of placing the self as the focus of the teaching-learning process, thus increasing motivation by directly linking this process to the students' experience and emotions. Though benefits on all the language skills can be brought about by using poetry in the language classroom, poetry-based creative writing practice is of special interest, as it stimulates and empowers learners to meaningfully and aesthetically express themselves while practicing grammatical elements and enriching vocabulary. Sadly, not much research has been carried out regarding the effects of poetry in EFL environments, especially in Latin American contexts. This is particularly latent with regard to the perspectives and beliefs that teachers hold about the inclusion of poetry in the language classroom. Some authors discuss the personal experience of teachers as a deterrent for the inclusion of poetry; however, there is not enough empirical evidence to confidently endorse this assumption. This empirical gap is certainly appealing for further research on the topic.

Nevertheless, this want of empirical support should not discourage language teachers from implementing poetry-based tasks in the classroom. Doing so might cause inattention to the students' needs and deprive them of activities with potential – and to some extent, empirically tested advantages for language learning.

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## Book review

### **Raise Up. A diverse and inclusive view of English**

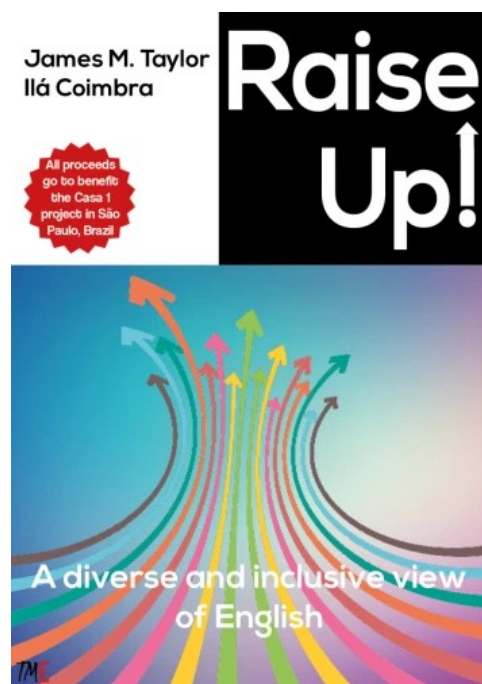
James A. Taylor and Ilá Coimbra, San Pablo  
Taylor Made English, 2019  
25 pp.

### **Raise Up. A diverse and inclusive view of English by James A. Taylor and Ilá Coimbra**

The aim of *Raise Up* is that of showing how feasible and achievable it is to create a truly inclusive mainstream coursebook. Through a strong political positioning, rather scarce nowadays, James A. Taylor and Ilá Coimbra take active part in the ongoing visibilization processes of historically forsaken non-hegemonic groups. Not only do the authors teach by example showing English teachers ways to become critical and active social players but also they contribute to remove prejudicial labels surrounding ELT practice.

The book is concerned with the teaching of English through the use of socially relevant and appealing contextualized lessons. Within these lessons the authors visibilize historically forsaken groups such as women, BAME, indigenous peoples, LGBTQIA+, the working class, refugees and non-conventional body types, among others. Nonetheless, as claimed by Taylor and Coimbra (2019, p. 2) “the lessons are not about the people represented, but including them.” This means that non-hegemonic identities are not described in the lessons; instead, real life situations which they are part of are the context for the different lessons.

The book is divided into eight lessons, each of them directed to a language level and age group. It includes lessons for teenagers as well as lessons for adult learners. The lessons are directed for students with pre-intermediate, intermediate, upper-intermediate or advanced levels. All of the eight units are structured around one main encompassing subject which follows the inclusive criteria above mentioned. The eight lesson subjects are *Family Life*, *Leadership*, *Rules at Work*, *Rural Life*, *Influential Women*, *Talking About Where You Work*,



*Refugees* and *Different types of homes*. According to Taylor and Coimbra (2019, p.2) they are to be used as individual lessons chosen by the teacher for their class. To different extents, each of the units takes into account the four skills (reading, listening, writing and speaking) and differentially places emphasis on grammar or vocabulary. The exercises' conventional structures and tasks turn into completely original and appealing activities if the teacher is one to appreciate the relevance of the contextualizing topics.

Despite the fact that, as it was mentioned before, the outstanding feature of the book is the real and appealing contextualization of the lessons, it is not the only one. That is to say that educators who might choose lessons from this book do not necessarily need to feel completely identified with the authors' cause. The type of exercises chosen and the sequence they shape are effective on their own.

What is more, the book reminds ELT educators of the importance of the inclusion of authentic literature as part of the lessons' structure. An example of this is Lesson 2 (for advanced level), which in order to work on reading comprehension skills, includes a passage of "Damnificados" a novel authored by J.J. Amawaro Wilson. The selected novel, set in metropolitan Caracas, deals with social issues such as work, unemployment, beggary, corruption, among others.

The last section of the book includes an extended invitation to readers to contribute with lessons based on inclusive criteria. It is also worth mentioning that all proceeds are to be donated to Casa 1 Project in Sao Paulo, Brazil, which is a shelter for LGBTQIA+ community members who have been expelled from their homes.

What the authors do say as much as what the authors do not say is part of the message of the book. Not only do they converge into a democratizing view of language as a vehicle of opportunities, but they also highlight the ethical value of the project. When we refer to what this book does not mention, we mean all those fictitious, unlikely and decontextualized universes that are sometimes proposed or imposed in mainstream textbooks. Here lies the value and the originality of working with the kinds of contextualized settings which *Raise Up* offers.

The authors regard the learning subject in only one way: as an autonomous learning subject. Any other conception of them would be inconceivable. Students just as much as teachers are real life subjects and the situations presented in the book are indeed not directed to artificial, extemporaneous nor imaginary audiences.

To conclude, this interesting material raises a number of questions which, as English Language Teaching professionals, would be worth asking. Can the ELT community members bear in mind a bigger scale production of projects like *Raise Up*? Are public institutions prepared for the implementation of similar projects? Is the editorial market prepared and willing to carry on with projects of such nature? Is the proposal in this book methodologically, culturally, socially and economically feasible in all Latin American countries? Can an hegemonic language such as English be the vehicle for the establishment



of academic bonds of vicinity or autonomy in Latin America?

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## Book review

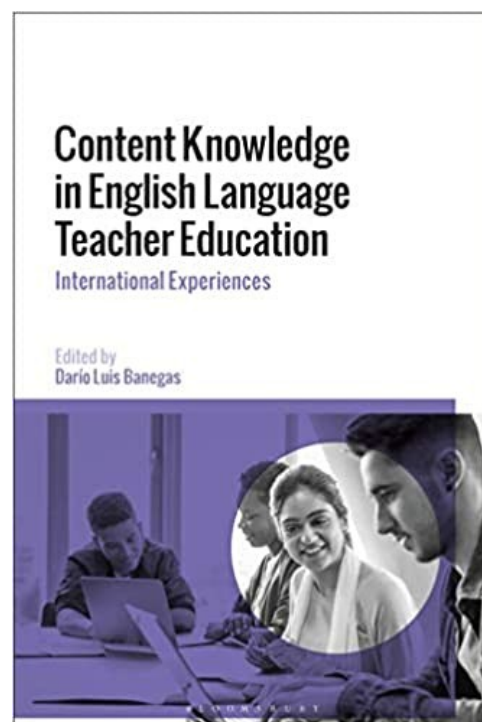
### **Content Knowledge in English Language Teacher Education**

Banegas, Darío Luis (ed.)  
Bloomsbury Academic, 2020  
London/New York  
288 pages  
ISBN-13: 978-1350084629  
ISBN-10: 135008462X

*Content Knowledge in English Language Teacher Education*, edited by Darío Luis Banegas and addressed to teacher educators, assumes that, depending on their circumstances, lecturers and tutors promote the construction of knowledge of and about the English language in ways which vary according to what they think relevant regarding what future teachers should know. Out of the three types of knowledge explored by teacher educators, namely content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and general pedagogical knowledge, this publication focuses on the former, and interrogates the way it is approached in English Language Teaching Education.

The authors brought together in this publication agree on defining content knowledge broadly, as possessing two dimensions engaged in a constant dialogue: the knowledge of English as a system and the ability to use English proficiently. Although most contributors approach the matter from the perspective of linguistics, all of them address this dialogue, therefore engaging in the exploration of English as a semiotic system and reflecting on how to improve English language proficiency among student-teachers. The theoretical backbone articulating all the contributions is clearly explained by Banegas in the Introduction to the book, a text which summarizes complex issues without ever simplifying them.

Readers will find fourteen chapters which reflect, describe or report on experiences which range from the teaching of History of the English Language to develop knowledge and proficiency (Ikeda, Chapter 1) to the incorporation of other languages in the classroom based on a module taught at an English Language Teacher Education programme (Schmitt,



Chapter 5), through considerations regarding the constraints and affordances of the curriculum (Güngör, Chapter 13).

Some chapters center on ways to improve proficiency, for example through an integrated scheme incorporating contents and skills learnt and developed by student-teachers in prior courses in order to foster linguistic, intercultural, academic and professional skills (Banfi, Chapter 10); by implementing a thematic module that allows students to explore current controversial issues to develop their competencies (Barahona and Benítez, Chapter 12); by incorporating cultural elements to a reading and writing workshop to raise cultural awareness and promote language learning (Soto and Ramírez, Chapter 14); by promoting the creation of writing portfolios to help student-teachers improve their writing and reflective skills (Saavedra Jeldres and Campos Espinoza, Chapter 11).

Some authors address prevalent approaches to the teaching of grammar and reflect on the implications of teaching formal or systemic-functional models (Anglada, Chapter 3) and on the importance of using corpora to show students authentic language use (Hardacre and Snow, Chapter 4). Others report on their experiences in teaching a number of units of study. Readers will learn about a graduate course introducing a functional model of language which is based on a systemic-functional language model, on pedagogy and on genre theory (Chappell, Chapter 2), about a module on world Englishes raising students' awareness of the number of varieties around the globe (Zhang and Wei, Chapter 6), about the teaching of pragmatics through different means, among them film (Heras, Chapter 7), about how teacher education programmes have approached the teaching of discourse analysis (Salas Serrano and Téllez Méndez, Chapter 8), and of phonetics and phonology (Blázquez, Espinosa and Labastía, Chapter 9).

We think this is a highly valuable book for teacher educators and curriculum designers. One of the assets of this publication is that it reports on experiences set in extremely diverse geographical settings, many of which are not generally addressed by international literature: Argentina, Australia, Chile, China, Ecuador, Japan, Mexico, Turkey, the United States. Not only does the book make an overt effort at representing different contexts and voices, but also invites teacher educators to continue reflecting on the issues it approaches by ending each chapter with a section titled "Questions for change", which aims at fostering interdisciplinary dialogues and collaboration with teacher educators in other parts of the world.

As Banegas states in the introduction, "content knowledge in ELTE poses challenges, debates and questions around the knowledge of and about the English language that EFL/ESL teachers need in order to carry out successful teaching practices." The fourteen accounts of institutional experiences regarding teacher education in different contexts offer brilliant insights into how teachers may make it possible for their students to acquire proficiency in language use and build knowledge about the language and its pedagogy as part of the same educational programme. No doubt this book makes a significant

contribution to discussions which, though dating way back, still spark heated arguments among educators.

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## Academic event report

### **Towards curriculum diversification in the training of English language teachers in Argentina**

Sponsored by the British Council Argentina, the three-day seminar ‘Towards curriculum diversification of English teaching at higher education in Argentina’ was held at



Universidad Nacional de La Plata from February 26 to 28, 2020. With more than 100 attendees from different educational institutions and provinces in Argentina and Mexico, the seminar focused on the potential contribution of language teaching to educational processes and the development of individuals, and also to the promotion of intercultural citizenship education. One plenary session, three in-person presentations, two local expert panels, and five expert screencasts approached intercultural education and curriculum diversification from different perspectives.

The opening session was in charge of professor Melina Porto and of the coordinator of the non-governmental organization ‘La Máquina de los Sueños’, Graciela Cavalieri. They shared some insights gained from the service-learning experience ‘Linking languages, cultures, and university students volunteering community work’, which took place during 2017-2018. The project connected English language learning in higher education and the community as volunteer students and teachers from Universidad Nacional de La Plata planned, designed and carried out workshops using multicultural literature in English for underserved children aged 8-12 in the local NGO located on the outskirts of La Plata. In the second morning session, Professor Anthony Liddicoat, from University of Warwick, presented ‘Planning for intercultural language teaching and learning in schools. His presentation focused on the need for a methodology that addresses the importance of teaching languages from an intercultural perspective. The underlying principle of this approach is based on the view that language and culture are intrinsically linked (Liddicoat, 2013), that being language proficient necessarily means understanding cultural differences and its implications, and that creating awareness about self and others may prevent cultural

misunderstandings from happening. In his view, since students cannot learn intercultural competence by themselves, teachers should consider that students study languages to communicate within a cultural context, which may differ from the learners' assumptions. This is why, from this perspective, language and culture teaching must be taught together from the beginning of the learning process.

In the afternoon session we were invited to watch a video presentation featuring Bernardette Holmes, director of *Speak to the Future*. In her lecture, 'Speaking to a global future: the role of languages and cultural agility in developing successful individuals, healthy economies and equitable societies,' she shared insights on the pivotal role languages play in the global market. From her point of view, while speaking English as the lingua franca to the knowledge economy, global research, international diplomacy and business will be of benefit to young people. It will not be enough to meet the requirements of the current labour force (Holmes, 2016). Thinking of the skills "global-born" generations will need, the expert reminds educational policy makers and societies that these young people are already part of a hipper-connected and diverse world. Holmes proposed to create language learning opportunities to equip young people with the competences they will need to face the highly skilled multilingual team recruitment.

The morning session of the second day opened with Professor Michael Byram (University of Durham), who delivered a video presentation on *Teaching for Intercultural and Democratic Citizenship: the Role of Language Teaching*. His presentation was organised under four main questions: the first was "Why democratic citizenship?" The second question made reference to the concept of intercultural citizenship, the third to the role of Foreign language Education, and finally he addressed ethical issues for teachers: the content of language teaching, the active role of the language teacher, language teacher identity and community action. The second speaker of the morning session was Leticia Yulita (University of East Anglia), who delivered an in-person presentation about *Language Pedagogy: Transitioning into Intercultural Citizenship Education in the University Sector*. This plenary explored what curriculum decolonization involved and reflected upon internationalization and internationalism, identity and critical cultural awareness. In the afternoon Professor Adrian Holliday (Canterbury Christ Church University) presented a video session, *DeCentring the relationship between learning language and learning culture*, where he focused on defining some concepts and ideas such as *global competence*, blocks and threads, the essentialist statement, hybridity, Third Space, interculturality and cultural formation, and cultural trajectories.

After that, ten local experts from different parts of Argentina were invited to share their insights about ways in which the curriculum could be diversified. The two panels integrated by Dr. Silvana Barboni from Universidad Nacional de La Plata who presented *Genesis for curriculum creation*, Cristina Mayol M.A., representing Universidad Nacional de Misiones and Federación Argentina de Asociaciones de Profesores de Inglés, shared her

vision on *The Ways FAAPI contributes to the Diversification of Curriculum at Teacher Education*, Lic. Estela Braun from Universidad Nacional de La Pampa presented *Social Justice in Teacher Education's Practicum*, Lic. Eugenia Carrión Cantón on behalf of Universidad Nacional de Tierra del Fuego AeIAS, Instituto Provincial de Educación Superior *Paulo Freire* and Ministerio de Educación, Cultura Ciencia y Tecnología de TDF AeIAS referred to *Social Justice as Part of the Curriculum at Teacher Education Level in TDF AeIAS*, Prof. Adriana Boffi from Universidad Nacional de La Plata focused on *CELU Spanish as a Foreign Language Exams as a Way of Diversifying Curriculum*. Griselda Beacon, M.A., from Buenos Aires city shared her presentation *A Small Narrative, a Yell in Silence*, Dr. Fabiana Sacchi on behalf of Universidad Nacional de Río Cuarto presented *A Research on Second Language Workshop and A Socio community Experience at Primary Level as Forms of Diversifying Curriculum at Teacher Education*, Susana Company M.A., from Universidad Católica de Salta, shared *Identity and Multiculturalism in English Speaking Discourse*, Lic. Ana María Gentile representing Universidad Nacional de La Plata shared *The place of French at University Level* and Prof. Ingrid Blank from Instituto de Formación Docente *Simón Bolívar* and Ministerio de Educación de Córdoba referred to *Challenges at Teacher Education Level in Córdoba*.

Opening the third day morning session, Ofelia García and Ricardo Otheguy lectured on '*Translanguaging*'. They presented and reflected on a case study and then interacted with the attendees, shared experiences, and replied to the audience's questions. While García replied from a pedagogical perspective, Otheguy supported the approach from Linguistics. They insisted on the importance of providing students with opportunities to make use of their full repertoire without being penalised if they are using their home language together with the language they are learning. The afternoon session opened with a video presentation by Professor Henry Kuchah Kuchah (University of Leeds) entitled *Towards an enhancement approach to language teacher education in challenging contexts*. He analysed two research projects about context appropriate language pedagogy in different settings in the Global South, focusing on research processes which attempt to develop a bottom up enhancement approach to teacher education. To close this three-day seminar, Dr. Darío Banegas (Strathclyde University) hosted a video session as a local expert where he shared his views of curriculum diversification at Teacher Education in Chubut, Argentina.

Since the ultimate goal of this seminar was to encourage the collaborative creation of a federal action plan to develop a curriculum that addresses these aspects, participants were invited to contribute in the after-seminar tasks. After each session, group discussions were facilitated to allow attendees to exchange their opinions about challenges such as curriculum diversification, social justice, gender, intercultural citizenship, and their concerns regarding ways of deconstructing the curriculum in Teacher Education. Many colleagues agreed that it is necessary to work more extensively mainly in three areas: Practicum, Academic Literacy and Applied Linguistics, which they think should be made into the core of Teacher



Education curriculum. Colleagues also reflected upon the inclusion of volunteering and community involvement projects in these Programmes, and on the need to research into Translanguaging and English as a Lingua Franca. We consider this was an invaluable opportunity to network and plan future possible actions.

The discussions held in this seminar cemented the idea that English teaching at higher education implies much more than providing opportunities for language learning for students to become teachers of English and aroused the interest of local and international experts, teacher educators, and students who were given an opportunity to participate, share and deepen their knowledge of the matter, as well as making their voices heard. Exceeding the linguistic boundaries, this seminar was a real celebration of Teacher Education Programmes as well as an opportunity to share, to learn and to reflect upon teaching practices which incorporate local cultures and develop intercultural and citizenship awareness. Additionally, the final goal of teachers working on a federal project under Dr. Porto's supervision provides teachers a framework in order to collaborate and think of a more inclusive proposal for language teaching in higher education.

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**CLIL. Content and Language Integrated Learning**

D. Coyle, P. Hood and D. Marsh

Cambridge

Cambridge University Press

2010

Pp. v + 173

ISBN 978-0-521-11298-7 (hbk): £54.50; US\$ 71.20

ISBN 978-0-521-13021-9 (pbk): £21.00; US\$ 25.91

ISBN 13:9780511740473 (Adobe e-reader): US \$71.00

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James (2009) argues that...

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Little (2006a) observes that...

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- Lantolf, J. (Ed.). (2000). *Sociocultural theory and second language learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Little, D. (1991). *Learner autonomy 1: Definitions, issues and problems*. Dublin: Authentik.
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### **What to submit and how**

1. You must submit the following documents:
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  - c. If applicable, you must submit tables and figures as separate files: submit tables as Word documents and figures/illustrations in TIFF format.

1. **With the exception of materials reviews, all other submissions (documents a-c above) must be sent to [ajaleditor@faapi.org.ar](mailto:ajaleditor@faapi.org.ar)**
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