VOL. 3(1) MARCH 2016

Journal of Language & Communication

jl&c

A Social Science Journal published by the
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, UPM

ISSN: 2289-649X

Journal of LANGUAGE & COMMUNICATION

VOL. 3(1) March 2016

A social science journal published by the
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia

ISSN: 2289-649X

EDITORIAL BOARD

ISSN: 2289-649X

Editorial Office

Journal Publication Office
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Publisher

The UPM Press
Universiti Putra Malaysia
43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
Tel: +603 8946 8855, 8946 8854
Fax: +603 8941 6172
penerbit@putra.upm.edu.my
URL: http://penerbit.upm.edu.my

Journal of Language and Communication
Vol. 3(1) March 2016

Contents

ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 1-12 (2016)

COMMODITY FETISHISM AND OBJECTIVE REALITY IN SAM SHEPARD'S *CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS*

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ABSTRACT
This article analyzes the class system in Sam Shepard's *Curse of the Starving Class*. Class system is scrutinized in terms of the capitalist and proletariat forces in the play. The core argumentative theme emphasises the degenerating labour opportunities in the socio-economic life of American individuals. In essence, the study mainly focuses on the achievement of economic welfare in a poor-economic society. The loss of economic welfare is not sufficiently obtained by the main characters, especially Wesley and Ella who long for economic prosperity and stable social life. These characters do not achieve their aspiration and do not make progressive economic labour. Therefore, the study accentuates the way in which these characters lose their work opportunities. The analysis of this economic loss is done by applying two Marxist concepts, namely, commodity fetishism, and the objective reality of economic societies. Together, these concepts uncover the class struggle in *Curse of the Starving Class.*

Keywords: capitalism, class system, human consciousness, Marxism, Shepard, society

INTRODUCTION
This article analyzes Shepard's *Curse of the Starving Class*. It mainly examines the play's various dialogues which reveal a conceptual appraisal of the theory of Marxism that is evident in Lukacs's focus on social class conflicts in industrial societies. The research also explores the inherent qualities of Lukacs's theory and its sequential Marxist traces in the play. Therefore, two major concepts are used in the course of the play's analysis, namely, commodity fetishism and the objective reality of economic societies.

The analysis encapsulates the forces which pave the way for the emergence of social classes and the dynamic stimuli underlying a scenario of developing social classes and their degeneration and replacement with new hopes and consciousness. This study of these forces is emphasised by applying the Marxist conceptual framework. This study analyses the economic forces involved and includes a comprehensive reading of the main characters who aspire to fulfil economic wealth by pursuing these forces. For this reason, the research tries to achieve two objectives 1) to examine the malicious reminiscences contorting the negative effects of economic struggle in a capitalist society, and 2) to identify the false American dream which is exemplified in the character's failure to achieve it.

The methodological framework, therefore, follows a textual analysis of the economic struggle in the capitalist society by analysing the main characters. Hence, a close reading of the characters' tendency to travel to different places reveals how they aspire to achieve economic wealth. They long for prosperity in terms of better economics.

Their purpose is to be sustained by monetary revenues which suit their social needs and status. Accordingly, this analysis focuses on their actions and ventures to improve their lives. Additionally, this analysis sheds new light on the characters' quest for such economic wealth, and how they fail to achieve it. Thus, the study argues that this failure is the main cause of the false American dream depicted in the play.

Material powers in *Curse of the Starving Class*

Shepard's *Curse of the Starving Class* (1978) is a well-known social drama that hinges on the story of a poor family living in a farmhouse. The family plans to sell the house to gain wealth in order to move to a bigger city. The main characters are the mother, Ella, Wesley, Emma, Taylor, Weston, and others who try to avoid their poverty-stricken life to be rich.

The play allows a revision and re-explanation of the past through the creative reestablishment of the historical cultural record. Shepard uses a reformulation of social-class accounts that move against the conventional restrictions of social milieus, revealing the existence of coercion and desire within broad structures of capitalist histories. This revelatory exercise is made suitable via a number of sociocultural writers, both men and women, who have investigated the manner in which the conventional capitalist dramatic structures of social classes often limit and ban social roles. In this regard, this study pursues additional capitalist dramatic arguments by various authors including deconstructive analyses of the social motifs offered by Marxist critics.

As a literary genre, dramatic conventions draw significance from their literary construction. Such construction requires certain textual modes which expose reality outside the text. Lukács, in "Art and Objective Truth" (1970), discusses this mode as referring to an objectivity embodying factual aspects of human consciousness in which an independent relation between life and reality exists. Lukács writes:"[the] basis for any correct cognition of reality, whether of nature or society, is the recognition of the objectivity of the external world, that is, its existence independent of human consciousness" (p.25).

In *Curse of the Starving Class*, Shepard makes a distinction between life and society in Ella's response to Wesley's enquiry about her interrogation of the police. Ella's condition is a real representation of what Lukács conceptualizes as an "immediate coincidence", where real-life situations and a social event take place simultaneously. In the quote below, she feels threatening imminent danger which makes her call the police instantly. This coincides with Wesley's wondering;

> Wesley: Did you call the cops?
> Ella: Last night?
> Wesley: Yeah.
> Ella: Sure I called the cops. Are you kidding? I was in danger of my life. I was being threatened. (p.136)

Affected by both social explanations of cultural politics and Marxist deconstructions of united capitalist authority, *Curse of the Starving Class* inspects the gender nature of social relations and discusses the dual antagonism between fantastic dreams and factual history. Largely utilizing the Marxist policies referred to above, Shepard's play, debatably, moves beyond an initial Marxist criticism of society and class interventions into capitalist's plans and pursues its project of mending individual histories and moving nearer to Marxism's view of socio-dramatic problems, becoming a representative instance of a creative merging of these two important late twentieth-

century concerns. By the same token, Lukács describes such social problems within a cultural framework of truth that concerns everything, but is "not to be found at the beginning but at the end ... truth is not the initial impression" (p.26). Additionally, truth can be formulated in terms of the general rehearsal of some concepts such as "judgement" and any relevant terminology via "generalization, the formulation of concepts (judgements, conclusions)" (p.27).

Wesley and Ella, again, confront a difficult social situation. They aspire to find a solution to this dilemma through personal insights. These insights, in Lukács's Marxist predilection, ensure a kind of objective fact which requires interference from other social groups (like the police in *Curse of the Starving Class*), and these groups will face such problems and find a resolution to them. Wesley and Ella talk further about the police. Their interaction is interrupted by a blurred understanding of each other as Ella's troubled and agitated feelings prevent her from getting along with Wesley who is concerned with food. This lack of understanding corresponds to the "truth" of their "independent" different feelings. As such, their feelings result from social forces that make them feel that way;

> Wesley: (still cleaning) It's humiliating to have the cops come to your own house. Makes me feel like we're someone else.
> Ella: (looking in refrigerator) There's no eggs but there's bacon and bread.
> Wesley: Makes me feel lonely. Like we're in trouble or something. (p.137)

Certain versions of American cultural realism set out from a more fanciful carnivalesque and fantastical aspiration to a surrealist convention of factual transfiguration, human restraint and figurative minimalism. Tyson (1999) treats all these cultural issues as social "ideology", which is a remarkable instance of the anti-real in a surrealist or intellectual strain. A most significant and desirable fact in capitalist communities is the tendency towards social groups' acceptance of each other. Tyson argues that "although almost any experience or field of study we can think of has an ideological component, not all ideologies are equally productive or desirable" (p.53).

In the case of *Curse of the Starving Class*, for example, Ella contemplates all the perfect social needs which the Thompson family satisfied when they came to America and achieved their American dream. This unattainable reality is to be found in Ella's aspirations to gain such a social position;

> Ella: All right then. The next thing is sanitary napkins. You don't want to buy them out of any old machine in any old gas station bathroom. I know they say "sanitized" on the package but they're a far cry from "sanitized." They're filth in fact they've been sitting around in those places for months. You don't know those quarters go into those machines. Those quarters carry germs. Those innocent looking silver quarters with Washington's head staring straight ahead. His handsome jaw jutting out spewing germs all over those napkins (p.139).

The functional nature of these dramatic tactics may vary independently, yet they share one component. In Modern Sociological Theory, Ritzer and Goodman (2008) argue that "economic determinism" is the dialectical nature of the ideological system in capitalist societies. Capitalist societies incorporate imagery of this "economic determinism". Ritzer and Goodman comment: "It was this imagery that led to the major

criticism of significantly oriented economic determinism – that it was untrue to the dialectical thrust" (140).

Socio-economic determination continuum

This "economic determinism" has become obvious in the articulation of a distinctive type of untrue consciousness, reasonably presumed by individuals in economic positions to conceal the actual nature of their beliefs. Their assimilation of a group of personal attitudes produces an entirely novel kind of dramatic discourse, one used in "Marxist" backgrounds and working at endless cross-purposes with the language that characters use in the play. This internal "individual" attitude is thought to be inappropriate with regard to the leading community economic periphery, a type of Marxist thinking that a person should have at least a superficial understanding of if that person wants to go about another person's conspicuous social ways of life.

By the same token, Lukács endorses the Hegelian category of mediation to substantiate his socio-economic conception, adapting the ideological view of capital. In this way, Lukács's (1971) idea of realism is inseparable from his early philosophical presupposition of form, which was developed in Tihanov's Heidelberg Aesthetics (1916–1918) where he argues that "Lukács presents a more elaborate, if not completely enthusiastic, case for a Hegelian understanding of culture as a possible alternative to Kantianism" (p.29). Accordingly, Lukács's doctrine of realism contains a certain tension between "the Hegelian postulate of the unity of content and form and the neo-Kantian prejudice that only form can upgrade content to essentiality" (p.42). This is the very principle by which Lukács regards realism as "a perennial trend in literature ... and a specific, historically determined mode of literary production" (p.108).

Lukács's deduction of Hegel's dialectical process in the social classes is articulated in *Curse of the Starving Class*. In the quote below, Ella and Wesley lead a very normal social life when they talk about their monotonous everyday existence. Yet, they later move on to a new social life as they change in a dialectical manner within their society;

> Ella: Well, you don't know what it's like. It's very tough. You don't have to make things worse for her.
> Wesley: (opening refrigerator and staring into it) I'm not. I'm opening up new possibilities for her. Now she'll have to do something else. It could change her whole direction in life. She'll look back and remember the day her brother pissed all over her charts and see that day as a turning point in her life.
> Ella: How do you figure?
> Wesley: Well, she's already decided to leave home. That's a beginning.
> Ella: (standing abruptly) She's too young to leave! And get out of that refrigerator! (143).

Here, Ella and Wesley negotiate the idea of leaving home. They have different attitudes towards leaving home. They embody our consideration of the ability of a person to switch back and forth between two different personal stands is frequently measured via social success, or merely survival. Yet, one ultimately arrives at a point where it becomes gradually more challenging to keep these attitudes at a distance, and they join faultlessly, encouraging the type of socio-economic binary vision to which Feenberg has referred. In Alternatives, Feenberg (1966) discusses Lukács's conceptualising of the construction of "Marxist cultural thought". In addition, such thought brings about a "dialectical" manner relevant to the development of a "social life". Feenberg comments;

> But most importantly because Lukács brought to bear on the problems which concerned him a formidable knowledge of Marxist thought and methodology, an understanding which could be built on for many years afterwards in the construction of a highly developed Marxist cultural thought. This contribution centers primarily around the connected ideas of Marxist dialectic, and a concept of the radically creative function of class consciousness in social life. (p.5)

One predominately explanatory instance of the split between personal and social discourse is presented in *Curse of the Starving Class*, where even the terribly self-aware Ella, who has no delusions about the dishonest nature of the capitalist milieu, is obliged to disclose certain reactions in a simulated interview staged by Wesley's wonderful reaction to Ella's fascination with Europe. This fascination comes from an inner personal longing for economic burgeoning. She feels confident about his fascination, especially her admiration of Grandfather's artistic heritage;

> Wesley: What's in Europe?
> Ella: They have everything in Europe. High art. Paintings. Castles. Buildings. Fancy food.
> Wesley: They got all that here
> Ella: Why aren't you sensitive like your Grandfather was? I always thought you were just like him, but you're not, are you?
> Wesley: No.
> Ella: Why aren't you? You're circumcised just like him. It's almost identical in fact. (p.144).

Consequently, Wesley and Ella long to imbue their traditions with personal experience, which they feel is a primary source of change, with the essence of a past whereby Europe has effectively expelled from the individual awareness of people's economic status. In Marxist Literary Theory, Eagleton (1989) contends that "realism" demonstrates a personal longing for change and prosperity. Individual wealth, therefore, springs from people's potential and progress: "The literature of realism, aiming at a truthful reflection of reality, must demonstrate both the concrete and abstract potentialities of human beings in extreme situations of this kind. A character's concrete potentiality once revealed his abstract potentialities will appear essentially inauthentic" (p.146).

Western economic materialism

The forceful expulsion of economic societies brings about an influence of scepticism that is analogous to that attempted by dramatic work. In so doing, the "material" world of socialist realism is made so distant from the real case that, in an inconsistent twist, it develops itself, producing a sense of monetary business which is part of the constructive economic mode of much of Western material culture. As Dewey (1934) puts it, in *Art as Experience*, that "intensified" personal "experience" is a vital agent to bridge the gap between society and people: "A primary task is thus imposed upon one who undertakes to write upon the philosophy of fine arts. This task is to restore the continuity between the refined and the intensified forms of experience that are works of art and everyday events, doings and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience" (p.3).

This specific incarnation of the individual spirit justifies Dewey's belief in "intensified forms of experience that are works of art and everyday events, doings and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience" (p.4), which is why society records its most influential presence in times of major personal thrift, when inspired people fight against trouble to envisage and articulate bankruptcy sufficiently beyond depiction. The "task is to restore the continuity between the refined and the intensified forms of experience" (p.6), hence Emma and Ella argue over the similarities of people in the same social class. They go against instilling a sombre note into their detached social meditations. In the long run, they agree that change is what is needed to escape from such dilemma;

> Emma: But we'd all be the same people.
> Ella: What's the matter with you? Why do you say things like that?
> Emma: Well, we would be.
> Ella: I do my best to try to make things right. To try to change things. To bring a little adventure into our lives and you go and reduce the whole thing to smithereens. (p.148)

The shift from historical to social realism in *Curse of the Starving Class* arises in a contextual dramatic construction and disappears through discourse, thus connecting the other ring of social encounters in the play, a portrait overlaid on the concurrent depiction of lately accomplished society. These discourses are utilized sparingly in the play, with a degree of divergence between the plain offences of contemporary history and the unfeasibility of demonstrating them sufficiently in a dramatic mode. This idea is emphasized in Kenneth O'Brien's (1969) The Sociology of Literature: George Lukacs, where he argues that social critiques represent a "gap" between social individuals and their reality: "But often the poetic critique of that society had an idealistic form, a realistic literature in idealistic gap" (p.141).

The boundaries between social reality and individuals are approached in the *Curse of the Starving Class*. The modes which the play presents blend a personal predilection towards prosperity and social advancement, which is rarely overtly pointed out, while a transition from one personal mode into another often passes unobserved, such as when Emma dreams of planning a trip. This occasional dramatic mode is interwoven faultlessly into the body of the realist dramatic recitation prior to it.

The blurry boundary between these two dramatic modes also separates the two kinds of personal attitudes towards departure. Emma's intentional plan conceptualizes an individual decision to change. However, Ella's intentions go along with a consciousness of the restrictions of human being, it is also a longing for the individual liberty that is offered within those restrictions. This second is the essence of this paper's hypothesis that the social outlook to life and the ideal dream of paradise motivate all fundamentalisms. The first is positively particular, distinctive and peculiar; the second is all-encompassing, daring and perpetual. In Commodity Fetishism and Domination: The contributions of Marx, Lukacs, Horkheimer, Adorno and Bourdieu, Lloyd (2008) proposes an idealistic return to the origins of individual socio-economic experience. He claims that individuals jeopardize their travel for social change. These changes exemplify the characters search for "commodity." Lloyd writes … "[to] return to the core concept of the commodity fetish will allow us to see the way in which Marx's original insight was developed into the social theories of Lukacs, Horkheimer, Adorno and Bourdieu" (p.1). A focus on commodity will also reveal how commodity itself is instrumental to the entire system of capitalism. It is of particular interest to determine the way in which commodity

contributes to reproduction of the status quo, what makes it so important and what maintains its prevalence in capitalist society (p.1).

Here, essential personal determination is about commodity. Individuals are solitary beneath the outward impression of having an economical purpose. A withdrawal into the world of social prosperity brings about change. This symbolic trend circulates around personal reluctance to challenge one's pantheistic difficulties and diagnose a burgeoning which is a fundamental part of the human situation. The symbolic character of individual dreams and the possibility of achieving them lie in the relation of man to a society of commodities. As such, he stands at the intersection of two integrally concomitant elucidations of presence, i.e. a world of dreams and a personal world where ideological moulds appear comprehensible. In the following quote, Emma and Ella talk about their individual dreams;

> Emma: I like cars. I like travel. I like the idea of people breaking down and I'm the only one who can help them get on the road again. It would be like being a magician. Just open up the hood and cast your magic spell.
> Ella: What are you dreaming for?
> Emma: I'm not dreaming now I was dreaming then. Right up to the point when I got the halter on. Then as soon as he took off I stopped. I stopped dreaming and saw myself being dragged through the mud. (p.149)

This is the sense that we derive from many dramatic texts, where sociality and individual interact. This is considered as two-edged an incident as anything else in an economic society: on the one hand, there is the commodity of delight at overt meaning; on the other, commodity is a way of seeking emancipation from the repressive clutch of dogma and unwavering views, as in the quote above. Nevertheless, it is damaging to the delusions that humans form to make sense of their social lives. In so doing, it discloses the sociability at the core of presence; and, in itself, it is a humanistic and cultural phenomenon. The concept of "fetish" is very close to the analysis of economic commodity. Korsch (1938), in Karl Marx, talks about the "reduction" of commodity to the simplest social quality. The liberation of "fundamental" power to determine social conditions can easily slip into a particular personal experience. Thus, there lies a final answer between social and human extremes which dominate individual chance and social influence;

> The fetish character of the commodity reduced to its simplest form consists in the fact that man's hand work assumes a peculiar quality which influences in a fundamental way the actual behavior of the persons concerned. It does not wield that remarkable power (as earlier economists had believed) by an eternal law of nature, yet it is endowed with such power under the particular social conditions prevailing in the present epoch of society (p.130).

Nowhere is the presence of social relations to individuals in the middle of bygone chaos better exposed than in *Curse of the Starving Class*, where the depressed returns as a vestige of the mysterious and the overpowering come to hang out the expurgated, orderly and securely expurgated in society. Taylor and Emma try to escape from their social boundaries in order to find better social conditions. Here, a genuinely insignificant experience spontaneously intermingles with intentionally mental and conventional

figures; the magic of a confirmed personality relies on money in a world which constitutes an ironic reworking of major individual experiences;

> Taylor: Well, he may have to. According to your mother he owes a great deal of money.
> Emma: To who? Who does he owe money to?
> Taylor: To everyone. He's in hock up to his ears. (p.154)

This personal tendency to pursue progress is echoed in Karl Marx's communist ideology. It is appropriate, and hence, in the convention of Marx's revolutionary reversal, it is the Devil who obliges modern individuals with the acknowledgment of super economic forces. In many senses, Marx's ideology can be seen as a social-realist context. This context and its manifold structures allow it to work on a number of levels simultaneously, as the disintegration of history and society, the ironic reordering of the social classes, and a concealed assessment of the modern communist environment.

As Shepard comments with regard to social realism in a social context, ironic distancing is a decisive characteristic of social-realist dramatic angles that integrate history, society and culture in a dramatic textile that habitually persists as a stage of disappearance when questioning the customs of which they are part. In the Western setting, it formulates a vital part of a sociological ironic feature of drama created in the West. Similar to commodity fetishism, as designated by Marxist critics with its material sense of cultural representation, it has roots in a social tradition that seeks to show and exploit the incompatibilities and fundamentalism of outlining systems. In *Curse of the Starving Class*, the dramatic structure is heightened while introducing a materialistic level that questions the relation between dramatic worlds and authorial perspectives. This is exemplified in Weston's following capitalized words;

> Weston: THERE'S NO MORE MIRACLES! NO MIRACLES TODAY! THEY'VE BEEN ALL USED UP! IT'S ONLY ME! MR. SLAVE LABORS HIMSELF COME HOME TO REPLENEISH THE EMPTY LARDER!
> Wesley: What're you yelling for? There's nobody here. (capitals in original) (p.157)

Weston is the incarnate of personal interaction with society. In this way, he feels that he is alienated from society because of labor forces which undermine his position as a human being. As he "yells" out this feeling, the dramatic strategies of the play's text are inclined to confuse audiences by putting them in marginal spaces of irresolution towards the characters. Weston's point of view is equally undecided, fluctuating between alienation and inferiority, connection and separation, and so on.

Individual alienation and cultural structures

Liminality and alienation thus depict the ideological structure of social-realist dramatic worlds and are manifested at a broad level, whenever a character assumes the idea of change as an unattainable position between coinciding limits of social and cultural spheres inside and outside dramatic texts. The numerous levels of alienation incorporated in these texts, in addition to their use of cultural structures and irony, terminate convictions and deflate anticipation, creating ratification and making agreement comprehensible.

In Marxist obsession, nonetheless, one can conceptualize trouble in shifting from one layer of ideologically contrived dramas of reality to another, where the inherent nature of reality is continually removed by constructs that serve as dramatic depiction. This is obvious in Wesley and Weston's discussion of anonymous land possession;

> Wesley: I didn't know you had land in the desert.
> Weston: Course I do. I got an acre and half out there.
> Wesley: You never told me.
> Weston: Why should I tell you? I told your mother.
> Wesley: She never told me.
> Weston: Aw, shut up, will ya'?
> Wesley: What kind of land is it?
> Weston: It's not what I expected, that's for sure.
> Wesley: What is it then?
> Weston: It's just not what I expected. Some guy came to the door selling land. So I bought some. (p.158)

The society itself, however, is part of the realistic representation of the play, it serves as an implicitly symbolic component in a drama in which actions seem to be released and regulated by unexpected economic power, instead of by the oddly lacking socio-ideological groups. The same unpredictable economic forces are approached by Loeffler (2003) in "The Subject and Social Theory Marx and Lukács on Hegel". Loeffler extrapolates the aforementioned notion thus: "the form of mediation constitutive of capitalism, in Marx's analysis, gives rise to a new form of social domination – one that subjects people to impersonal, increasingly rationalized structural imperatives and constraints. It is the domination of people by time. This temporal domination is real, not ghostly" (p.78).

The efforts at economically elucidating reality, such as no available labour opportunities for people, are weakened by its concurrent position as the projection of Weston's ecstatic mind and an experimentally present social individuality. Dramatically, this connotes both definition and ambiguity. It also serves as a cultural space in which the qualities of the real world intermingle spontaneously with those of social conditions which insistently find abstract similarity in the material construct of the community's labour;

> Weston: Put some a' that on it. (pauses a second, looks around) You know I was even thinkin' a' sellin' this place.
> Wesley: You were?
> Weston: Yeah. Don't tell your mother though.
> Wesley: I won't.
> Weston: Bank probably won't let me, but I was thinkin' I could sell it and buy some land down in Mexico. (p.159)

Living with ingenious forecasts of diverse places, Weston efficiently cancels the outcomes that he has planned for, given the factual reality of his present community. This is in contingent relation to Marx's concept of the "automatic subject". With this concept, Marx initiates an eminent "change" in the personality of social individuals in their communities. In Capital Vol. 1, Marx (1976) contends that: "it is constantly changing from one form into the other without becoming lost in this movement; it thus transforms itself into an automatic subject ... In truth, however, value is here the subject of a process

in which, while constantly assuming the form in turn of money and of commodities, it … valorizes itself" (p.255–256).

It matches the analogous, though contradictory, social movement in Shepard's *Curse of the Starving Class*, where Emma links her life to her times in order to expose the material relations of money. This, in turn, reveals her proletarian position in society. That being so, she and Taylor are haunted by the same capitalist feelings. As such, for them, the American dream gradually disintegrates. The ideological support and the sociological context are diverse; the recovering impulse is the same for both characters;

> Emma: Do you think she's making it with that guy?
> Wesley: Who, Taylor? How should I know?
> Emma: I think she is. She's after him for his money.
> Wesley: He's after our money. Why should she be after his? (p.160)

In other universes, social-realist attitudes frequently show a yearning to go back to a special milieu, a cultural setting, a remote, and isolated and singularise identity. This identity does not convince the public to believe in the intervention of society and materialism in the same way. In this sense, society may function as a symbolic region in which one's independence may be valued and endangered by outside interruption, a space of internal independence which equally corresponds to a common proletarian feeling which can eventually be a place where the weird monetary success of a spirit can take refuge. Lukács (1971a) examines the same idea in History and Class Consciousness. Yet, Lukács ascribes proletarian feelings to the concept of the abolition of capitalism. This concept nurtures a proletariat feeling, hence Lukács proposes: "this image of a frozen reality that nevertheless is caught up in an unremitting ghostly movement at once becomes meaningful when the reality is dissolved into the process of which man is the driving force" (p.181).

Again, this is evident in Shepard's play. In the play, both these proletarian feelings assimilate into Wesley and Emma's discussion about Taylor's possession of land. They live in the same time-space, one that has no link to their contemporary presence. However, beneath the pleasant fantasy lurks a lot of social loneliness and hopelessness. The withdrawal from the real world of fantastic wealth into a proletarian status is left intact by the progression of capitalism. That being so, capitalism is exposed as intensely challenging and, eventually, a hindrance to Emma and Wesley's dreams;

> Wesley: The house. You think it's Mr. and Mrs. America who're gonna'
> buy this place, but it's not. It's Taylor.
> Emma: He's a lawyer.
> Wesley: He works for an agency. Land development.
> Emma: So what?
> Wesley: So it means more than losing a house. It means losing a country.
> (p.162–163)

Against the proletarian universe of the real, individuals often find escape in fictionalized selves. Thus, Deutschmann (2010) imaginatively creates his "double" labour nexus of workers who possess all the attributes of the means of production but without any personal revenue. In this way, they wish to have the benefit of work but do not. The dramatic sense here is that Deutschmann proposes work power in relation to multiple social productive supplements, addressing that, other than within labour, workers wish to achieve personal profit but cannot. The reflected imageries that such replications project

are rebellious, as they display a self and, by extension, a world that could be; although the recognition of the proletarian self is regularly hindered, the likelihood that they engrave a resolute social reality exposes this reality's dissatisfaction with social problems like poverty, thus heralding the necessity of change. In "A Pragmatist Theory of Capitalism", Deutschmann (2010) discusses this idea further: "The universalization of the money-labour nexus means that workers and the means of production (including land) become separated from each other. Society divides itself into two classes, one owning the means of production, which now becomes capital, the other owning nothing except personal labour power" (p.94).

The device of "universalization" functions effectively to disclose the hidden side of a seemingly incoherent and singular reality in which individuals strive to change to another economic life. Here Wesley and Emma talks about the possibility of travelling to Alaska where Wesley hopes for a better business opportunity;

> Wesley: I'm not staying here forever.
> Emma: Where are you going?
> Wesley: I don't know. Alaska, maybe.
> Emma: Alaska?
> Wesley: Sure. Why not?
> Emma: What's in Alaska?
> Wesley: The frontier.
> Emma: Are you crazy? It's all frozen and full of rapers.
> Wesley: It's full of possibilities. It's undiscovered.
> Emma: Who wants to discover a bunch of ice? (p.163)

The play's status as social drama, however, is problematic. Wesley's decision to go to Alaska is a dark representation of the disappearance of the American dream. This is to imply that the dramatic construction is an examination or discussion of real-life situations. As we read the play, initially through comments ascribed to the characters, then through discussions attributed to other characters, we become aware that the two sides of the play do indeed have a basis in the socio-economic record. This gradual process of realization on the part of the reader is completed by the "frozen reality" proposed by Lukács for the "historical" and undersigned meaning of reality. Lukács (1971b), in "Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat", further develops this concept with a relation to bourgeois capitalism whereby "reality that nevertheless is caught up in an unremitting, ghostly movement at once becomes meaningful when the reality is dissolved into the process of which man is the driving force. This can be seen only from the standpoint of the proletariat because the meaning of these tendencies is the abolition of capitalism" (p.181).

CONCLUSION

In *Curse of the Starving Class*, Shepard portrays the socio-economic situation of American society at the time. The play depicts the cultural forces which demolish an individual's sense of the American dream. In so doing, he tackles one of the key threats to this conventional dream. In this paper, I have analysed the distortion of the American Dream caused by a public belief in the deteriorating labour possibilities in societies. Thus, a sort of capitalist materialist struggle develops, affecting American individuals and the surrounding economic forces. This struggle brings about the proletarian and capitalist social classes simultaneously.

A number of themes have been exposed in the light of economic power in *Curse of the Starving Class*. There has been an appraisal of the fictional characters' reciprocal dialogues about their ambitions and the possibility of achieving them. One of the major themes focuses on alienation of the individual. This alienation is caused by the absence of spiritual as well as material opportunities. Accordingly, the characters want prosperity and stability in a perfect and good life. The perfect places for their dreams are those American states which abound with labour and well-paid jobs. However, the apparent discrepancy between the characters' fanciful ambitions and the American Dream seems to be complex. This is because the American Dream is not available any more. Thus, this study has used Lukacs' concepts of commodity fetishism and objective reality to analyse such sense of alienation.

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ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 13-21 (2016)

EVALUATION OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS AT A MALAYSIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT
Communication among students from different nationalities who stay and study in multicultural university campuses is an important issue for their personal and academic lives. Among other concepts of communication, interpersonal communication which requires the direct interactions among communicators is important to be assessed. This study was carried out to assess the characteristics of interpersonal communication among international postgraduate students of a Malaysian public university. This study had 128 participants from 17 different countries, and the quantitative and qualitative methods were applied for the data collection procedure. Based on the results from this study, their stay and study in a multicultural university campus with students from various backgrounds helped the participants to have opportunities to interact with different people, and to gain some new personal and social skills and information. The results from this study confirmed that most of the participants of this study who were from different countries had daily interactions with students from other nationalities, and were comfortable and satisfied when interacting with their international peers. Based on the results, personal skill building was among the main reasons that encouraged the participants to leave their own countries and enroll at a multicultural university abroad. The results from this study may encourage university students to have more interactions with their peers and may also help researchers to focus on the related issues in the future.

Keywords: communication, interpersonal communication, international postgraduate students, Malaysian universities

INTRODUCTION
Interpersonal communication among university students from various nationalities helps them to exchange their views and experiences, and to know and help one another to have happier and successful personal and academic lives in the university campuses. Interpersonal communication refers to the direct interactions and discussions between at least two communicators who exchange their spoken messages with each other (Crowell, 2011; Dawson, 2008; Stewart, 2002). One of the main encouraging points for international students who prefer to enroll in the multicultural modern universities abroad is to gain some new personal and social skills. Thus, university time is the main opportunity for them to achieve their goals. Kim and McKay-Semmler (2013) argued that, communication is the main means that enables individuals to establish personal and social relationships. University students through their interactions can make international friends and establish multicultural social networks. Lin (2011) believes that

communication is one of the main requirements for individuals to understand one another, to learn, and to be fitted in the diverse environments. It is considered as an important skill to have contacts and to be connected with people from different backgrounds (Sinicrope, Norris & Watanabe, 2007). According to Reed (2008), university time is an important opportunity for students to decrease their stresses and improve the levels of their communication competence.

Interpersonal communication has important effects on personal and professional lives of individuals. Their daily interpersonal communication may help postgraduate students to develop the different parts of their personal and professional lives. As asserted by Paulk (2008), the skills to have successful interpersonal communication are the main pints of human progress and well performance in the different fields. Also, interpersonal communication is the fundamental step of human communication. According to Vevea (2011), interpersonal communication is the main step of communication and other aspects of communication were developed from the interpersonal communication field. Gao (2011) also believes that interpersonal communication is the main factor that help individuals to increase their public relationships.

Moreover, interpersonal communication among students from different nationalities helps them to have more academic successes and share their different academic experiences to tackle their university related problems. According to Mahoney, Cairns and Farmer (2003), their good interpersonal skills help university students to have good academic success. As interactions among students may have good effects on their personal and professional lives, thus they should consider their daily interactions as an important part of their daily lives, and they should try to be involved in daily interactions with their peers as much as they can. Also, their eagerness towards their involvements in the daily interactions with students from different countries may encourage them to have more interactions and gain more skills and information.

The arguments and statements of the cited scholars are all supportive of the effects of interpersonal communication on personal and social abilities and lives of individuals. This issue may be more important for international university students who are living out of their countries to study and gain some new skills. But, previous researchers mostly focused on the process of interactions in the western parts of the world. The communication filed and most of the works on this filed belong to the Western people, especially Americans and if other people want to know their own communicative situation, they have to work by themselves (Kim, 2007; Kim, 2012). Therefore, assessment of this issue may help university students and university managing bodies to pay more attention on the process of interpersonal communication among postgraduate students from different nationalities. Thus, this study aims to assess the characteristics of interpersonal communication among international postgraduate students of a Malaysian public university.

Theoretical support

This study was conducted under the guidance of the Contact Theory of Allport (1954). Allport (1954) grabbed the attention of scholars, researchers and policymakers in the social and intergroup contacts affairs by introducing of his Contact Theory in his famous book of (The Nature of Prejudice). Allport had stated his concerns and views about the peaceful and fruitful contacts among people from different racial and social backgrounds who were facing bias and conflicts in the societies. Based on his concerns and ideas, he introduced his framework for the development of a successful and undisturbed contacts and communication among different groups of people in his Contact Theory/Hypothesis (Aidoo, 2012).

The Contact Theory was used as a theoretical framework for different studies in the fields of human communication and social activities among people from various backgrounds for around half a century (Aidoo, 2012; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). According to Broad, Gonzalez and Ball (2013), Contact Theory of Allport (1954) is among the broadly cited works in the studies on contacts and communication among people from different backgrounds. Allport (1954) introduced the four main steps for the process of interpersonal and intergroup contact which starts with the sheer contact that leads into the competition, as a third step experience the accommodation and meets the last step which is assimilation. The steps and preconditions of the Contact Theory can support a study on interpersonal communication in an academic environment. Students from different social backgrounds when enrol in a multicultural university, and stay with individuals from different backgrounds, they may start some basic contacts when they face one another in the campus. Their basic contacts may help them to know one another and establish some social relationships. Also, their social contacts and relationships with their peers may help and encourage them to have durable interactions. Their daily interactions may help individuals in a multicultural collegiate environment to get familiar with the environment and adapt the existing social and communicative norms and conditions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

All types of communications among people begin with interpersonal interactions. Interpersonal interaction is the basic part of social contacts and connections among people (Kim, 2005; Kim, 2001). Also, daily interpersonal interactions among people help them to advance their social abilities. According to Kim (2001), interpersonal interactions among individuals from various backgrounds have positive effects on their functional strength and psychological well-being, and help them to be adjusted in the new environments. As argued by Gao (2011), interpersonal interaction among individuals living oversees are good opportunities to make friends and expand their social relationships.

Interpersonal communication includes the process of interactions among individuals through the use of verbal or non-verbal messages, and under the interpersonal context of communication, while the presence of communicators is preferred (Crowell, 2011; Dawson, 2008). Interpersonal communication is a continuing and durable process, not just an event or few events. All of the daily contacts, negotiations and discussions of students with their peers, roommates, classmates and other people are the examples of interpersonal communication (Crowell, 2011; Stewart, 2006; Dominick, 1999).

Interpersonal communication is one of the main parts of social lives of all human-beings. Some researchers (e.g. Gao, 2011; Aidoo, 2012; Abdulla, 2008) through their studies found that daily interactions among university students from different nationalities have important effects on their personal and university related lives. Based on the cited scholars, interpersonal communication as an important part of social lives of individuals, especially university students from various backgrounds has impacts on their daily lives. According to them, interactions among university students from various nationalities help them to know environments and overcome the environmental challenges.

Huang (2010) through the assessment of the relationship between American and Chinese students in some higher education institutions in the United Sates found that interpersonal interactions play important role on the daily university related lives of students regarding their personal and social issues. Based on the results of a study on interactions between American and Japanese students of some American higher education

institutions, Izumi (2010) found that personal characteristics of students have important effects on their daily interactions and daily lives when they stay and study abroad. These assertions and findings illustrate the important role of interactions among students on their personal and academic lives.

Wade (2008) also focuses on the effectiveness of the university time on students' lives to learn new things through their contacts with their peers and to develop their personal abilities. Also, Lusting and Koester (2006) believe that interpersonal interactions among individuals are important for their personal and social lives. Thus, assessment of the characteristics of interpersonal communication among university students in a Malaysian public university through an academic study may answer more questions and may add some new information for the Malaysian context of communication in the literature.

METHODOLOGY

Both of the quantitative and qualitative methods were used to conduct this study. The main method was the quantitative method and qualitative data used to support the quantitative data set. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), researchers use both of the quantitative and the qualitative methods as mixed method to well answer their research questions. The participants of this study were 128 postgraduate students of a Malaysian public university, namely University Malaysia Pahang. The participants belonged to 17 different countries with their M/SD scores of M = 180, SD = 15. From all participants, 100 of them were male and 28 others female. The participants were living in the international residential college of the university. From all participants, nine of them were interviewed for the qualitative section of this study as well. The quantitative instrument for the purpose of this manuscript included the demographic information and four questions which were adapted from Gao (2011). The questions were designed based on the Likert scale with five options per question from (Strongly disagree) to (Strongly agree). The convenience sampling was applied for the quantitative data collection and the qualitative interviews were directly conducted and audio taped based on personal agreements of the participants. The quantitative data were analyzed through the use of the essential tests of SPSS and the qualitative interviews were transcribed and categorized based on the research themes.

FINDINGS

The findings section includes the results from the quantitative and the qualitative data sets. The results from both of the quantitative and the qualitative sections are reported separately below. The quantitative findings include the results from the analyses of answers of the participants for the structured quantitative questionnaire, and the qualitative findings include the direct answers of the interviewees for the qualitative open-ended questions.

Quantitative findings

The descriptive test of SPSS was applied to find out the demographic details of the participants. Based on the results, from all participants, 100 (78.1%) of them were male postgraduate students, and 28 (21.9%) of them female. Also, from all participants, 73 (57%) of them were master students, and 55 (43%) of others PhD students. Table 1 below illustrates the demographic information of the participants.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participant

Item	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Gender				
Male	100	78.1	186.1	16.8
Female	28	21.9	193.6	14.9
Level of Education				
Master	73	57	186.1	15.7
PhD	55	43	188.9	17.1
Age Category				
22-27	57	44.5	184.3	16
28-33	45	35.2	189.7	17.9
34-39	13	10.2	195.4	8.5
40+	13	10.2	182	14

The characteristics of interpersonal communication among the participants were also analyzed through the descriptive test of the SPSS. Based on the results, the participants had most of their interactions with students from other nationalities, and also most of the participants reported that they had daily or at least many times per week interactions with students from different countries. According to the findings, the participants mostly satisfied when interacting with their peers from different countries. Table 2 below shows the results for the characteristics of interpersonal communication among the participants.

Table 2. The results of the characteristics of interpersonal communication

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Frequency of ICC with other students		
Almost everyday	24	18.8
A few times per week	15	11.7
Twice a week	19	14.8
Once a week	34	26.6
Less than once a week	35	27.3
Level of Satisfaction of participants from the ICC		
Very dissatisfied	4	3.1
Dissatisfied	8	6.2
Neutral	49	38.3
Satisfied	49	38.3
Very satisfied	18	14.1
Level of confidence of participants during ICC		
Very uncomfortable	1	.8
Uncomfortable	1	.8
Neutral	37	28.9
Comfortable	69	53.9
Very comfortable	20	15.6

Qualitative findings

The qualitative section of this study had nine participants from nine different countries. The participants were: 1) a PhD student from India, 2) a PhD student from Iran, 3) a Master student from Yemen, 4) a Master students from Ghana, 5) a Master student from Afghanistan, 6) a PhD student from Bangladesh, 7) a PhD student from Sudan, 8) a Master student from Algeria, and 9) a PhD student from Indonesia. The given numbers for the participants will be mentioned below instead of their personal information.

Based on the answers of almost all participants, they had daily interactions with their peers from different nationalities and their interactions helped them to gain some new personal and social skills, and have happier lives in the university campus. For example, participant 1 said that "PhD is an international degree and after PhD someone must be able and survive in the different countries. Thus, during my stay in the university campus and through my communication with students from Arab, Asian and African countries I learned many things and if I go and work in their countries, I am able and already I know how to interact with them." Also, as stated by participant 2 "This is something very interesting when talking with people from different cultures and we learn many interesting issues. Also we learn how to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds." Moreover, participant 3 told that "My interactions with other students were very useful for my social and academic lives. Thorough my interactions with students from different countries I gained the comfort and secured to go and work in their countries and interact with their people." Moreover, participant 4 said that "Obviously our contacts improve our personality and we learn many things from each other over involvements in interactions. Also, our interactions enable us to communicate with some good researchers and our interpersonal and intercultural interactions help us to establish some academic networks and personal relations with others." Based on the above mentioned views of the interviewees, their daily interactions with individuals from various backgrounds had important effects on their lives.

Furthermore, participant 5 said that "The main benefits of our interactions are to understand different cultures, customs and behaviours, and also the improvements of our academic lives and the levels of collaborations through our interactions." These views were supported by participant 6 as said "I learned many different social and academic skills from other students through our interactions during my stay at the university." Moreover, participant 8 also said that "We gained many academic benefits from our interactions as we help one another about particular software and exchange our books, we can learn more." These acknowledgments were supported by the views of participant 9 as said "Socially I feel some positive changes in my life. Also, our interactions help us to know about different cultures and different people and socially it's very helpful. But sometimes some students don't want to share their information and don't want to collaborate during the teamwork and these things are not interesting." As it was added "As all people we contact are academic people, thus we can learn many things from them and also we can improve our information and our general knowledge which are very important for our lives" participant 7. Based on the results from this section of the qualitative data, students can achieve different experiences and information through their interpersonal interactions with individuals from different cultures and countries.

DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to evaluate the characteristics of interpersonal communication among postgraduate students from different countries in a Malaysian public university. When international students leave their own countries to study abroad, they expect to gain some new personal and social skills. Their gatherings in the new collegiate environments enable them to interact with different people. Kim and McKay-Semmler (2013), and Lin (2011) focus on the importance of the university time for students to learn new things and to experience some positive changes in their personal and social lives. The results from this study confirmed that during their stay in the university campus the participants of this study had good opportunities to interact with students from other nationalities, and make

friends and learn new skills through their interactions. These findings are supportive of the assertions of the above mentioned scholars.

Based on the results, most of the participants had daily or many times per week interactions with students from different countries and they had the most parts of their interpersonal communication with other international students. According to the findings from this study, most of the participants satisfied and had good levels of personal confidence during their interactions with students from other nationalities. Their daily interactions helped them to improve their personal confidence and increase the levels of their satisfaction from their social lives at the university campus. These findings are supportive of the arguments of Reed (2008) and Paulk (2008) who emphasize on the important effects of daily interactions among university students on their personal and social lives.

According to the qualitative results, most of the participants of this study had regular interpersonal communication with other students and their gathering in a multicultural university campus helped them to have more opportunities to be involved in daily interactions with individuals from different countries. Based on the answers of the qualitative interviewees, their daily interactions helped them to gain some new skills, to improve the levels of their personal skills, and to have happier lives in the university campus. Based on their answers, the interviewees of this study considered their daily interactions as an important part of their university related lives.

As the previous works in the human communication filed mostly were conducted in the Western parts of the world, thus the results from this study and the findings from other studies on the same or similar issues in the Asian countries, especially Malaysia would be helpful for researches and educational organizations. Kim (2007) also focusing on the importance of the assessment of social and communicative norms and practices of different people by themselves. Moreover, the results from this study may add some new information in the literature based on the Malaysian context of communication. The results may also help researchers in the future to focus on the related issues and expand the information through their works.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Malaysia as an emerging hub of higher education would host thousands of international students from different countries in the future as well. Thus, assessment of the process of interactions among international student would remain as an important and attractive topic. Assessment of interactions among local and international students of Malaysia universities also would be interesting for researchers and readers. Researchers in the future can assess interactions among international undergraduate students, and also between local and international students of Malaysian universities. Researchers in the future can assess the ways and factors that affect interactions among international students, and between local and international students of Malaysian universities. Moreover, assessment of the same or similar issues in the different parts of Malaysia and in the different Malaysian higher education institutions may have different outcomes and results. Thus, researchers can evaluate the characteristics of interpersonal communication among international or between local and internal students in the different Malaysian universities.

CONCLUSION

This study was carried out to assess the characteristics of interpersonal communication among international postgraduate students of a Malaysian public university. The results from this study confirmed that there were good opportunities in the Malaysian multicultural university campus for international students to have daily interactions with students from various nationalities, and to improve their personal skills through these interactions. Based on the results from this study, their settlement in a multicultural university campus with students from different countries helped the participants to have regular interactions with other international students, and to gain some new skills and information. Also, their daily interactions helped the participants to have happier lives in the university campus.

Based on the results from this study, the main advantages of international postgraduate students who were enrolled in a Malaysian public university were the experience of interactions with students from various nationalities, and the achievement of some information about different social and communicative norms through their daily interactions. Their information about different people and different communicative and social norms may help international students to be more successful in their professional lives. The results from this study may encourage university students to have more interactions with students from different nationalities. However, more studies on the related issues may expand the information and enrich the literature.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was conducted by the sponsorship of University Malaysia Pahang under the Doctoral Scholarship Scheme (DSS). We are thankful to those anonymous reviewers who give their time to review this manuscript.

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ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 23-32 (2016)

An Insight of Marxist-Feminism in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*

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ABSTRACT
Marxist-Feminism highlights the unjustifiable inequality faced by the working class citizen. The effect is especially evidently shown on women who have been subjugated and oppressed in so many ways by men. This study addresses the issues of subjugation and subordination faced by Tess, the Victorian woman, in Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. The impact of cultural hegemony is carefully structured and presented by Marxist-Feminism. Such constructed ideology is brilliantly created to show the misleading superiority of men over women. The huge influence of Capitalism in the 19th Century is shown through the treatment women received in both public and private spheres. The active enrolments of women as Productive and Reproductive labours go unrecognised. Textual evidences are extracted to facilitate, support, and solidify the purpose of study.

Keywords: capitalism, hegemony, marginalization, Marxist-Feminism, subjugation, Victorian Era

INTRODUCTION
Marxist-feminism was first identified when inequality was detected in the society; class system was created among the people; and gaps in economy widens between the poor and the rich. Inequality in distribution of wealth among the people has an especially big impact on the women who suffer from double marginalisation – poverty and gender. Family background also plays an important role in determining the treatment a woman may get from the society. Living in poverty often associates women with low morality and lack of education. Education a woman receives will determine the level of her ability in appreciation of the finer things in life such as the beauty of languages, sewing, and playing musical instruments. Lack in such aspects will contribute to harsh societal judgments. Thus, women with no education are listed as brute and crude.

Furthermore, the fixation on virginity and sexual purity is heavily looked upon. The double-standard of sexual morality has long been established in the society. Women are treated and looked differently from men. The consequences of such unjust treatment lead to the theory of Marxist-Feminism that is the fight for women equality in economy.

Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1884) is known for its criticism of social constrains that the Victorian people had to endure. The authority and clergymen are seen to work closely with each other. They are the ones who set the class system in the society. Class conflict arises due to the systems set by the ruling class in accordance with their need to maintain or increase class conflict in order to remain in power. As for Tess, the heroine of the novel, she is rejected by her in-laws because she is of a poor background and works as a dairymaid whereas her in-laws are of the educated and well

respectable family. The fixation on virginity and sexual purity from Marxist Historical perspective justifies the rejection faced by Tess from her in-laws. People from the lower class are seen as the ones with low moral values or none at all. Tess's in-laws seem to practice such beliefs. Hardy is astute in highlighting the flaws he observed in the Victorian society. Social statuses are incredibly important during this era. The rich are often seen walking and talking to people of the same status. The poor, unfortunately, are left to admire the impossible. Marriage must also be done within the same social circle. The rich are not allowed to marry anyone from the lower class as their reputation in the society will be in jeopardy if their offspring marry someone of a different social class. Apart from that, the education one received also reflects the family background. The conflicts found in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* are deemed suitable to be processed and analysed by using Marxist-Feminism that is a direct causal connection between capitalism and the subordination of women.

Marxist-Feminism

The emergence of Marxist-Feminism dated back to late 80s. Benston (1969) and Peggy Morton are the founders and prominent figures in the fight against the issues regarding inequality amongst the people of different social classes and genders. Marxism per se carries its own ideology. Marxism documented a series of inequality faced by humans of all kinds. The retarded system formed by the people in power has ruined the image of the society. Marxism covers a relatively wide scope of related issues. Karl Marx believes everyone who was born in this world shares equal rights before God. No absolute person should overrule another person of a weaker background.

Rules were initially made to exert disciplines and order. Rules were made in the name of God, under a strict supervision and based on God's decrees and principles. Thus, everyone has to obey the rules with no exception to anyone. Needless to say, the temptation of greed and power blinds the ones who hold the ultimate authority of the constitution and law.

Slavery – a norm in the society whereby the masters (males) exudes their power over the slaves (females) in order to satisfy their sexual needs and to ensure procreation of the next heir or generation. The capitalist males, however, require loyalty and fidelity from a non-slave partner. In which, purity and moral values are placed on top of the list as priorities. Often, those who do not possess such innocence are labelled as whore or categorised in the lowest rank as the slaves.

Based on Marxist view, class is defined as production, appropriation and distribution of surplus labour. Therefore, economic processes will be involved. The economic "processes concerned with the production and distribution of goods and services" (Cassano, 2009). On the other hand, gender can be defined based the differences between male and females. As people are classified based on their class in the society, they are distinguished by their gender as well. The way, people contribute in economic process is relevant to their gender. As Mackenzie notes "gender constitution is a process implicated within a complex of productive and reproductive relations, and that women's position can be located in terms of the relation of production and reproduction at various moments in history" (Mackenzie, 1984). Therefore, patriarchy shows its power in household and distribution of power between men and women. Therefore, in Marxist-Feminism, the researcher intends to study the class processes, the gender processes and the interconnection between them.

The biological difference between men and women can ease the way to distribute power. As a result, different attributions are connected to each of these genders. The ideology that differentiates female and male is the focus of Marxist-Feminism. Gender process happens in all the conditions and situations. Even household chores, being a teacher, nurse and care taker are assigned to women. However, most of the outside jobs are assigned to men. Gender processes are decided by the class processes. As male and female contribute in production, appropriation and distribution of surplus labour can define their understanding of gender. Marxist-Feminism is formed in align to the sub-theories found in Marxism that supports equality as well as Feminism. Marxism is a strong pillar and the backbone of Feminism as they fight the same battle in retaining equality.

Tess, the fallen Victorian woman

The lack of education given to Tess and her immaturity lead her to self-destruction. Sexually-abused at a young age changes the mentality and emotion of such victims. The production of high self-defence mechanism due to such despicable incident has gradually transformed an innocent and free-spirited character to succumb to fear and shame. The insertion of Hardy's own voices in the novel solidifies the agreement made by the author himself. A young woman who was born as a white sheet and filled with purity falls due to lack of proper education and naivety. The morality of Tess magnifies through her innocence. The lack of exposure to the outer world makes her naïve in dealing with new people she meets. The functionality of real society differs from the system she has grown up with – the village. Harvey (2003) also points out;

> The Victorian middle class image of women was culturally controlled. They were denied political and economic power, and were expected to conform to the idea of separate spheres for men and women. (p.34)

In *Impact of Class on Life: A Marxist Study of Thomas Hardy's Novel Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Nazir (2013) points out exploitation of economy is the core factor that leads to the fall of Tess. The intervention of various parties and state authorities has caused the imbalance in the society. The changing and exchanging of different perspectives and mind-sets are the core relation to economy gaps. The implementation of such socio ideology creates a faux façade. The victims are more often than not the less fortunate and of uneducated background. The impact is such that the people who were not made aware of such implementation are forced to learn it through the hard way;

> [I]t does not seem to give them any real control over the kind of society or the nature of their economy that they might have preferred. In short the desire for ethnic or cultural autonomy is universal; the political means to satisfy that desire within the integrated world, market economy is not. Many, perhaps most, society have to be content with the mere appearance of autonomy. (Strange, 1996, p.6)

The capitalist society believes that men should be the chosen ones who hold, mould, and shape what believes to be the laws. Concerning the psyche of the Capitalists, we have to dig deeper into the history of England. The long monarch hierarchy is one of the factors that should be taken into consideration. The monarchy as well as the high standing profile figures who receive benefits and privileges. This, in return, causes the proletariats, middle working class people to have the want to be on par with the

mentioned people with ranks and titles given by the ruler. As a denotation to Elizabeth Cady Stanton's words, "Our laws and constitutions, our creeds and codes, and the custom of social life are all of masculine origin'?" (Schneir, 1996, p.28). A rightfully made set of laws would not create uproars. However, as we look into the history, people at the time were unsatisfied and helpless but to obey.

Marxist-Feminism aims to highlight and untangle the knot – injustice faced by fellow human beings. Marxist-Feminism necessitates the urge for changes in the 'advanced' society. Marxism and Feminism carry a similar vision – to banish social inequality. The combination of two very individualistic and strong criticisms could only mean one thing – strive for the betterment of the poorly treated people. According to Engels in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, he presents the outcome of his analysis as such;

> [W]omen are originally equal to, if not more powerful than, men in communal forms of production with matrilineal family organizations. Women lose power when private property comes into existence as a mode of production. Men's control of private property, and the ability thereby to generate a surplus, changes the family form to a patriarchal one where women, and often slaves, become the property of the father and husband. (Engels, 1972, p.63)

As presented, the connection between Marxism and Feminism is made stronger when two criticisms are combined. The reliance is such that both needs each other in order to send the intended messages across and to achieve their main goal – to create awareness to the people that the main reason of subjugation and oppression are the greed of the capitalists. The highlight should be on the domineering capitalists who hold the remote controller. Changes in law are necessary to keep them tightly secure in the place and to ensure they will always on hold to the power and highest authority in a society. Undeniably, agreed minor changes were performed between Marxist theory and Feminist theory to align with each different but rather similar principles. The idea of freeing people from the grasp of corrupted society and lead them to liberty gives endless hopes. Marxist Feminist puts the spotlight on the neglected and undervalued women, especially those who are in the workforce. Sexism are born out of the capitalist society and according to MacKinnon in *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*;

> There is a difference between a society in which sexism is expressed in the form of female infanticide and a society in which sexism is expressed in the form of unequal representation on the Central Committee. (MacKinnon, 1989, P.10)

Tess of the D'Urbervilles has been investigated through the lens of Feminism and Marxism separately by various scholars around the world. The combination of two prominent criticisms creates a thin perilous line – confusion. Marxism and Feminism are dangerously known to possess almost similar ideologies in these two different theories. In fact, Feminism and Marxism are interlinked in both real world and ideologies. The saying goes, 'money is the root to all evil'. The father and founder of Marxist theory, Karl Marx himself had witnessed the causes and consequences of inequality in the hierarchy of social classes in the society. The rich will always be on top oppressing the poor. Products yielded by presumably the poor and uneducated will be made as profits gained by the bourgeoisies.

> Double marginalisation faced by women in the 19th Century as well as the protagonist is evidently executed to which Tess utters to Angel: "But if it should reach the ears of your friends at Emminster that you are walking about like this with me, a milkmaid–" (Hardy, 2012, p.232)

The tone clearly depicts the acknowledgement Tess has of her humble background and occupation. The social gap between Tess and Angel halts Tess from accepting Angel as her husband. As far as the concerns goes, the Clares are placed amongst the high social standing figures. The conflict is such that preservation of the noble bloodlines is inevitable and necessary. Previously, the discussion highlights on the banishment of people who could no longer contribute to the landlords and the owners of the lands. Here, the conflict is to retain their heirs from making themselves seem crude and lower themselves to the level of on par with the people of no ranks. An excellent example would be;

> […] I do entreat you to endeavour to keep as much as possible in touch with moral ideals. Farming, of course, means roughing it externally; but high thinking may go with plain living, nevertheless. (Hardy, 2012, p.191)

The remarks made by Felix, Angel's brother clearly shows that he has observed differences in his brother and wishes his brother not to succumb to the thinking of lower ranked people. This is further supported by another observation made by his brother on him, they saw;

> He was getting to behave like a farmer; […]. The manner of the scholar had nearly disappeared; still the more the manner of the drawing-room young man. A prig would have said that he had lost culture, and a prude that he had become coarse. Such was the contagion of domiciliary fellowship with the Talbothays nymphs and swains. (Hardy, 2012, p.198)

The disagreement expresses Angel's brothers in seeing a degradation of himself to a farmer's rank. Marxist theory argues that the prevailed inequality in a society should be eradicated as humans are all the same in the eyes of God. Wealth, jobs opportunities, and educations should be distributed equally amongst the creatures of God. However, as shown above, evidently the two elder sons of the clergyman do not agree to that. "Angel's growing social ineptness worries the brothers. They wish to preserve their family dignity and social status by denigrating Angel's newly adapted body language and behaviour. By using Marxist-Feminist approach, we could see that sexism is never too far away from a man. The emphasis on the ladies' innocence and purity weight heavily. In *Why Are Women Oppressed*, Anna Jonasdottir quotes D.H Lawrence;

> Man is willing to accept woman as an equal, as a man in skirts, as an angel, a devil, a baby-face, a machine, an instrument, a bosom, a womb, a pair of legs, a servant, an encyclopaedia, an ideal or an obscenity; the only thing he won't accept her as is a human being, a real human being of the real sex. (Jonasdottir, 1994, P.31)

An object, a mere private property of men, the branding for women never cease. The case is made worse with the declination of a woman's origin and family background. In order to be highly valued by men, a woman need to be educated with qualifications as that of Mercy Chant, the deemed potential wife by Mr. and Mrs. Clare to their youngest son, Angel. In addition, the family social standing amongst the society is considerably important as well. As the observation goes, Angel who chooses to divert himself from the social stigma of being a social 'dogmatist' (Hardy, 2012, p.191). As far as the society is concerned, clergymen and people with power and authority are 'servants of corruption' (Hardy, 2012, p.384). They are seen to 'have escaped the pollutions of the world, are again entangled therein and overcome – whose latter end is worse than their beginning?' (Hardy, 2012, p.384). The new generations of people with money and high social rankings are proven to be the benefactors of the corrupted society. To bring back the equilibrium of humanity is to first eradicate the dead leaves of a plant. Angel is the by-product of the seed which society had planted. To which he expresses, "I wish half the women in England were as respectable as you." (Hardy, 2012, p.287).

The statement made by Angel shows Angel does not like nor would show interest on women with low morality. The hypocrisy is such that when Tess reveals the truth of her being "not what in a common parlance is called a lady" (Hardy, 2012, p.196), he loses the alleged claims he said himself to be. This shows that purity and innocence is an unspoken taboo yet highly demanded. Tess' charms and Angel's love are nothing when Angel realises the harsh reality is not acceptable in the society. Dignity of a man is far more important than having to understand the traumatic aftermath of the raping incident his wife had experienced. To which he says: "O, Tess – you are too, too – childish – unformed – crude, I suppose! I don't know what you are. You don't understand the law – you don't understand!" (Hardy, 2012, p.284).

The above expression by Angel displays the mortification Angel is going through. He is afraid of the judgements society would throw at him. His family name and dignity suddenly comes to him to be defended, as if marrying an improper lady is the cause of his family's downfall in the social standings. The emphasis of defending and retaining the high social status is beyond comparison in a capitalist society. The trepidation Angel feels whilst envisaging the degradation of his family in the social ladder which they had climbed so high and might fall any minute now as he has made a mistake of marrying an improper lady, 'a cottager's daughter' (p.196) as predicted by Tess: "[t]hey might feel it a hurt to their dignity." (p.232). In addition, the words uttered by Angel's father also plays a huge role in making Angel the more suffering and agonizing when he recalls he had indeed made a huge mistake by marrying Tess.

Readers could witness a remorseful Angel. He could maintain in his wealthy position, further his studies to the University and becomes a respectable clergyman rather than being an unnecessary complex situation like this. To which Angel articulates, "My position – is this, I thought – any man would have thought – that by giving up all ambition to win a wife with social standing, with fortune, with knowledge of the world, I should secure rustic unsophistication as surely as I should secure pink cheeks; but – […]" (Hardy, 2012, p.283);

> "This belief was confirmed by his experience of women, which, having a latterly been extended from the cultivated middle-class into the rural community, had taught him how much less was the intrinsic difference between the good and wise woman of one social stratum and the good and wise woman of another social stratum, than between the good and bad, the wise and the foolish, of the same stratum of class. (Hardy p. 197-198)

This statement highlights the importance of maintaining a high social status is far too great to be dismissed. The emphasis is too great to be bore, moreover, when it is the dignity of Clares that is at stake in Angel's hands.

The ailing society wishes to see the downfall of a woman. Women with no morality and purity are always up to their harsh judgments. Tess bears no such ill will to tarnish Angel's family and to degrade them in the societal ladder. The oppression posed on Tess is unbearable to the extent she needs to justify herself to Angel, saying, "I am only a peasant by position, not by nature!" The moment when she revealed her past to Angel, Angel has categorised and labeled her as a 'wicked' (p.284) woman though she tried to explain that she "was a child – a child when it happened! I knew nothing of men." (p.276). Needless to say, Angel being a patriarchal guy who was raised in a capitalist family chooses to explain that he did not think of Tess as a 'deceitful' woman (p.276).

Inequality is by no means applies to the social gaps between the higher ranked figures and lower ranked people, and vastly applies to woman who intends to be not only a reproductive labour in the private sphere of a home and family but a productive labour who could work to earn extra income to feed and support her family. To be looked down upon by the potential employer(s) seems to be a norm for women when it comes to requesting for a job. The same incident occurs to Tess when Mr. Crick 'surveyed her up and down.' (p.126). To which, Mr. Crick poses a rather provocative question, "Quite sure you can stand it? 'Tis comfortable enough here for rough folk; but we do not live in a cowcumber frame." (Hardy, 2012, p.126).

In accordance to Marxist Feminist theory, women are punished with oppressions in a capitalist society; due to her background as well as gender. When Tess has run out of allowances given by Angel, she could not ask for more from her in-laws. Firstly, it is due to the reluctance of Angel's family from meeting her on the wedding day. Thus, they have never saw her and could not phantom her appearance. The objection is clearly projected and lined to show the marriage does not gain approvals and nods from the Clares. Moreover, Tess understands that they could never give an approval to provide her with allowances due to the differences of their social standings. Upon seeing the fallen of Durbeyfield family, Alec D'Urbervilles offers help to Tess. Note that Alec offers his help as a way of 'repaying' (p.423) Tess for his past. To which Tess rejects it by saying, "I shall not come – I have plenty of money! At my father's in-law, if I ask for it." (p.423). But, knowing Tess well, Alec indifferently replies, "If you ask for it. But you won't, Tess; I know you; you'll never ask for it – you'll starve first." (p.423). The desperation of earning money to support her family and not rely on Alec forces her to search for a job to sustain. However, due to her gender, the farmer's wife accepts her under the condition – she has to accept lower priced salary: "Female field-labour was seldom offered now, and its cheapness made it profitable for tasks which women could perform as readily as men." (Hardy, 2012, p.337).

Marxist-Feminist fights for equality of womenfolk in both public and private spheres. Women were born and taught of enthralling herself to the man she loves. The notion that it has to have a limit often blurred out as men would not have allowed. Majority of the women are found to be the submissive of their husband-spouse as portrayed by Tess. She is a willing submissive to Alec. On two different occasions, Tess from the beginning has low confidence and self-esteem. She confesses that she is by-and-by 'not a – proper woman.' (p.422). The rampant and seem-to-be-normal norm of practised sexism is invalid at times. Women are oppressed to the state of not willing to fight but succumb to the norm as that of Tess. In an occasion with Alec, she apathetically says; "I will obey you like your wretched slave, even it is to lie down and die." (p.274). Meanwhile, in another occasion, she says; "[n]ow punish me! Whip me, crush me; you need not mind those people under the rick! I shall not cry out. Once victim, always victim – that's the law." (p.394). Clearly, this shows that Tess is aware of the biased set of laws that has arbitrarily states that men will always have the control over women and that nothing could be done to change it. Marxist Feminist chooses to highlight these issues as the embedded of such ideas is severely wrong to begin with. People are made equally despite differences in gender.

Objectification of women as private properties of men is seen as a norm in the 19th Century. Men hold the ultimate power and control over a woman's life. Just as what Alec has over Tess: "Remember, I was your master once! I will be your master again. If you are any man's wife you are mine." (Hardy, 2012, p.394).

In the extract above, Alec is found to have no hesitation to claim back Tess in his life. It is obvious evident that in the eyes of Alec, Tess is a mere object. Moreover, women are prone to blindly believe the ideologies that her husband believes in without questions to it. To which, Alec points out to Tess, "The fact is whatever your dear husband believed you accept, and whatever he rejected you reject, without the least inquiry or reasoning on your own part. That's just like you women. Your mind is enslaved to his." (Hardy, 2012, p.381).

CONCLUSION

The aforementioned Marxist-Feminism highlights the denotation of such ideology. The connotation at the mention of Marxist-Feminism is to create an equal and humane society. Human rights should be respected and protected despite the existing class system which threatens to widen the gap between the poor and the rich.

The notion that family status is closely related to the morality of a female is apprehensible but misleading. The female protagonist in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is portrayed as a country girl with no proper education and teaching provided to heighten her social standings. The result of her parents' negligence is the double marginalisation and oppression she had to suffer from throughout her lifetime. As delicately penned down by Hardy, she suffers from double marginalisation of being a female and born in an uneducated farmer family. The ignorance of general knowledge to protect herself from Alec comes subsequently with a greater consequence which she has to bear until her final day.

People of higher standings in the societal ladder carry preponderant influences. However, the sense of authority and in power was not used accordingly in the 19th Century. The given privileges were used to benefit their interests. The results are the prominent cruel treatments the poor had to endure silently without objections. Demonstrations and rallies on the streets was a rare sight and forbidden under the arbitrary laws set by the authority. The spinning wheel is such that the rich gets the profits

from the labours the poor poured in. Ultimately, Tess is the walking example and victim to such conditions. She wills herself to both reproductive and productive labours. She works under the harsh circumstances and weather to support herself when she runs out of the money provided by Angel. Evidently, it is her and her employer's last resorts. A win-win situation is enacted. However, Tess is an underpaid worker by her employer due to her gender.

Capitalism is a practice that is still prevalent in the 21st Century. Karl Marx is hailed from Russia, however, he beheld Capitalism as a disease that spares no country should no awareness could be raised. Generically speaking, human is created and born with senses and instincts to hunt and win over another species or own species for the worse. All is to preserve and secure their positions in the social standings. Today, the most prominent Capitalist country which leads the world is the United States of America.

On contradiction to the successful Capitalist country, countries which still practicing socialism are no longer shadowed by the stereotypical backward thinking. Admittedly, the equal distribution of wealth to all citizens guarantees a united force within the country. Only one leader is needed to rule the country, in an uncontested election. People who live in such country do not recognise the hardship of being poor or enjoyment of being rich. Generally, greed of power and money is not recognisable thus the peaceful and harmony human interactions and relationships in the society.

Democracy is honoured as an ideal ideology which technically could lead to less disputes and more equality. Countless of countries around the world tried to practise democracy, many unsuccessfully prosecuted. 'Money is the root to all evil' hits the bullseye. As found in many cases, money is deemed to mislead even the brightest human. A profound research finds that the greed of power and money could also lead to making lies after lies to cover the previous wrongdoings of corruptions, bribery or money laundering. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* portrays a similar plot and situation to the audience, whereby the core factor to disparity and gaps between the poor and rich is corruption. Misuse of the assigned authority leading the convicts to thinking it is their 'rights' to enjoy such 'privilege'. In *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, the despicable act of corruption and unlawful transactions between clergymen and unnamed authorities. To make matter worse, education is set as the benchmark from the beginning of the book. Tess is looked down due to her poor background and lack of wisdom in the intellectual field. It is thereinafter mentioned that only the rich are awarded the privilege to enter university. Such distinction has been created back in the 19th Century to preserve the lines of rich and honourable families.

The fact that the aforementioned issues are closely interlinked is not surprising as the issues have long lingered around us on daily basis. Audience need not travel back in time to witness such horrible occasion whereby female were oppressed due the lack of education and poor family backgrounds. It has come to our enlightenment that in the 21st Century, it is no longer the feminist activists who roam on the streets fighting for justice, creating awareness and to demand the equality rights, for both men and women. The educated, the less literate class, the poor and the rich, all walks of life come together as one to fight for equality for women. And, to do so the distribution of wealth in the economic sector should be fair. This is to close the wide gap between the rich and poor. The wider the gap the bigger the discrimination held to oppress. With the issues of class system and gender discrimination, morality comes close. As per discussed in the previous chapters, Tess is a good example to highlight the close relations between the trio. Money and education are the benchmarks for morality. In short, if you had none, you are of a no morale woman.

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ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 33-44 (2016)

POWER AND SOLIDARITY IN SOCIAL INTERACTIONS: A REVIEW OF SELECTED STUDIES

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ABSTRACT
Denoting power and creating solidarity in social interactions has always been a target for researchers due to their importance in shaping relations among interlocutors within the same linguistic and cultural community or across different languages and cultures. The present work is a critical review of some of these studies. These studies are divided, according to the type of informants and the languages they investigate, into four types: native informant, non-native informant, mixed informant and cross-cultural studies. The review shows that there are many accounts of power and solidarity within the same native culture using the mother tongue, while studies that target non-native informants, mixed informants or cross-cultural studies are very few. The study recommends more cross-cultural studies to be conducted as they give helpful insights for people who use languages other than their native tongues. The same is true about studies that target non-native and mixed informants which support the fact that all humans try to be polite and friendly, but use different strategies to achieve these goals. The study also recommends that socio-pragmatic studies should rely on quantitative and/or qualitative methods that support personal claims native speakers assume about their mother tongues.

Keywords: cross-cultural variations, culture, multi-lingual community, power, social interaction, solidarity

INTRODUCTION
It is widely believed that speech has great influence on the social life of individuals and whole communities. Thus, a lot of research effort has been devoted to analyzing what people say in their daily interactions and the linguistic choices they make to achieve communicative goals. Formentelli (2010) claims that while engaging in conversations, speakers consciously or unconsciously demonstrate their identities, their belonging to a certain culture or social community and their desire to come close or distance themselves from their addressees. Social relations among speakers and addressees are usually reflected in the way they talk to each other; of these relations are power and solidarity. Fasold (1990) as cited in Tannen (1993), states that since Brown and Gilman's (1960) pioneering study, and the subsequent works of Friedrich (1972) and Brown and Levinson (1987), power and solidarity have been fundamental concepts to sociolinguistic theory.

To give a definition of power and solidarity is not a difficult task, but the difficulty is to identify them in the actual interactions of interlocutors. Brown and Gilman (1960) state that in any conversation between two persons one of them is thought to have the power to control the talk and the behavior of the other person. They further claim that both speakers cannot have the same level of power in the interaction. According to Tannen (1990), power is associated with nonreciprocal forms of address. A speaker, for example, addresses another by a title or last name but is addressed by the first name.

Solidarity is associated with reciprocal forms of address. Both speakers address each other by title, last-name or first name.

Power usually indicates asymmetrical relationships where one speaker is subordinate to another, while solidarity indicates symmetrical relationships characterized by social equality and similarity. Those of solidarity distinguish relatively intimate relations from distant ones (Hudson, 1996). Dominance or power in a conversation is usually affected by several variables like; sex, status, age, and kinship relations which make power a non-inherited feature. Power circulates among participants in a conversation due to many reasons (Mendez & Garcia, 2012). Therefore, identifying power in a particular talk is not an easy task. Tannen and Kakava (1992) emphasize that the linguistic markers of power and solidarity are not only ambiguous, implying either power or solidarity, but are also polysemous as they may imply both at the same time.

Sequeiros (1997), cited in Mendez & Garcia (2012), illustrates that people perceive solidarity as a sporadic value that entails closeness with others. Solidarity, Xiaopei (2011) argues, implies a similarity and a degree of closeness and intimacy between people of equal power in the social order. Hence, solidarity is a relation which mostly indicates similarity or even sameness of prominent features in two or more persons. Mazid (2008) states that "the variety in solidarity may lie in the degree of intensity, or degree of solidarity, ranging from close intimacy to distant reserve" (p.10). Most theories of solidarity conceive it as a positive concept which brings benefits to group members and generates feelings of interconnectedness. Yet, some researches like Komter (2001) talk about negative aspects and consequences of solidarity.

Studies reviewed here differ in the type of informants they observe and the medium of interaction these informants use. Most of the studies related to power and solidarity are concerned with how native speakers reflect these two social relations in their interactions using their native language. A few other studies aim at comparing the techniques people from two different languages use to express power and solidarity relations. Another type of studies target communities of mixed informants who come from different parts of the world speaking different languages but live in the same community usually due to reasons such as pursuing an education. More challenging studies are the ones that examine power and solidarity in the interactions of people using English as a foreign language. The review conducted in this study will be organized based on the type of informants they target.

NATIVE INFORMANT STUDIES

Native-informants studies of power and solidarity are the studies that observe the linguistic behavior of people who use native tongue in their social interactions. The first native informant study was conducted by Tannen and Kakava (1992). The study analyzed expressions of agreement in the natural conversations tape-recorded in Athens as provided by two Greeks, man and a woman, and an American woman to show if these expressions could denote power or create solidarity among interlocutors. The study assumes that different people have different purposes and different styles of saying 'no'. Analysis of the three speakers' conversations showed that they exhibited different frames; they each had different purposes in the conversation and different styles of disagreeing.

The authors tried to create a link between expressions of disagreement and remarks of power and solidarity by focusing on two markers of solidarity, namely names or figurative kinship terms often in the diminutive form and personal analogy. The authors stressed the idea that power and solidarity are not paradoxical; they rather entail each other as they emerged in conversations. The analysis shows that although people

react differently when they have different opinions regarding something, they are not really very different. This is because of the use of markers of solidarity which keep people close to each other even when they disagree. Disagreement can be seen as a marker of solidarity even though people take opposing stands. With regard to gender differences, the study concluded that the male respondent gives advice in a direct way, while the female respondent gives advice indirectly.

Tannen and Kakava's (1992) contributed a lot to the literature of power and solidarity as it was an empirical study based on the analysis of spontaneous speech. The objective set at the very beginning of the study was partly achieved. The part related to markers of disagreement and their relation to power and solidarity was totally covered, while the part related to gender differences required further elaboration. The study relied on empirical work supported by personal claims and reflections the authors, specifically Kakava, had after a long history researching in this and other related fields. The markers of disagreement and advice and their relation with, and their influence on power and solidarity among interlocutors were discussed. This hypothesis was discussed fully and a clear conclusion was attained. The second hypothesis was related to the influence of gender on the way power markers are used to disagree and give advice. This hypothesis, however, was not dealt with comprehensively. It was touched upon here and there in a way that gave the impression that it was only a marginal aim. A very pertinent question to ask is, "why was the American woman included in the study as it was about Greek?" Perhaps, the authors wanted to test a very specific point which was 'disagreeing with a foreigner'.

Salifu (2010) suggests that the linguistic forms speakers use to address each other imply various social and cultural meanings such as the relations between participants and the attitude the speaker bears to the addressee. The author identified the key linguistic components in Dagbanli, the language spoken in Savelugu in Northern Ghana such as address forms: kinship terms, names and titles. He also discussed the social and cultural values related to each. Salifu also outlines the different ways in which these elements are combined not only for the purpose of identifying the addressee or referent, but also for communicating other social meanings and attitudes like politeness, power and solidarity. The author assumes that the speaker of Dagbanli has a set of linguistic choices to address one another. These linguistic choices are influenced by three main social variables: kinship terms, age and sex. These three variables construct hierarchal relations between interlocutors. These may be represented in the rights and privileges older people have over younger ones. The mode of address, the author believes, is an example of the linguistic forms that express such hierarchal relations.

The study identified some differentiations that Dagomba people should pay attention to; social hierarchy, age, sex, and status. In terms of sex, women are considered subordinate to men, while seniority in age entails a lot of prestige, respect and positive self-image. The third variable is status which refers to a position or office usually identified by a title which a person acquires or inherits and the possession of which entitles the holder to certain degrees of privilege and prestige. In verbal interaction, respect must be shown to those older than oneself and to those of higher status. The author claims that a child should be taught the most basic speech forms for starting a successful conversation: (1) greeting and (2) addressing or referring to older people appropriately. The author states that the name of an older or higher status person must be preceded by a kinship term whether speaker and addressee are kindred relations or not. An older person may, however, address a younger person by name only.

The author presents the theoretical framework that defines the main concepts related to the study starting with the social deixis that is concerned with those aspects of language structure that encode the social identities of participants, or the social relationships between them, or between one of them and persons and entities referred to. Then, the concept of politeness is introduced and linked with the face as the public self-image. This image is either positive or negative and are both used, consciously or unconsciously, in the conversation as the situation demands.

Names, the first form of address, are classified into two main types; traditional and Islamic. Traditional names are already found in the language of Dagomba, while Islamic names are derived from Arabic. Kinship terms are classified into superior kin which includes, among many, yaba (grandfather), (yab) paga (grandmother) ma (mother), ba (father), bakpema ('senior father', i.e. father's older brother/cousin). In Dagomba culture, any speaker who addresses any person who is older than he should use a kinship term in front of the name of the addressee such as mapira (junior mother/ mother's younger sister or cousin) and pirba (father's younger or older sister or cousin). Inferior kinship terms are used whenever the speaker is younger than the addressee. Such terms may include bia (son/daughter/nephew/niece), tuzo (younger brother/sister/cousin/).

The exceptional use of kinship and social terms to show respect has been also emphasized in other communities and cultures such as the Chinese and Japanese. You (2014) states that words expressing relationship, e.g. *father*, *aunt*, or position, e.g. *teacher*, *lecturer*, are used as address terms to show respect and/or signal the formality of the situation, for example, Mandarin Chinese: *baba qing chi*; Japanese: *sensei dozo*! The address forms of a language are arranged into a complex address system with its own rules which need to be acquired if a person wants to communicate appropriately. However, Salifu (2010) states that in the Dagomba culture kin terms can also be used to address non-related adults who are strangers to each other. Men address other adult strangers of both sexes as father's kin (bapira), whilst women address adult strangers as mother's kin (mapira).

The method adopted in Salifu (2010) is qualitative but mainly dependent on the researcher himself as he is a speaker of the Dagomba dialect. He also relies on personal interviews held with some families living in Dagbanli. Relying on personal claims and personal interviews may weaken the conclusions made in this study. However, this may be justified by the fact that such dialects do not have formal records written about them. The problem is stated at the very beginning of the study and the hypotheses are also presented in a straight forward manner. Yet, the procedures adopted in collecting and analyzing data are not very clear such as the way the researcher conducts the interviews and which claims are based on which interviews. However, the evidences provided are very effective in supporting the main argument raised in the study. These are sometimes linked with other evidences and that makes the argument more convincing.

The studies reviewed above focused on disagreement in Tannen and Kakava (1992), and forms of address in Salifu (2010). Both studies employed a qualitative approach in collecting data supported by researchers' personal perceptions. They both depended on observing and recording the linguistic behavior of informants; Salifu (2010) made use of interviews to support his personal claims while Tannen and Kakava (1992) transcribed all incidents of disagreement and accompany the transcription with word to word glosses. This difference may be ascribed to the different audience each study targets. The procedures of choosing informants in Tannen and Kakava (1992), and executing interviews in Salifu (2010) are both obscure and should have been explained in more detail.

NON-NATIVE INFORMANT STUDIES

Socio-pragmatic studies that investigate the linguistic behavior of interlocutors using the foreign or the second language are few in number. Mendez and Garcia's study (2012) is concerned with power and solidarity relations manifested by foreign learners of English in the classroom. The study is based on a critical discourse analysis referring to school students' power and solidarity relations in English as a foreign language in an elementary school in Bogota, Colombia. The study is inspired by Fairclough's (1989) statement on the possibility of dealing with power and solidarity relations in any context where people interact with each other regardless of the medium of discourse they use, native or non-native. The study claims that there are various techniques of exercising power and solidarity in the classroom. It also assumes that reproaches can be used to exercise, resist, and challenge power. Solidarity, on the other hand, can be represented by taking sides to protect colleagues in the class.

Mendez and Garcia (2012) made use of the learner-based approach they adopted in their teaching methodology in which the learner is the focus of the educational process. Keeping the eye on students as generators of power and solidarity gave researchers the chance to recognize them as persons as well as learners. The study's focus was on (1) finding the way power and solidarity dynamics occur in the classroom when students work in groups and on (2) detecting the effect of power and solidarity in directing the class and modifying its development.

The informants targeted in the study included a class of 34 students from the fifth grade. Half of the informants belonged to low and middle-income households and the other half to high income households. After establishing procedures of data analysis, the subjects were video-recorded while working together. These procedures were later used in analyzing video-recordings in order to arrive at certain interpretations. These interpretations were validated by interviewing students and asking them for explanations for certain actions and behaviors. The study investigated two different types of relations; students-students and students-teacher relations. In each type of relation, the techniques of showing power and solidarity are different. It was observed that some of the characteristics of the students' power, among others, had to do with discipline, responsibility, fellowship, resistance, reproach, and silence. Teachers represent the dominant party in a class, yet students assume positions of power when they work together. In most events, good students exert power in the class; though in some other cases silent students assume positions of power in front of colleagues, since a student who keeps silent forces others to speak. Teachers usually express power via the reproaches they use inside the classroom, while students use reproaches to complain about others' performance and behavior. This technique can also be used by students to show solidarity with the teachers. A student, for example, might tell the teacher that his colleague had not done his/her homework, had not participated in a task, etc. Students also show their solidarity with their teammates when grouped together to perform a certain task.

Senowarsito (2013) examines strategies used by teacher and students in two 90 minute English lessons in a senior high school in Indonesia to show politeness. The data were video-recorded from two classroom settings where English was the object and the medium of teaching. Data was analyzed in terms of Brown and Levinson's politeness Theory. As in Mendez and Garcia (2012) classroom interaction is by large dominated by the teacher to instruct, explain, appreciate, encourage, and respond to students' questions. Due to students' limited linguistic competence, their interaction was basically to respond to teachers' questions and instructions. The study showed that various positive, negative and on record strategies have been identified in the discourse sued by teachers and students in classroom interaction.

Students tend to use some interpersonal function markers and linguistic expressions that include addressing, encouraging, thanking, apologizing, and leave–taking as well as some other non-verbal expressions. Social distance created by age difference and institutional setting is still prominent in classroom interactions. To be polite, teachers employ strategies such as reducing the threat of face using group identity markers and expressions of sympathy, showing respect and establishing a close relationship. Similarly to reduce power, teachers try to appreciate students' participation and use indirect speech acts and solidarity makers. Imperative expressions teachers give are often softened by the expression 'please'.

Both studies explored teachers' and students' linguistic strategies used in classroom interactions indicating that teachers usually represent the powerful side in the class, yet teachers often try to create close relations with their students. Actually, the English language becomes an object of learning, rather than a medium of communication in the English lesson. The focus is often on the linguistic and semantic features of the language instead of the pragmatic features. Teachers rarely pay attention to the pragmatic issues of language use. Consequently, students are still unaware of these issues and their pragmatic abilities still lag behind.

MIXED INFORMANT STUDIES

Mixed informant studies target communities in which people who come from various linguistic backgrounds speak the same language. Formentelli's (2010) targets mixed informants, who come from different countries and speak different languages but study together in an academic setting, namely the University of Reading, and use English as the medium of instruction. This study deals with verbal and the non-verbal patterns of address, the use of nominal and prenominal forms, the level of formality shown by students and teachers, and the influence of hierarchical relations on the frequency of certain address strategies. Hickey and Stewart (2005); Helmbrecht (2003) refer to the unusual system of address forms in English which makes it different from other European languages. Accordingly, power and solidarity are not expressed on a binary address system based on T/V pronouns.

The data collection methodology used relies basically on a nine month field research during which the corpus was collected. It includes observing the linguistic behavior of participants and semi-structured interviews conducted with 26 informants, 18 students and 8 teachers and video-recording of lessons. Observation was useful in detecting the categories of forms used in interactions and to form hypotheses about the variables and mechanisms framing the phenomenon of address.

The study found that a reciprocal usage of formal address forms indicating distance has not been identified by participants or reported in video-recordings. The mutual use of informal address forms denoting familiarity was not as frequent as was expected and illustrated in previous models and described as marked by subjects. Although some students evaluate reciprocal informal address as a motivating factor as it helps create a suitable atmosphere for studying and collaborating with their lecturers, the majority still prefer to use formal strategies as a way to show respect. This is shown frequently in the address forms used by first year students. They feel more at ease in employing the non-reciprocal use of address forms highly employed at secondary schools. Lecturers show different opinions with regard to the use of reciprocal informal address, as some encourage the use of first name for students, while others emphasize the necessity of signaling boundaries.

The study also finds that differences in power regulate the choice and distribution of address forms in the academic setting. Formal forms of address are used to address the more powerful party, while informal strategies are used with less powerful addressees. Furthermore, the change to reciprocal informal vocatives is initiated by the powerful side and never by the less powerful. Interestingly, the findings of this study show different linguistic behavior from the ones described over the last decades for American academic settings. The British speakers are keener on keeping the asymmetrical distribution of address forms and consider reciprocal informal strategy as a marked choice.

Yet, the study does not make use of the chance of having a mixed community that encompasses students coming from different parts of the world to dig deeper for possible differences in the use of address forms during classroom interaction. It would have been so tremendous if the researcher had kept an eye on the ways natives and non-natives used address forms in classroom interactions and try to identify whether students who belong to different cultures made efforts to assimilate into the new academic setting or stick to their linguistic and social habits. No reference is made to instances of code-switching that is very popular in communities where more than one language is present though code-switching is one of the ways that denote power or create solidarity in multilingual communities (Walker, 2011).

Sliwa and Johansson (2014) examine the effects of evaluations of non-native speaking staff's spoken English in international business settings. The study proposes a sociolinguistic perspective of power and variations in linguistically miscellaneous establishments in an Anglophone environment. The study proposes a critical consideration of language and power in these establishments via concentrating on verbal language use in a diverse linguistic setting in which English is the official medium of interaction. The study employs a qualitative approach, namely an interpretive approach, where reflexive analysis of the researchers' responses to the participants' spoken English are offered. Sliwa and Johansson (2014) implicate that managers need to comprehend the relation between English language used by native and non-native speakers and power and inequalities in their organizations. Evaluations made by non-native listeners and speakers encompass several non-linguistic factors which may deepen disparities among staff and eventually lead to conflicts and rejections. Such conflicts and rejections will possibly result in negative impacts on the organization. Creating a linguistically inclusive climate inside the organization requires the development of corporate policies and processes which overtly address language attitudes and the use of language.

Following Giles and Marlow's (2011), the study employs direct interviews to construct the research design. Altogether, 54 semi-structured interviews were conducted between March-September 2012 with foreign academics working at 19 business schools in the UK. Participants were either recruited from university websites or through the researchers' direct contact with these participants. Several criteria such as L1 background and the type of work occupied were considered in the selection of participants. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data were analyzed in a reflexive manner starting by reading and coding respective transcripts to identify the ways participants used to account for events and emotions related to the use of English. Transcripts were later shared and discussed by researchers. A framework that can account for non-native speakers' use of English, in addition to evaluations was used. The process of data analysis and interpretation required sequential and repeated series of shifting between the empirical data, the thematized material and the theoretical notions utilized.

The study is a call for international business researchers to conduct further studies of the relationship between language use, power and inequalities in organizations. Understanding the meaning and dynamics of such categories of diversity has significant

implications for managing power relations and inequalities in organizations operating in the international business environment. By contrast to a situation where the lack of linguistic solidarity between speakers leads to negative evaluations of non-native speakers and to the construction and perpetuation of organizational inequalities, where linguistic similarities are perceived, such negative evaluations do not arise. Through adopting the sociolinguistic framework of status, solidarity and dynamism, the interdisciplinarity of international business research was extended to demonstrate how concepts and ideas developed by sociolinguistic research can help understanding phenomena occurring in contemporary multicultural and multilingual organizations. The study recommends that organizations arrange regular staff training courses on the influences of language used by managers and employees in creating a more linguistically inclusive environment.

The research design was basically based on recorded interviews which could have been preceded by a questionnaire that tells something about what informants believe in and actually do in their interactions. Moreover, native speakers' evaluations were not included as a source of data; hence, discussing the judgments about non-native speakers' use of language made by standard speakers was not attempted. Speakers' and listeners' evaluations made with regard to interactions where the same speakers and listeners engaged were unfortunately not considered.

It is obvious from the two studies reviewed above that managing multilingual diversity through a focus on finding a common language does not inevitably generate an integrative outcome (Piekkari, Vaara, Tienari & Säntti, 2005). Yet, profounder understanding of the language used by people who come from different linguistic backgrounds and work or study in the same setting can be helpful in creating a more productive and friendly environment in which conflicts and prejudices can be avoided.

CROSS CULTURAL STUDIES

Misic (2004) refers to the significance of cross-cultural studies by claiming that there are rules for polite acceptance or refusal, greetings, conversation topics, forms of address, in all societies but these rules differ cross-culturally. Thus, a certain linguistic behavior is acceptable or even desirable in a certain society but is inappropriate or even taboo in another. These differences may seem totally random but are actually closely connected with different social values and attitudes of different societies. In spite of the importance of cross-cultural studies, very few researches have investigated power and solidarity relations in two different cultures looking for possible similarities between the two.

Spencer-Oatey (1997) is a cross cultural study that deals with people's conceptions of an unequal role relationship in two different types of cultures: a high power distance society and a low power one. The study employs a mixed, qualitative and quantitative, method that bases its investigation on a questionnaire and interviews. 166 British and 168 Chinese tutors and postgraduate students in three different British universities and different tertiary institutions in Beijing and Shanghai were asked to respond to a questionnaire which aims at investigating their conceptions of degrees of power differential and social solidarity in this role relationship. Results hinted to a significant nationality effect for both aspects. Chinese participants judged the relationship to be closer and having a greater power differential than the British respondents did. Written comments on the questionnaire and interviews with 9 Chinese with experience of both British and Chinese academic environments confirmed the statistical findings. The comments stated that there are major ideological differences related to the differing conceptions.

The study results are discussed in terms of Western and Asian concepts of leadership, and differing perspectives on the compatibility/incompatibility of power and solidarity. With regard to power, the study follows Pye's (1985) and Wetzel's (1993) which refer to the contrast between Asian and Western concepts of power. These two studies point out that in the West; power is usually linked negatively with authoritarianism, whereas in Asia it is often linked positively with kindness and supportiveness.

The study has a great degree of authenticity as it depends on a mixed method which makes use of statistics, comments and interviews. Practically speaking, the study adds to the body of knowledge about cross-cultural differences and their effects on social relations. The findings of the study are of great benefit to people from Britain and China in particular as it informs them of the differences between British and Chinese communities which may be problematic for interlocutors in a cross-cultural encounter. The only thing that the researcher could have done extra is to find British people to interview besides the nine Chinese interviewed and ask them to give comments.

Bargiela, Boz, Gokzadze, Hamza, Mills, and Rukhadze (2003) investigate the way ethnocentricism, and in particular anglocentrism, informs certain linguistic strategies in cross-cultural interactions between British and American speakers and speakers of English from other countries. The authors assume that for many British and American speakers, informality is considered as an indicator of ease of communication and solidarity with strangers. In British and American societies, there is a tendency to move towards first name basis as quickly as possible as it is a politeness strategy. Yet, in other language groups, such strategy may be regarded as impolite. The study also investigates strategies of politeness and distance used in English, Italian, Arabic and Georgian along with the various strategies of naming used in different countries and their effect on social relations.

The data analyzed in this study were collected from previous literature about the subject and the personal claims and assumptions each of the authors has about his native language. No recordings, interviews or questionnaire were conducted to collect data for analysis. Yet, the conclusions attained seem reasonable and well supported by a sufficient number of examples. The study concludes that British and American speakers of English should reconsider the assumption that involvement politeness strategies are perceived by people from different cultural backgrounds in opposite ways rather than the one intended. Calling others by their first name, for example, is regarded as a sign of friendliness and solidarity in communities like the British or Georgian. However, it is a sign of deference and over-familiarity in other communities like the Arabs and Russians, especially when social variables such as age, status and gender are not regarded.

Therefore, great attention should be directed to the appropriateness of address forms in cross-cultural interactions. Social variables like age, education, status, gender, etc. should also be taken care of not only in cross-cultural interactions but also in local interactions in which the interlocutors are supposed to be equal (Salzman, 1993). The researchers also conclude, following Fraser (1990), that each society has a specific set of social traditions, including more or less explicit rules that judge a certain behavior, a state of affairs, or a way of thinking, governing polite behavior. Being polite definitely means to show respect or solidarity towards your partner and to avoid offending him. Linguistic strategies used to show politeness are formulated within different social and cultural backgrounds; thus, the ways solidarity is shown by interlocutors could be more or less different based on these social and cultural backgrounds.

The interesting thing about the two cross-cultural studies reviewed above is that they look for possible differences among various languages and cultures that should be considered in any cross-cultural encounter to avoid misunderstanding. The first study targets two different cultures, while the second is more comprehensive as it targets five different cultures. The first study, however, seems more objective than the second since it relies on qualitative and quantitative data collection. The second study relies entirely on personal claims made by the five authors who belong to the five cultures. Yet, the study findings from the second study are well supported by examples which may give the study the trait of objectiveness and reliability.

CONCLUSION

Socio-pragmatic studies are among the most interesting undertakings as they take care of the language people use to address each other in preserving social relations and respecting cultural values of the community they live in. Socio-pragmatic competence entails more than just linguistic and lexical knowledge. It entails that the speaker has the ability to vary speech in accordance with the situational or social values present (Harlow, 1990). People are always obsessed with the desire to be as friendly as possible to gain the favor of their addressees. That is why speakers are very careful with what they say to and how they address others. The studies above are all endeavors to investigate the social and cultural implications contained in different people's speech. More research efforts may be needed to investigate similar aspects of other societies in order to provide linguists with the raw material needed to understand the way people talk to each other and the communicative goals they want to achieve.

Cross-cultural studies are strongly required as they give a broader idea of the linguistic choices people from different cultures make in similar social settings. Studies that attempt to examine that behavior in mixed informant communities are also recommended, as they can show how people who belong to different cultures linguistically behave when they are in the same setting. Instances of code-switching in mixed environments can be a way of showing power and solidarity inside the classroom and that would very interesting to examine. The review presented here indicates the need for conducting more socio-pragmatic studies that investigate various social relations in interactions where people use foreign or second languages. More cross-cultural studies that look for possible similarities and differences in the way people from different cultures perceive social relations and express them are also needed. Cross-cultural studies, in which informants from different cultures use non-native language such as English for example, are also lacking in the literature.

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ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 45-60 (2016)

THE EFFECTS OF FACEBOOK ADVERTISEMENTS ON THE WORKING ADULT'S PURCHASING BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT
Effectiveness of advertising on Facebook has been a constant debate among scholars with contradicting opinions. Subsequently, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of Facebook advertisements in driving awareness and sales conversions among the consumers. By using Hierarchy of effects theory framework, this study further analyzed on the factors that influence consumer's purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements. Among the factors examined in this study were, consumer's awareness towards advertisements placed at home page, profile page, fan page and group page that they are member of. Besides, characteristics of Facebook advertisements such as format; color; interactivity; reliability and relevancy of Facebook advertisements in affecting consumer's purchasing behavior were also studied. A quantitative research method was utilized by using a survey method. Systematic sampling method was used on 415 respondents, who were the working adults in Klang Valley. Data was collected using survey questionnaire. The findings of this study revealed that, though consumers were aware of Facebook advertisements placed on their Newsfeed wall, however they do not click on the advertisements or proceed with purchases due to the security and privacy reasons. Therefore, this study further concludes that, by having a group pages that are targeted besides ensuring the relevancy of the Facebook advertisement to the target audience, advertisers could increase users' preference towards advertised products or services and subsequently influence their purchasing decisions.

Keywords: awareness of Facebook advertisements, characteristics of Facebook advertisements, Facebook, online purchasing behavior

INTRODUCTION
Advertising has been Facebook's main revenue stream since its origin, and it was believed that, the year 2010 as the year companies opened up significant new revenue streams, in which one of those was the virtual currency. Other than that, e-commerce was also believed to generate revenue to Facebook through a cut of sales from any person or company that sells some products or services within Facebook (e-Marketer, 2011). Adding more, eMarketer, (2013) had estimated that Facebook's total revenue would have reached 6 billion by January 2013 with 1.7 billion coming from the mobile platform.

Whereas in Malaysia, Facebook is also seen as a platform for advertising and marketing in which David (2015) reported that, there are 10.4 million Facebook users in Malaysia. Furthermore, in a recent article, it was reported that almost half of Malaysian Internet users have identified Facebook as their favorite social platform, with more than 8.7 million users accessing Facebook via their smartphones on a daily basis (Waxman &

Li, 2015). Furthermore, there were also some forecast claimed that, the number of total Internet users in Malaysia would hit 25 million and the total social media penetration would be close to 80% by the year 2015 (Singapore Management University, 2012). According to Miranda (2010), these social media users create a "media" network that could garner more reach and engagement, which are more potential than the largest newspapers or TV channels in the country. Therefore, social media is always seen as a huge challenge to traditional media owners in Malaysia. Nevertheless, some of the traditional media owners in Malaysia can be obviously seen as adopting this medium faster than others to capture the shifting advertising ringgit.

Although Facebook is frequently claimed to be the most effective medium to do direct or tailored targeting, and a huge sum of money is being invested into the medium by the advertisers worldwide, the actual effectiveness of the advertisements placed on the platform, whether on the home page, profile page or any specific fan pages are still questionable (Fue, Li & Wenyu, 2010; Louise, Gayle & July, 2010). In fact, scholars like Dand (2010), had questioned Facebook advertisement's effectiveness by claiming that it has very low inventory of advertisements, which causes the media owners to cycle through the limited number of available but irrelevant advertisements to the consumers despite its irrelevancy. This resulted in Facebook advertisements to be perceived as lesser effective than other advertising options like paid search or contextual advertisements on traditional sites.

Null (2013) conducted a study to test the effectiveness of Facebook advertisements in driving awareness and engagement among the target audience. However it was found that, despite heavy awareness or high number impressions gained from advertising on Facebook, Null merely received 25 clicks, which resulted in a click through rates as low as 0.01%. Hence, at the end of his study, Null questioned the effectiveness of the advertisements on Facebook in driving awareness as well as purchasing behavior due to its high number of reach or impressions but poor click through rates.

Teixeira (2014) had also reasoned that consumers might spend less attention to advertisements due to the advertisements clutter as they are exposed to many advertisements at the same time on a daily basis. Besides, distrust could be another reason for advertisements being ignored as consumers had lost faith on the truthfulness of the advertising messages. Furthermore, user's short attention span and media proliferation could also be another potential reason for them to ignore the advertisements. Stelzner (2015) has also reported that, out of the total marketers who advertise on Facebook, only 45% of them agreed that their marketing efforts yield benefits, whereas the remaining 55% of the marketers either do not know or acknowledged that their marketing efforts are not working.

However Loomer (2014a) on the other hand, claimed that with better advertisement features that are currently available such a lookalike audiences, and website custom audiences filtering features, marketers could do more relevant targeting that could yield positive click-through rates as well as online sales. This was further supported by, scholars like Lafferty (2014) who also claimed that, it is still effective to invest on Facebook advertising, as it is cost effective as compared to other advertisements on the Internet.

Furthermore Gustin (2012) claimed that, certain types of advertisements formats on Facebook works better for some marketers than others do. He also claimed that Facebook advertisements formats such as color and creative elements do contribute to its effectiveness in driving consumer's awareness and purchasing behavior. Moreover in terms of the online users in Malaysia, it was reported that, even though the total Internet

users who make purchases via online sites had tripled since the year 2007, however the factor of online security was still among the top concern with 7 out of 10 online shoppers expressing their hesitations in spending on online transactions due to the poor online security (Shaun, 2011). According to Karamjit Singh (2013), Malaysians are ten years away as they are still reluctant to buy through online. He also stated that, Malaysians right now would only buy online if they could not get the item at a brick and mortar store in Malaysia or only if it is cheaper to purchase via online than offline.

Theories and conceptual background

This study examined two hypotheses based on the Hierarchy of Effects Theory developed by Lavidge and Steiner in 1961. This theory explains the ways in which target audiences process and use information from an advertisement to decide on a product or a brand of choice (Schmalensee, 1983 as cited in Barry & Howard, 1990). According to Barry & Howard, (1990) audience of an advertisement and other marketing communications respond to those messages in a very ordered ways, which are (1) Cognitively (thinking); (2) affectively (feeling) and (3) conatively (doing). Cognitive responses are the outcome of thinking about what is happening, and affective responses are the result of an emotional reaction to the stimulus while conative or behavioral responses result in consequent actions. Besides, they also suggested advertising as a long-term investment because of its impact that is long-term in nature.

In their study, Lavidge and Steiner (1961) denied consumers jumping directly from a stage of disinterest to the stage of convinced purchasers. The scholars claimed that consumers go through a series of 7 stages before making any purchases, which are from unawareness of a product or service's existence; awareness of a product or service's existence; knowledge of what the product has to offer; favorite attitude toward the advertisement; favorable attitude to the point of preferring one brand to the other; desire to buy as well as making conviction that the purchase would be wise and finally followed by the actual purchase. Lavidge and Steiner (1961) also added that these seven steps were not necessarily instigating each other, but consumers could walk through several steps concurrently. Besides, the consumer's psychological or economical commitment would also play importance on consumer's succession to the final step, which is making the final purchase. They also added that higher committed purchases would take a longer duration to go through the funnel.

Consumer's awareness of Facebook advertisements and purchasing behavior

A standard Facebook advertisement relies on a gathered social action by users on Facebook to deliver more accurate and targeted advertising. These homepage advertisement can be further classified into three different categories, which are: a) homepage advertisements, b) homepage advertisements with social context (social impressions), and c) organic impressions. Homepage advertisements appear either as an advertisement space or as a sponsored content on the right column of the News Feed Wall while a social impression, on the other hand, refers to homepage advertisements with social context that includes the names of the user's friends who had become a fan of a specific brand.

On the other hand, organic impressions refer to "social stories" about user's friends who have become a fan of a specific brand (Gibs, 2010). In a study conducted by Gibs (2010), these three different types of standard Facebook advertisements were reported to have high impact on consumer's advertisement recall, awareness and purchase intentions. Besides, the users who were exposed to both the paid advertisements and the

organic impressions were described to remember the advertisements three times better than the users who were only exposed to the paid homepage advertisements.

According to Dan (2014), Facebook's newsfeed advertisements are highly effective in creating awareness. He also claimed that Facebook newsfeed wall has 44 times higher click-through-rates and five times more conversion rates than right-hand side advertisements. This is because, newsfeed wall advertisements which is a form of native advertising does not interrupt the flow or the user's attention with a pop-up banner, banner or pre-roll video but instead make the advertisements feel like part of the user's Facebook interface usage experience. Therefore, he noted that consumers will most likely notice the advertisement and will not ignore it. However, Corey (2014) on the other hand conducted a Google Analytics test to gauge the effectiveness of Facebook advertisements and concluded that, right-hand column advertisements as very effective in driving clicks and contributing towards consumer's awareness towards a product or an advertised brand. He also added that users who clicked on the right-hand column advertisements were clearly more interested in the product advertised and spent more time on the product's page.

In an article published by Paytronix (2011), social media impressions have been defined into four types namely, brand-to-fan impressions; fan-to- Facebook friend impressions; fan-to-fan impressions and fan-to-brand impressions. Brand-to-fan impressions can be defined as the post initiated by the brand on their fan page, which is viewed by the fans of the brand on both their newsfeed as well as on the page itself. Fan-to-Facebook friend's impressions on the other hand, can be defined as fan's activity (post and comments) on the brand's fan page that is published on the fan's personal page. Fan-to-fan impressions on the other hand, can be defined as the activities such as comment, likes and shares among the group of friends who are fans of a brand's fan page. Lastly, fan-to-brand impressions can be defined as the act of a fan initiating a post on the brand's fan page.

In terms of the effectiveness of Facebook fan page in driving sales, Paytronix concluded that, an advertiser or brand which foster a productive social network that allows nurturing of the fan's affinity towards the brand, would be able to create organic brand advocates who will influence the purchasing behavior of their friends and family using this medium. In a nutshell this study concludes that, the longer time spent on this medium besides influential online recommendation, advertisements on the fan pages would influence consumer's perceptions towards a brand as well as their purchasing behavior.

According to Carr (2013), the closer user get to making a purchase, the more they tend to rely on the "dark social network", to get more personal advice on a respective product or service that they are about to purchase from their close friends and family members via Facebook. Besides in a study conducted by Comscore it was also found that, friends of fan's whom saw the 'earned messages" about their friends liking and interacting with a page converted more by 19% as compared to controlled group of friends that were not exposed to the earned messages (McBride, 2012). This indicates that, the actual interaction with the brand on Facebook plays an important role as well. It was reported that 35% of fans on Facebook, like a fan page because they want to take part in all the contests organized by the brand or the advertiser while 42% of the fans like a fan page to get coupon or discount from the brand (Cooper, 2013).

According to Marolt (2014), having consistent interactions with fans via the Facebook fan page enables fans to see a post posted by the brand or advertiser organically on their news feed wall. Besides, the more fans interact with a brand, the more "stories" or "earned impressions" that will be created on the fans' friends page. Adding more,

having the fans constantly engaging with a brand via Facebook fan page will send a signal to Facebook's algorithm showing that, the brand is sharing quality content and this enables the Facebook fan page in getting higher ranking. Hence, more contents will be transmitted to the fans. This will be useful to the brand or the advertiser as 92% of the Facebook users trust earned media such as word-of-mouth and recommendations from their family and friends than other forms of advertising (Marolt, 2014). Based on the findings from the past research, this present study assumes the following hypothesis:

Hypotheses 1: Awareness of advertisements on Facebook shows a significant relationship with consumer's purchasing behavior

Characteristics of Facebook advertisements and purchasing behavior

Though there are many standard features of Facebook advertisements that are available to the marketers, however in a study conducted by Marketing Charts in 2008 on 5,022 respondents, it was found that newer forms of advertising such as advertisements that uses sounds and video, widgets, in-game advertising were claimed to create more awareness among the users on Facebook. Specifically, Facebook gifts and branded applications were proposed as highly effective among the adults aged between 18-24 years old.

There are various types of Facebook advertisement formats such as right-hand column advertisement; newsfeed advertisement; Facebook video advertisement; photo advertisement; multi-product advertisement; local advertisement; offer advertisement; event advertisement; retargeting advertisement as well as the boosted post, which could fit into both right hand column advertisement and the news feed wall post (Sibley, 2015). These different formats of advertisements were claimed to drive more user engagement with the brand, which ensure better click through rates and interaction with the brand or advertiser. Furthermore, these various formats of advertisements were reported to influence the consumers cognitively and are claimed to be more effective in terms of creating high advertisement noticeability and advertisement recall. The high advertisement recall is said to create the top of mind on specific brands, hence influence consumers' decisions during purchases. Besides, to further boost the advertisement's performance, on June 24th 2015, Facebook launched its right-hand column advertisement in a bigger size than the previous advertisement. This bigger advertisement size, which will be placed on the user's newsfeed page is claimed as able to capture audience's attention better than before besides enticing them to click on the advertisement (Loomer, 2014b).

In a study conducted by Evans & Epstein (2010), it was concluded that sponsored content on Facebook is best suited to drive engagement among the users besides creating awareness and positive associations with a brand. However, it was also reported in the study that brand that has a profile or fan page on Facebook that allows the user to become fans has higher tendency of converting sales besides acquiring loyal fans. Moreover, the advertisement on Facebook in the format of a banner was also reported to play a great role in driving purchasing intentions among the users.

According to Wishpond (2013), a colorful background of an advertisement on Facebook is proposed as highly effective in getting the attentions of the users, as it can stand out among Facebook's dull pale blue border. The author also added that by adding contrast and bright colors to the advertisement, an advertiser could make the advertisement works better in driving more clicks. Furthermore, scholars like Vreeland (2013), also claimed that using images that contain bright, vibrant and attractive color on Facebook are more pleasing to the eye and get noticed better as compared to advertisements with pale colors. Besides, the Facebook post with photo are also claimed

to potentially getting 120% more engagement than the average post, while photo album in a fan page gets 180% more engagement from the fans (Cooper, 2013).

Nonetheless, regardless of using unique characteristics of Facebook advertisement such as formats, color and interactivity to lure the consumer's attention, it was reported that an advertiser had to ensure that the content of the advertisement is informative and relevant enough because advertisements with irrelevant messages that are perceived as annoying, has the highest tendency of not being clicked and ignored by the users (Kim, Kang, Kim, Reeves & Moon, 2010). Facebook partnered with data mining companies to collect and generate data based on user's past purchasing behavior; applications downloaded and surveys completed for better targeting capability. This enables users on Facebook are targeted based on their social behavior and interests (Loomer, 2014c). As such, the present study draws the following hypothesis:

Hypotheses 2: Characteristics of Facebook advertisements shows a significant relationship with consumer's purchasing behavior.

Besides, the present study was also conducted to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of awareness towards advertisements on Facebook among the respondents?
2. What is the relationship between awareness of the advertisements on Facebook with consumer's purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements?
3. What is the relationship between the characteristics of Facebook advertisements and consumer's purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements?
4. What is the relationship between the most contributing factors with consumer's purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements?

METHODOLOGY

A survey was conducted and 415 completed questionnaires were collected. The respondents of this study were working adults in Klang Valley who have an account with Facebook. This study only included working adults to ensure that the respondents are not financially restricted which may influence the purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements. Respondents were chosen through systematic sampling. The researcher has determined 415 respondents for the precision of ± 5% as the sample size to represent the average monthly Facebook unique visitors in Klang Valley, which are 5,600,000 (Advertisements Manager, 2015). Each respondent was given 20 minutes to fill in the survey forms.

The demographic information provided by the respondents included age, gender, ethnic and education. The majority of the respondents of this study were young working adults aged between 20-31 years old (78.1%). In this study, 42.9% of the respondents were male while the remaining 57.1% were female.

Table 1. The demographic profile of the respondents (n=415)

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Age Group (n=392)		
20-25 years old	101	25.8
26-31 years old	205	52.3
32-37 years old	58	14.8
38-43 years old	18	4.6
44-49 years old	6	1.5
50-55 years old	4	1.0
Gender (n=415)		
Male	178	42.9
Female	237	57.1
Ethnicity (n=415)		
Malay	216	52.1
Chinese	106	25.5
Indian	85	20.5
Others	8	1.9

Respondents were mainly Malays (52.1%), followed by Chinese (25.5%) and Indians (20.5%). Most of the respondents held degree as their highest education qualification (56.4%) followed by Diploma (29.7%) and Master's Degree (11.8%). Respondents were mainly from the middle-income group with the majority of them earning a monthly household income of less than RM 9,999 (76.2%). A competitive number of respondents do not own a credit card (53.3%). However, most of the respondents agreed to have making online transaction through online banking (65.1%).

Table 2. The demographic profile of the respondents (n=415)

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Highest Education Level (n=415)		
SPM	1	0.2
STPM	6	1.4
Diploma	123	29.7
Degree	234	56.4
Masters	49	11.8
PhD	2	0.5
Monthly Household Income (n=412)		
Less than RM 9,999	314	76.2
RM 10,000 RM 24,999	41	10.0
RM 25,000- RM 49,999	31	7.5
RM 50,000- RM 74,999	17	4.1
More than RM 75,000	9	2.2
Own Credit Card (n=415)		
Yes	194	46.7
No	221	53.3
Do Online Banking (n=415)		
Yes	270	65.1
No	145	34.9

RESULTS

Awareness towards Facebook advertisements

The respondents of this study agreed to be aware of Facebook advertisements (M= 2.99, SD=1.18). However, respondents have neither denied of looking at the advertisements on Facebook (M=2.46, SD= 1.12), nor clicking on the advertisements on Facebook (M=2.35, SD= 1.15).

Table 3. Respondents overall exposure towards Facebook advertisements (n=415)

Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
	Percentage (%)						
Aware of advertisements in Facebook (n=411)	13.8	18.0	34.1	23.4	10.7	2.99	1.18
Look at advertisements in FB (n=410)	22.7	30.7	29.3	12.4	4.9	2.46	1.12
Have clicked on advertisements (n=409)	28.9	28.6	24.7	13.9	3.9	2.35	1.15

Based on seven-point Likert Scale:
1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Slightly Agree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree

Based on the table 4 below, respondents have answered that the first page that they look at upon login to Facebook is the homepage or the news feed wall on Facebook (M=3.96, SD= 1.16). Though Facebook users had agreed as aware of Facebook advertisements, however they denied of looking at the advertisements placed on Facebook regardless of its position within Facebook page but were slightly positive towards advertisements placed at user's newsfeed wall.

Table 4. Exposure towards Facebook advertisements on home and profile page (n=415)

Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
	Percentage (%)						
Advertisements at FB Homepage (Newsfeed)							
Look at homepage first upon log on to FB (n=410)	6.5	4.8	14.6	33.9	40.2	3.96	1.16
Spend time looking at advertisements on Homepage (n=411)	33.3	27.5	19.2	15.8	4.2	2.30	1.20
Overall Mean						3.13	1.18
Advertisements at User's Profile Page							
Look at profile first upon log on to FB (n=410)	7.8	16.1	30.5	31.0	14.6	3.28	1.15
Spend time looking at advertisements on Profile page (n=410)	38.8	26.1	22.0	8.5	4.6	2.14	1.16
Spend time looking at advertisements on user friend's Profile page (n=410)	39.5	29.5	18.3	9.0	3.7	2.08	1.12
Overall Mean						2.53	1.27

Based on seven-point Likert Scale:
1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Slightly Agree; 4= Agree; 5= Strongly Agree

Nevertheless, respondents disagreed of looking at either their favorite fan page (M=2.32, SD=1.20) or their favorite group page (mean=2.37, SD=1.20) when they first login to Facebook. They also disagreed of looking at the advertisements placed on either their favorite fan page (M=2.09, SD=1.13) or group page (M=2.13, SD=1.15).

Table 5. Exposure towards Facebook advertisements on fan and group page (n=415)

Items	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
	Percentage (%)						
Advertisements at Favorite fan Page							
Look at favorite fan page first upon log on to FB (n=409)	29.8	32.0	21.3	10.0	6.8	2.32	1.20
Spend time looking at advertisements on favorite fan page (n=409)	39.1	30.3	17.1	9.8	3.7	2.09	1.13
Read updates on the products /services at the fan page (n=410)	19.8	25.1	32.4	17.3	5.4	2.63	1.14
Read promotion on the products /services at the fan page (n=410)	22.4	23.9	31.2	17.6	4.9	2.63	1.47
Overall Mean						2.50	1.14
Advertisements at Favorite group Page							
Look at favorite group page first upon log on to FB (n=408)	28.9	29.9	23.0	11.6	6.6	2.37	1.20
Spend time looking at advertisements on favorite group page (n=409)	37.9	29.6	17.8	10.8	3.9	2.13	1.15
Read updates on the products /services at the group page (n=411)	16.5	23.6	33.3	20.0	6.6	2.76	1.15
Read promotion on the products /services at the group page (n=411)	23.4	26.6	28.8	15.6	5.6	2.53	1.17

However, respondents slightly agreed to read updates (M= 2.63, SD= 1.14) or promotion (M=2.63, SD= 1.47) on the products or services on their favorite fan page as well as reading updates (M= 2.76, SD= 1.15) or promotion (M=2.53, SD= 1.17) on the products or services on their favorite group page on Facebook.

Purchasing Behavior through Facebook advertisements

From the total 415 respondents in this study, only a handful number of respondents (17.6%) agreed to have made purchases via Facebook advertisements or retailers on Facebook. Based on the findings derived from this study, in the past 12 months, the majority of the respondents have declined using Facebook to make any product or services purchase (82.4%). Hence, Facebook is not popular as an online retailer platform. Among the 73 respondents who have made purchases through Facebook advertisements, the total amount spent purchasing through Facebook advertisements is very little, which is less than RM400 (89%) with 39.7% of the respondents purchasing a product or services valued at less than RM 100.

This can be further supported by the findings revealed by Wong (2012), on the Malaysian's online shopping scene, which reported that Malaysians tend to spend around the range of RM 100- 300 online. This could be because of the Malaysia user's hesitations and not willingness to lose money through the new type of transactions (Hamisah Hassan & Samsudin A.Rahim, 2009). The majority of the respondents (66.7%) have only done transactions 1-2 times with Facebook retailers, and only 6.9% of the respondents have made purchases for more than five times.

Table 6. Respondents purchasing behaviorthrough Facebook advertisements (n=415)

	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
In the past 12 months;	Yes		No	
Purchased a product or service through FB advertisements	73	17.6	342	82.4
Total amount spent (n=73)				
Less than RM 100	29	39.7		
RM 101 to RM 400	36	49.3		
RM 401 to RM 600	4	5.5		
More than RM 601	4	5.5		
Frequency of transacting with FB retailers (n=72)				
Never	7	9.7		
1-2 times	48	66.7		
3-4 times	12	16.7		
More than 5 times	5	6.9		

Out of the total respondents who have made purchases through Facebook advertisements, only 44.4% purchased through specific fan page on Facebook and merely 41.1% attended events promoted via the specific fan page.

Table 7. Respondent purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (n=415)

	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
At fan page in Facebook (n=62)				
Have purchased any products/services promoted	32	44.4	40	55.6
Attended any events announced	30	41.1	43	58.9
At group page in Facebook (n=68)				
Have purchased any products/services promoted	37	50.7	36	49.3
Attended any events announced	31	42.5	42	57.5

As for the subscription through specific group page on the other hand, the numbers of respondents who make purchases are slightly higher (50.7%). Nevertheless, the number of respondents who attended any events promoted via special group page is still minimal (42.5%). This can be further supported by the findings revealed by Paytronix (2011) in which, Facebook fan or group pages functions as the forum that allows continuous interaction with its fans and eventually grow advocates that influence the purchasing decisions of their friends and family using the medium. Besides, the high length of time spent on Facebook and easily accessible online recommendations have made the pages to be strongly influential in driving sales.

Table 8. Relationship between the awareness towards advertisements in Facebook with purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (n=73)

Awareness of advertisements in Facebook	Purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements	
	r	*P*
Awareness on advertisements at users' profile page in Facebook	.441**	0.000
Awareness on advertisements at users' home page or News Feed Wall in Facebook	.257**	0.030
Awareness on advertisements at fan pages that users are fan of	.536**	0.000
Awareness on advertisements at group pages that users are fan of	.553**	0.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The Table 8 above shows that, there is a significant and substantial positive relationship between user's awareness on advertisements on their profile page on Facebook and their purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (r=. 441, P <. 05). It can also be concluded that, consumer's awareness on the advertisements placed on their home page has no significant relationship with consumers' purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (r= .257, P <. 05) as the variable shows a weak positive relationship. Therefore, it can be derived that advertisements placed on user's home page has no influence on consumer's purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements.

However from the table above, it can also be derived that, there is a significant and substantial positive relationship between consumer's awareness on advertisements placed at fan pages that users are fan of with purchasing behavior (r=. 536, P <. 05). There is a significant positive relationship between consumers' awareness on advertisements at group pages that they are member of and their purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (r=. 553, P <. 05). Hence, it can be clinched that advertisements placed on fan or group pages that users are a member of has a nominal influence on consumer's purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements.

This finding is in line with the report released by Stelzner (2015) that records, about 91% of the marketers who spend at least 6 hours per week on social media sites carrying out marketing activities, have reported an increase in their brand and product exposure in the social media space. Besides, more than 50% of the marketers who have been using Facebook fan pages as part of their marketing efforts for at least two years have reported an increase in their yearly sales besides improving their organic search ranking on search engine that further boosted their online exposure to their target audience.

Table 9. Relationship between characteristics of Facebook advertisements and consumers' purchasing behavior (n=73)

Factors of Facebook Advertisements	Purchasing Behavior through Facebook Advertisements	
	r	*P*
Format of Facebook Advertisements	.527**	0.000
Color of Facebook Advertisements	.336**	0.004
Interactivity of Facebook Advertisements	.400**	0.000
Reliability of Facebook Advertisements	.401**	0.000
Relevancy of Facebook Advertisements	.569**	0.000

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 9 above depicts that, there is a significant and substantial positive relationship between the format of Facebook advertisements and consumer's purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (r=. 527, P<. 05). However, the following factor, which is the color of Facebook advertisements, has significant but low correlation with consumers' purchasing behavior as compared to the other factors (r=. 336, P<. 05). The interactivity factor of Facebook advertisements also portrays a significant and positive relationship with consumers' purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (r=. 400, P<. 05). The reliability factor of Facebook advertisements also has a significant and positive correlation with consumers' purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (r=. 401, P<. 05). The correlation analysis also shows that there is a significant and substantial positive relationship between the relevancies of Facebook advertisements with consumers' purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements (r=. 569, P<. 05). Finally, to identify the most contributing factors among the 9 factors tested in this study, the researcher conducted Stepwise Regression Analysis. Table 10 below depicts the summary of the results obtained from the stepwise regression analysis.

Table 10. Factors of Facebook advertisements predicting purchasing behavior (n=69)

		B	SE (B)	B	t	p-value
Step 1						
	Constant	5.912	3.765		1.570	.121
	Relevancy of the ad	.650	.115	.569	5.666	.000
Step 2						
	Constant	3.033	3.584		.846	.401
	Relevancy of the ad	.442	.122	.387	3.629	.001
	Ad on user group page	.820	.236	.371	3.479	.001

Note: R^2 = .324 for Step 1; ΔR^2 = 0.105 for Step 2. p < .05

The prediction model contained two of the nine predictors and was reached in two steps. At Step 1 of the analysis, relevancy of the advertisement was entered into the Regression equation and was statistically significant, F (1,67) = 32.10, p <0.01, accounted for approximately 32.1% of the variance of purchasing behavior (R^2 = .324, Adjusted R^2 = .314). At Step 2 of the analysis, advertisement on group page that user are member of was entered into the regression equation with the variable relevancy of the advertisement,

not being removed. The model was significantly related to purchasing behavior $F(2,66) = 24.76$, $p < 0.01$, accounted for approximately 24.8% of the variance of the purchasing behavior ($R^2 = .429$, Adjusted $R^2 = .411$) could be accounted by the relevancy of the advertisements and awareness towards advertisements on group pages that users are member dimensions together. Advertisement on group page that users are member of solely accounted for approximately 10.5% of the variance of purchasing behavior. Therefore, with this the regression equation for predicting purchasing behavior (PB) is:

PB = 3.033 + .442 (Relevancy of the advertisement) + .820 (Awareness towards advertisements on group pages that users are member of)

Scholars like Jones (2015), have noted that relevancy of the products or services that are featured in online advertising are crucial in online and social media marketing besides personalization of the advertisement. This is because of the nature of the online and social media advertisements, which have shorter shelf life. Therefore, featuring relevant products or services to potential customers are vital to catch their attention as well as to influence them to make online purchases.

The Facebook group page allows a small group of users to share their common interests, express opinions and share photos among each other. Facebook group can also be a secret group, closed or open for public. This Facebook group pages can be more personal and extremely effective in driving awareness and in influencing consumer's perceptions towards a brand as compared to both normal wall post or newsfeed updates as it allows the administrator of the page to send out mass message directly to its members' inbox. Advertisers could certainly receive expected outcome and positive return on investment by sending out more personalized and customized messages directly to the members of a Facebook group (Shu, 2011).

CONCLUSIONS

The present study shows that Facebook is indeed popular among the working adults in Klang Valley with 59.3% of the users login to the site at least 1-2 times a day and spend about 1-3 hours per login. There were also few addictive users who login to the site for more than nine times a day. Users were able to access continuously or stay login to the site on a daily basis as they login to Facebook via office or home computer as well as their smartphones.

Word of mouth has a strong influence in molding users' favoritism and consideration towards following a brand page. Therefore, to increase the number of followers to their page, marketers could do 'like advertisements', that will provide both paid and earned impressions. Earned impressions are gained when a user's friends get notified upon the user liking a brand's page. 'Like advertisements' could work well in Malaysia as users have the tendency in which, friends of fans would also like or follow the page. By doing this, an advertiser could also grow its fan base organically at a cheaper cost. Alternatively, advertisers could also consider having customer loyalty programs on their social networks, to generate good word of mouth that would also grow the brand's fans or followers organically. In most cases, the fans that grow organically have the possibility of staying longer with a brand than those fans that were recruited via advertisements on Facebook.

Relevance score on Facebook is calculated based on the positive and negative comment that the advertisement received from its target audience. An advertisement that receives more positive comments will receive a higher quality score and will be shown prominently at a lower cost. Advertisers should do a thorough market study and analyze on the market sentiment among its target audience and prepare an advertisement that consist of strong and relevant messaging in the most interactive way and place it on user's profile page and on fan or group pages that users are member of. The advertiser should also ensure that proper targeting had taken place to avoid reaching the wrong target market. This will allow them to stand a better chance for their advertisements to get higher click through rates at lower cost besides increasing the sales conversions. Alternatively, advertisers could also send out personalized messages to their pool of fans in the group pages, which could garner better results, as it is more targeted and are highly relevant. This is because, based on the present study, it was revealed that user who became fan of a specific brand's group page are more receptive towards updates and promotions that are published by the advertiser or the marketer.

Therefore in a nutshell, it can be derived that advertising on Facebook is indeed effective in influencing consumer's purchasing behavior through Facebook advertisements provided the promotion that are being offered is interesting and value for money. In terms of the placement of the advertisements, advertisements that are placed on advertisers or retailers fan or group pages that user are member of has higher tendency of converting potential customers. Therefore, advertisers or marketers should analyze and study the market sentiment related to their product or services and ensure that they use the Facebook insights to impose proper strategies as well as to offer excellent product offerings and promotions that are needed and relevant to the potential target audience in order to obtain the preferred outcome.

By ensuring the correct choice of advertisements' formats and by having short, relevant and call to action driven advertisements, marketers could garner better feedback from their target audience, which could contribute towards positive sales results from investing on Facebook advertising. Furthermore, with the newly revised algorithm coding from Facebook, advertisements that are less relevant will be penalized by not being shown to the potential target markets. This will also eventually cause marketers in spending on higher CPM. Therefore, by ensuring the advertisements contents are relevant to potential target's interest, advertisers stand a chance to show their advertisements to the users more frequently besides influencing them to click on the advertisements and subsequently influencing them to convert. The more the respondents click and engage with the brand, the better Facebook perceive the advertisement as relevant and this could also assist advertisers to gain higher ranking on the search engine's results page, which expands the brand's reach among the target market even outside Facebook but on the other digital avenues.

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ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 61-71 (2016)

APOLOGY AND NON-APOLOGY STRATEGIES BY IRANIAN AZERBAIJANI ESL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
This study investigated the use of apology and non-apology strategies by Iranian Azerbaijani ESL students at Maz International School in Malaysia. The data gathered from Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and role-play were triangulated and analyzed based on Cohen and Olshtain's (1981) framework. The results of the study indicate that female respondents opted for explicit expressions of apology while males offered apologies instead of asking for forgiveness. As for the non-apology strategies, it appears that male students preferred the use of avoidance, but female students frequently used denial of responsibility and blame the victim.

Keywords: apology and non-apology strategies, discourse completion test, gender, Iranian Azerbaijani ESL students, sociolinguistics

INTRODUCTION
The fact that language use differs in speech communities is an appealing matter of study for researchers. Many scholars have realized the importance of pragmatic competence in language teaching and learning. According to Leung (2005), linguistic competence and pragmatic competence are two crucial constituents of communicative competence. Based on the main theory of the communicative competence, learners need to be linguistically, pragmatically, and socio-pragmatically competent so that they can communicate proficiently. Considering the notion of pragmatic competence, language learners need to express proper intent in different contexts.

Olshtain (1983) believed that apologies are employed by the offender to advocate the victim who has been transgressed by the misdeed. Hatch (1992) stated that speech acts are real–life interactions that need both the knowledge of language and the appropriate use of it within a given culture. Similar to other speech acts, apologies carry a particular cultural value and are performed in various patterns. According to Cohen and Olshtain (1981), people apologize when they violate social norms and Holmes (1990) further indicated that such apologies are used as politeness strategies to redress a violation. Similarly, Bergman and Casper (1993) believed that apology is a way to reestablish social relation harmony following a transgression.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Olshtain and Cohen (1983) studied speech acts of apology and request to probe feasible pragmatic universals and their features. Olshtain (1983) indicated that the Cross-Cultural Study of Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) data revealed remarkable similarities in Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs) and taking on responsibility. Blum-Kulka (1991) stated that adult learners acquire a lot of L2 pragmatic knowledge, which are universal or transferred from L1. Afghari (2007) believed that apologies in Persian are really formulaic and two variables such as social distance and social dominance influence the frequency of apology intensifiers in different scenarios. Iranians use intensified apology strategies to their close friends and the less intensified ones to strangers.

Shahrokhi (2011) investigated request and apology strategies among Persian males regarding context-external and context-internal variables. Strategies were categorized based on a modified coding schema. The findings revealed Persian males used the most direct request strategy, namely an imperative and a new request strategy i.e. Challenging Ability. They tend to apply Intensifying Adverbial, Emotion and Double Intensifier to support main apologies. In addition, they used Offer of apology, and Request for forgiveness to perform explicit apologies while recurrent apology strategies include Taking on the responsibility, Explaining the situation, Offering to repair and the new strategy, and Underestimating the offence by humor.

Yeganeh (2012) studied apologies by Kurdish-Persian bilinguals in Iran. Findings revealed that although people of Ilam mainly used IFIDs and explanations in their apologies, they were not inclined to use Denial of responsibility and Concern for the hearer. Men and monolinguals used fewer apologies than women and bilinguals. In addition, males tried to compensate the damage more.

Kuhi and Jadidi (2012) investigated Iranian EFL students' politeness strategies in request, refusal, and apology speech acts. The results indicated indirect strategies were used in refusing and requesting, while direct strategies were applied in apologies. Iranian EFL students opted for negative politeness and gender influenced the face saving strategies.

Babai and Sharifian (2013) investigated Iranian English Language learners' refusals to invitations, offers, suggestions, and requests. According to the results, Focus Group Interview (FGI) responses related particularly to Persian Cultural Schemas like tă'ărof and ru-dar-băyesti in both First (Persian) and Second (English) languages.

Since studies on Iranian Azerbaijani ESL students are scarce and previous studies focus on Persian, Arabic or other Western languages, this study fills the research gap and attempts to investigate the apology and non-apology strategies used by Iranian Azerbaijani male and female ESL students.

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical framework

Theoretical framework of the study is based on Cohen and Olshtain (1981, p.113-134) and Olshtain and Cohen (1983, p.22-23).

1. An Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs)
   - An expression of regret, e.g. I'm sorry
   - An offer of apology, e.g. I apologize.
   - A request for forgiveness, e.g. excuse me/ forgive me/ pardon me.
2. Explanation or account, e.g. there was a heavy traffic.
3. Taking on responsibility:
   - Explicit self-blame, e.g. it's my mistake.
   - Lack of intent, e.g. I didn't do it on purpose.
   - Expression of self-deficiency, e.g. I totally forgot it.
   - Expression of embarrassment, e.g. I feel ashamed.
   - Self-castigation, e.g. It was very stupid of me.
   - Justify the hearer, e.g. you are right to be angry and disappointed now.
   - Refusal to acknowledge guilt
     - Denial of responsibility, e.g. It wasn't my fault
     - Avoidance of subject or person
     - Blame the hearer, e.g. it's your own fault
     - Pretend to be offended, e.g. I'm the one to be offended
4. Concern for the hearer, e.g. I hope I didn't upset you/Are you alright?
5. An offer of repair, e.g. I'll pay for the damage.
6. Promise of forbearance, e.g. it won't happen again.

This model includes Illocutionary Force Indicating Devices (IFIDs), apology strategies and non-apology strategies. Taking on responsibility implies apology strategies, while Refusal to acknowledge guilt indicates non-apology strategies. Blaming the victim, Offending the victim, Avoidance of discussion and Showing the incident as unimportant are some instances of non-apology strategies by which the offender tries to abstain from apologizing. Although these strategies are not exactly within the area of apologizing, they are related in a negative way.

Sample of the study

A total of eight Iranian Azeri EFL students studying at Maz International School in Malaysia, ranging between 16 and 18 years of age participated in this study.

Data collection and analysis

In view of ethical norms, student information sheet, consent form, and parental information sheet were given to the students. Following attained permission, the researchers employed an open questionnaire Discourse Completion Test (DCT) and role-play to gather data. The students were asked to read the situations in the DCT and wrote down their responses. Similar situations were given to the students in the role-play sessions, which were video recorded. The data were analyzed qualitatively based on Cohen and Olshtain (1981) and the frequency of occurrences of the strategies used was also noted to support the qualitative data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the study revealed pertinent information on the use of apology and non-apology strategies by the Iranian Azeri students. Despite some contrasts, several comparable apologies were distinguished in the data collected from DCT and role-play. The outcomes gained from DCT revealed that female students used IFIDs and intensified them, but male students offered an apology instead of asking for forgiveness. Despite the fact that offer of repair, accounts, and justify the hearer were frequently applied by male students, females used more self castigation, expression of embarrassment, expression of self-deficiency, lack of intent, explicit self-blame, and concern for the hearer. In addition, promise of forbearance was not used by any of the students. Regarding non-apology strategies, avoidance, laughing the incident off, offending the victim, and brush off the incident as not important were mainly used by male students, while denial of responsibility and blame the victim were frequently applied by females. The following tables present the results related to IFIDs, apology, and non-apology strategies in DCT.

Table 1. IFID strategies used by male and female respondents in DCT

Strategies	Items														
	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	N	%
One expression of regret and one intensifier	M	2	1	2	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	2	1	12	12.2
	F	3	1	2	1	3	2	1	0	1	1	1	3	19	19.3
One expression of regret	M	2	0	1	2	2	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	15	15.3
	F	3	2	1	1	0	2	2	2	1	2	0	1	17	17.3
A request for forgiveness	M	1	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	9	9.1
	F	2	0	2	1	2	0	1	1	1	0	3	2	15	15.3
An offer of apology	M	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	6	6.1
	F	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	5	5.1
One expression of regret and two intensifiers	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
One expression of regret and three intensifiers	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 1 illustrates that one expression of regret and one intensifier and one expression of regret are the most frequent strategies used. Females opted for one expression of regret and one intensifier (19.3 %), one expression of regret (17.3%), and request for forgiveness (15.3%) strategies more compared to males. The male students prefer to use an offer an apology strategy (6.1%) more than female students (5.1%). Some examples are shown below:

(1) One expression of regret
M: I'm sorry from bottom of my heart!
F: Sorry!

(2) One expression of regret and one intensifier
M: I'm so sorry!
F: I'm terribly sorry!

(3) A request for forgiveness
M: Excuse madam!
F: Pardon me.

(4) An offer of apology
M: I apologize!
F: Please accept my profuse apologies.

Table 2. Apology strategies used by male and female respondents in DCT

Strategies	Items														
	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	N	%
Reparation	M	3	1	4	4	2	3	3	1	2	0	0	2	25	17.1
	F	1	2	4	2	0	4	3	0	0	0	2	1	19	13.0
Expression of self-deficiency	M	1	0	0	0	3	1	3	6	0	0	0	2	16	10.9
	F	2	0	0	4	4	1	1	7	1	1	0	0	21	14.3
Accounts	M	3	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	10	6.8
	F	1	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	8	5.4
Explicit self-blame	M	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	5	3.4
Lack of intent	M	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	7	4.7
	F	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	1	9	6.1
Expression of embarrassment	M	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
	F	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	7	4.7
Self-castigation	M	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	1.3
Justify the hearer	M	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	2.0
	F	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.6
Concern for the hearer	M	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	4	2.7
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	1	6	4.1
Promise of forbearance	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 2 shows that reparation and expression of self-deficiency are the most recurrent strategies used. Females use more expression of self-deficiency (14.3%), lack of intent (6.1%), expression of embarrassment (4.7%), concern for the hearer (4.1%), explicit self blame (3.4%) and self-castigation (1.3%) strategies, while males prefer reparation (17.1%), accounts (6.8%), concern for the hearer (2.7%), and justify the hearer (2%). None of the students use promise of forbearance strategy. Some examples are shown below:

(1) Expression of self-deficiency
F: I forgot about payment.
M: I forgot it!

(2) Expression of embarrassment
F: I feel ashamed.
M: It's very embarrassing.

(3) Explicit self-blame
F: My mistake!
M: It's my fault!

Table 3. Non-apology strategies used by male and female respondents in DCT

Strategies	Items														
	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	N	%
Denial of responsibility	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	10
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	30
Avoidance of subject or person	M	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	20
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blaming the victim	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10
Laughing the incident off	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	10
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Offending the victim	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	10
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brushing off the incident as not important	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	10
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

As shown in Table 3, denial of responsibility and avoidance of subject or person are frequently used. Males prefer to use avoidance of subject or person (20%), laughing the incident off (10%), offending the victim (10%), and brushing off the incident as not important (10%), whilst females use denial of responsibility (30%) and blaming the victim (10%). Some examples are as follows:

(1) Denial of responsibility
F: It is not my fault!
M: It was my teacher's fault!

(2) Avoidance of subject or person
M: I wouldn't give him the book. He may tell me ugly words.

The following tables present the results related to IFIDs, apology, and non-apology strategies in role play.

Table 4. FID strategies used by male and female respondents in role play

Strategies	Items														
	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	N	%
One expression of regret and one intensifier	M	2	0	1	1	2	0	3	1	2	1	2	2	17	28.3
	F	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	19	31.6
One expression of regret	M	1	0	0	2	1	2	0	1	1	2	2	1	13	21.6
	F	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	0	7	11.6
One expression of regret and two intensifiers	M	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.6
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
An offer of apology	M	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.6
	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.6
A request for forgiveness	M	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.6
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

As shown in Table 4, the results acquired from role plays show that one expression of regret and one intensifier (31.6%) was repeatedly used by females, but male respondents opted for one expression of regret (21.6%) and one expression of regret and two intensifiers (1.6%). On the other hand, females used more accounts, expression of self-blame, offer of repair, and invoking God's name, however male respondents opted for expression of self deficiency, lack of intent, justify the hearer, and concern for the hearer. In addition, expression of embarrassment, self-castigation, and promise of forbearance were not used by any group. Regarding non-apology strategies, both groups used less non-apology strategies in role-plays. Although females only used denial of responsibility, both groups applied avoidance strategy. Laughing the incident off, brush off the incident as not important, blaming the victim, and offending the victim were not used by any group. Some examples are shown below:

(1) One expression of regret
M: Oh my God! Sorry Miss
F: Sorry guys

(2) One expression of regret & one intensifier
M: I'm very sorry again
F: So sorry my friend

(3) An offer of apology
M: I apologize
F: I apologize!

(4) Request for forgiveness
M: Forgive me my friend.

Table 5. Apology strategies used by male and female respondents in role play

Strategies	Items														
	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	N	%
Reparation	M	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	13	15.6
	F	2	0	2	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	2	14	16.8
Lack of intent	M	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	4	2	12	14.4
	F	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	3	9	10.8
Accounts	M	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	7	8.4
	F	2	0	2	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	9	10.8
Expression of self-deficiency	M	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	6	7.2
	F	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	5	6
Justify the hearer	M	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2.4
	F	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.2
Explicit self-blame	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.2
	F	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	2.4
Concern for the hearer	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	2	2.4
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Expression of embarrassment	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-castigation	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Promise of forbearance	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

As shown in Table 5, reparation, lack of intent and accounts are the most frequent strategies used. Females prefer to use reparation (16.8%), lack of intent (10.8%), accounts (10.8%), expression of self-blame (2.4%), however males opted for reparation (15.6%),

lack of intent (14.4), expression of self deficiency (7.2%), justify the hearer (2.4%), and concern for the hearer (2.4%). In addition, expression of embarrassment, self-castigation, and promise of forbearance were not picked by any group. Some examples are shown below:

(1) Lack of intent
M: I didn't mean it.
F: It happened accidently.

(2) Expression of self-deficiency
M: I didn't realize.
F: I forgot to tell you.

(3) Explicit self-blame
M: Now I noticed my mistake!
F: It was my mistake!

(4) An offer of repair
M: Can I pay for the books?
F: I'll pick it for you.

Table 6. Non-apology strategies used by male and female respondents in role play

Strategies	Items														
	Gender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	N	%
Avoidance of subject or person	M	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	33.3
	F	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	33.3
Denial of Responsibility	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	33.3
Blaming the victim	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Laughing the incident off	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Offending the victim	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brushing off the incident as not important	M	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	F	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Table 6 indicates that male and female students most frequently use avoidance of subject or person non-apology strategy (33.3%). Unlike male students, females opt for denial of responsibility (33.3%) more. Laughing the incident off, brush off the incident as not important, blaming the victim, and offending the victim were not used by any group at all. Some instances are shown below:

(1) Avoidance
M: I will say nothing and leave.
F: I just run away.

(2) Denial of responsibility
F: It wasn't my problem.

CONCLUSION

The results obtained from DCT showed that females opted for explicit and intensified strategies, while males offered more apologies and refrained from requesting for forgiveness. Although offer of repair, accounts, and justify the hearer were mostly used by male students, females applied more self castigation, expression of embarrassment, expression of self-deficiency, lack of intent, explicit self-blame, and concern for the hearer. In addition, promise of forbearance was not used by any of the respondents.

Female Azeri students frequently used non-apology strategies such as denial of responsibility and blame the victim. Based on the results acquired from role-plays, female students mainly used one expression of regret and one intensifier, but males utilized one expression of regret and one expression of regret and two intensifiers. Females employed accounts, expression of self-blame, offer of repair, and invoking God's name, while male respondents used expression of self deficiency, lack of intent, justify the hearer, and concern for the hearer.

Moreover, expression of embarrassment, self-castigation, and promise of forbearance were not used by any of the respondents. Regarding non-apology strategies, both group used less non-apologies in role-plays. Although female students only employed denial of responsibility, both males and females opted for avoidance. Laughing the incident off, brush off the incident as not important, blaming the victim, and offending the victim were not used by any group.

New strategies such as invoking God's name, asking victim not to be angry, and using idiom were found in the study. Male students mostly used God willing in their responses to DCT, but females used more idioms. On the other hand, males preferred God willing more than females in role plays and using idioms and asking victim not to be worried or angry were not discerned in any responses at all.

Investigating pragmatic strategies of Iranian Azerbaijani ESL students raises their pragmatic awareness to avoid any possible misdeed in their interactions. Azerbaijani English teachers will share the findings to realize the strengths and weaknesses in their students' use of apology in English. They will prepare better instructional lessons for the students and help them to use more contextually appropriate speech act in the target language. The results of this research is also important for Iranian Azerbaijani students who plan to study in English overseas, university lecturers who have Iranian Azerbaijani students, university staffs, or any researcher who is interested in this area of research. The implications of this study can be helpful in teaching and learning English as a foreign language in the Azerbaijani community.

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ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 73-84 (2016)

USING AUDIO AND VIDEO LISTENING MATERIALS TO IMPROVE ESL UNDERGRADUATES' LISTENING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT
Listening is an important language skill and should be acquired by all language learners. In training the listening skill, many online freeware and courseware can be applied, for example, Schoology. It can be used to entice students' interest to do listening exercises online, and subsequently improve their listening competence. This study investigated the efficacy of two different modes of listening materials, audio and video, through a quasi-experiment. It also examined if Schoology was useful in improving ESL undergraduates' listening skills through analyzing the participants' perception to its use. The study was conducted in a public university in Malaysia. The participants were 50 undergraduates assigned to two experimental groups. The measurement instruments comprised a pre-test, a post-test, and a questionnaire. The two groups received a series of treatment in the form of parallel listening materials in either audio or video mode administered through Schoology. The results showed that the audio mode achieved a higher mean than the video mode in the post-test. In addition, the study found that the listening exercises conducted through Schoology produced a significant gain. Outcomes from this study should be beneficial in facilitating language teachers and policy makers to choose the right mode of listening materials for the language classrooms.

Keywords: ESL, listening mode, online learning, Schoology, quasi-experiment

INTRODUCTION
The development of all other language skills is said to be linked to listening because it is the basic skill that language learners need to develop first. It is said to be at the heart of both first and second language learning (Dehghani & Jowkar, 2012). However, listening has received the least structured support in English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom and is considered as the weakest skill for many language learners (Vandergrift & Goh, 2012).It is a skill that language teachers ought to pay attention to, and they should recognize the importance of listening as a stepping stone to other language skills. The connection between effective learning and listening comprehension has been widely discussed among scholars. Their views on learning listening critically and analytically are important in both online learning and traditional classrooms.

On the other hand, the fast evolution of technology has affected English language learning and instruction in many different ways. Educational technologies are growing at an intense rate with online tools becoming more popular and evident in the daily lives of students in higher education. However, traditional classrooms still play a role in the learning of listening. Recent studies have discussed several pedagogical theories related to the content and modes of listening. Online learning was defined by scholars as the experience where teachers and learners are separated physically but connected through an

online network system where educational contents are shared and virtual communication occurs among students, teachers and staff members (Hassan, Abiddin & Yew, 2014). Students and instructors in higher learning institutions are expected to use the computer and the Internet; therefore, online tools regardless of their advantages and disadvantages have been widely used. At the same time, many scholars have proposed different categories of learning styles (for example, Flowerdew & Miller, 2005). When teachers recognize the difference in learning styles among learners, they will be able to design appropriate instructional techniques or media to benefit the learners.

In relation to the use of instructional technology, thus far research on the effectiveness of technology has been presented from different perspectives. For example, Felix (2005) specified three different types of research on the effectiveness of using technology and online instruction in ESL classrooms. The first type includes positive reports, where Basena and Jamieson (1996, p.19) stated that "the newer technologies show promise to be able to provide feedback in multiple modes, such as listening and reading". The second type involves unconcerned, unsubstantiated comments such as: "Study after study seems to confirm that computer-based instruction reduces performance levels and that habitual Internet use induces depression" (Noble, 1998, p.1). The third type of inquiry and the most often quoted collection of research reported no difference between traditional and online instruction. At the end of her article, Felix (2005) explained common problems on the effective research including misleading titles, poor choice of variables to be investigated, poor description of the research design, failure to investigate previous research, and over-ambitious reporting of results. In the following section, a number of recent studies related to the present study have been selected for review.

Among the studies reviewed, several studies measured the effectiveness of using technology in ESL classrooms. These studies found that traditional instructions are more effective than technology-based instruction in ESL classroom. For example, Hassan et al. (2014) carried out a study to investigate if there was any significant difference between learning listening online and learning listening in traditional classroom through metacognitive awareness listening strategies that students used. The aim of their study was to explore the best approach in teaching listening. The participants from the experimental group underwent an English listening courseware and the control group underwent the normal traditional classroom lessons. The results from the pretest showed the student's level of proficiency was the same, but based on results of the post-test given at the end of the month, traditional classroom learning indicated higher learning gain. There are other studies who found no difference between traditional instruction and technology-aided instruction; however, as Burnston (2003) stated, it is important to measure more aspects in assessing the impact of technology on the curriculum besides the instant learning outcomes. He indicated that these explorations are concerned about final outcomes and conclusions are almost always made in a theoretical vacuum without considering the second language acquisition processes underlying the reported linguistic performance (Burnston, 2003).

In another study, Shin and Son (2007) examined EFL teachers' perceptions and perspectives of Korean secondary school on the use of the Internet for teaching purposes. 101 teachers, participated in a survey and responded to the questions related to their opinions about Internet-Assisted Language Teaching (IALT), how they used the Internet, and the type of resources they used on the Internet. The findings of the study reported three key factors affecting the use of the Internet in the classroom are: teachers' personal interest in Internet use; teachers' abilities to integrate Internet resources into classroom activities; and computer facilities and technical support in schools.

Kim (2009) on the other hand, examined the teaching beliefs and perceptions of 10 ESL teachers' about the role of computers in their classrooms. For data collection, each participant was interviewed for 50 minutes. The findings suggested that these teachers' perceptions and expectations of computers favoured their use as instructional tools. Sophocleous (2012) explored student-teachers' perceptions on the usefulness of new technologies in their learning and the participants believed that they could be excellent tools to use in their teaching with their students. At the same time, Al Qasim and Al Fadda (2013) investigated the extent of using podcast as an educational tool to improve the listening comprehension skills of EFL tertiary level students. They examined 46 undergraduate learners who were randomly selected and divided into control group (no special treatment) and experimental group (received podcasts on their mobiles). A pretest was conducted and six weeks later, a posttest followed. The findings revealed that the use of podcasts can make a significant difference to the listening comprehension of the EFL tertiary level students. The study shows that participants in the experimental group achieved positive agreement, demonstrating that they were motivated by podcasts in their learning. Similarly, a number of studies have been conducted on development of learners' language skills using technology-based instruction. For instance, Shabani (2001) investigated the advantage of using CALL on vocabulary learning of Iranian EFL learners, and Hatam (2004) found the positive impact of Internet-based tasks on the development of interactional competence of Iranian EFL learners.

However, the idea of technology does not necessarily come in a hardware form, but can be seen as a system of practical knowledge. Learning management systems like Schoology fit into this category as an online interface and platform. Schoology, is a learning management system (LMS) and social network that makes it easy to create and share academic content and is designed to enable educators to do things as simple as posting assignments, quizzes and links to additional resources or as sophisticated as conducting online courses, providing one-on-one remediation, or hosting discussions (Ashly, 2013). Schoology connects students and parents to educators and learning resources anytime, anywhere in a safe, secure online environment (Schoology, 2009; Moran, 2010; Kim, 2009). It also provides various instructional tools including organizable lessons and self-paced learning, threaded discussion boards, micro-blogging, and content migration and imports (Moran, 2010).

Learning management systems (LMS) are the most representative e-learning applications and becoming more popular in higher education with the increasing enrollment in online education and distance learning programs. Schoology, as a learning management system, is more than a platform to deliver course content. Such systems may also offer ability to create course announcements, display assignments and grades, upload lecture notes and documentation, increase communication and collaboration, develop a learning community with unlimited capacity and accessibility (Ashly, 2013).

On the other hand, the importance of listening cannot be underestimated since as Celce-Murcia (1991) explained that listening is used far more than any other single language skill in normal daily life. She further argued that on average one can expect to listen twice as much speaking, four times more than reading, and five times more than writing. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), some applied linguists argue that listening comprehension is at the core of second language acquisition and therefore demands a much greater prominence in language teaching. Based on the importance of listening in language learning and the opportunities that new technology provides, this paper addresses the thesis question: Does using Schoology have any significant effect on the improvement of ESL undergraduate students' listening comprehension?

Educators at all levels have been challenged over the past several decades by a wide variety of technologies designed to assist in teaching and learning (Picciano, 2009). Schoology has successfully combined classroom management and social networking with architecture similar to Facebook in providing individual profiles, an event calendar, personal messaging, grouping, and it also allows faculty to monitor the amount of time students spend using Schoology (Schoology, 2009). However, the use of Schoology as a teaching and learning tool for improving ESL listening skill is relatively a new form. There is a lack of studies (if any) on the use of Schoology in ESL classrooms. Through exploring on how to use Schoology in developing ESL listening skill, the present study hopes to instigate further studies. By using quantitative and qualitative approaches, researchers can better understand the role of Schoology on ESL learners' listening skill. Policy makers and the educators may explore using Schoology as a pedagogical option in the language curriculum. Teachers can plan how best to motivate students to make use of the full learning potential of Schoology, and to allow the ESL learners to benefit from the use of Schoology as a pedagogical tool in an ESL listening class.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general purpose of this research is to investigate whether Schoology as an online learning system can increase ESL students' listening performance after their engagement with the online listening tasks and to determine whether there is any significant difference in students' pre and post-tests after their engagement with the online listening materials using Schoology. Moreover, this study aims to compare the effectiveness of two types of listening presentation modes (audio and video) that can provide higher performance means among the students. Thus, the present study addresses the following objectives:

1. To investigate whether Schoology affects the ESL undergraduate students' listening comprehension.
2. To examine students' perception to Schoology as a new learning platform.
3. To investigate which listening presentation mode (audio and video) produces higher listening comprehension means among the students.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a quasi-experimental design for a quantitative data collection and analysis. This study involved one intact class of students as the participants to examine whether the use of Schoology can improve or not the listening comprehension of the students and to explore the effect of two listening presentation modes: audio (listening only), video (watching and listening). In this study, the two independent variables (IVs) were the two listening presentations (Audio and Video), and the dependent variable (DV) was the pre and post treatment test scores (Figure 1).

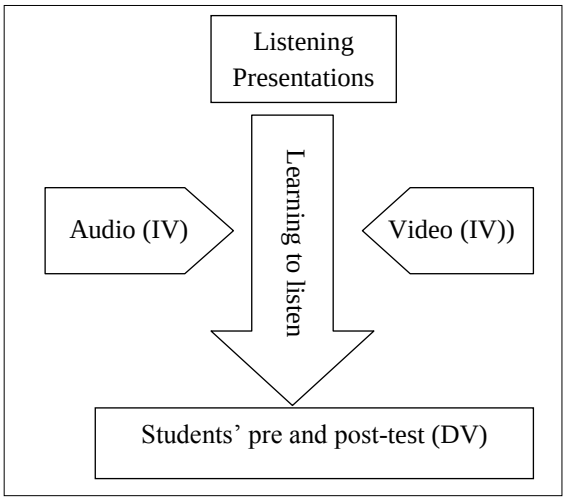

Figure1. Independent and dependent variables of the study

Participants

The participants selected for this research were one intact class of 50 undergraduate students including 12 males (24%) and 38 females (76%) at a public university in Malaysia. The students attended a compulsory English course and most of them were in Year 3 of their academic programme. The participants' age ranged from 21 to 25 years (94%), 26-30 years (4%), and 31 years or older (2%). They were from two ethnic origins: Malay (88%), and Chinese (12%). The Fishbowl technique was used to divide the class into two groups. According to this technique, fifty cards of two different codes (25 each) prepared in a box and each participant randomly picked one card. Thus the intact class divided into two groups of twenty five participants randomly. Group 1 received audio materials, while group 2 received video materials during the listening training. Most of the students (92%) had Internet access at home.

Their level of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) were beginner (6%), intermediate (92%), and expert (2%). Most of them (58%) spent more than 8 hours on the Internet per week, while some others (22%) spent 6-8 hours, and the rest (20%) spent 4-6 hours a week (see Table 1).

Table 1. Personal profile of the participants

Variable		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	12	24
	Female	38	76
Ethics	Malay	44	88
	Chinese	6	12
Internet access at home	Yes	46	92
	No	4	8
ICT Level	Beginner	3	6
	Intermediate	46	92
	Expert	1	2
Hours spent on internet/week	More than 8 hours	29	58
	6-8 hours	11	22
	4-6 hours	10	20

Research instrument

At the beginning of the experiment, the listening comprehension skill of the participants was gauged by a pre-treatment test designed by the researchers. This is followed by administering the listening treatment through using Schoology for a period of four weeks. The post-test was conducted four weeks later. The post-test was a parallel test to the pre-test (based on the same topic, and the same level of difficulty). It was designed to measure the effectiveness of using Schoology as a learning system, and to measure the effectiveness of the audio and video modes of listening. In addition, a questionnaire was given to the participants after the experiment was carried out, in order to investigate their perception on using Schoology.

Listening materials

The news series from Cable News Networks (CNN) Student News were carefully selected as the treatment materials presented in both audio and video modes in this study. The rationale for the news selection was that the news from CNN is usually short and the vocabulary matched the proficiency level of the students. Besides, it is important to introduce a native speaker's voice to the students. Also, students got to know new vocabulary and expression in context, and the news scripts open up windows for students to get to know new cultures (Bahrani, 2011).

Procedure

At the beginning of the experiment, the students were introduced to the Schoology system and they were trained to create their student accounts. The researchers created an account as a teacher on Schoology. Two courses (Audio and Video) had been created for the students (see Figures 2, 3, &4). Each course had its own access code. The first group of students (n=25) was named as Audio group, and the second group was named the Video group (see Figure 3&4). A questionnaire was given to the participants before the experiment to collect information about the students' demographic background. The questionnaire asked the participants about their age, gender, ethics, and their information and communication technology level (ICT) (see Table 1).

Figure 2.Start page of Schoology

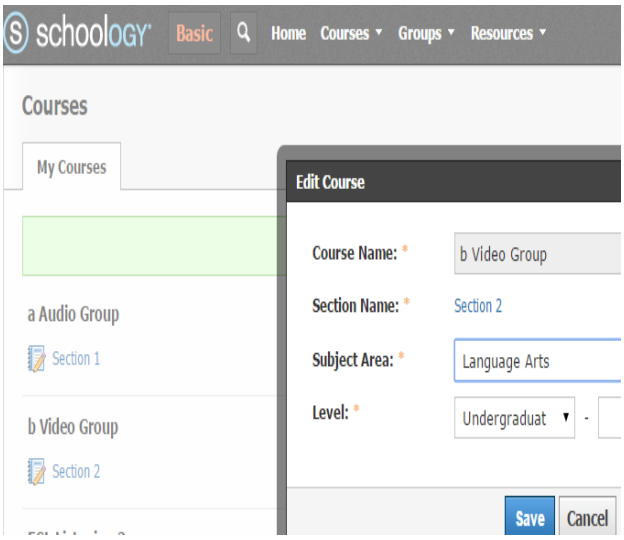

Figure 3. Creating video-group on Schoology

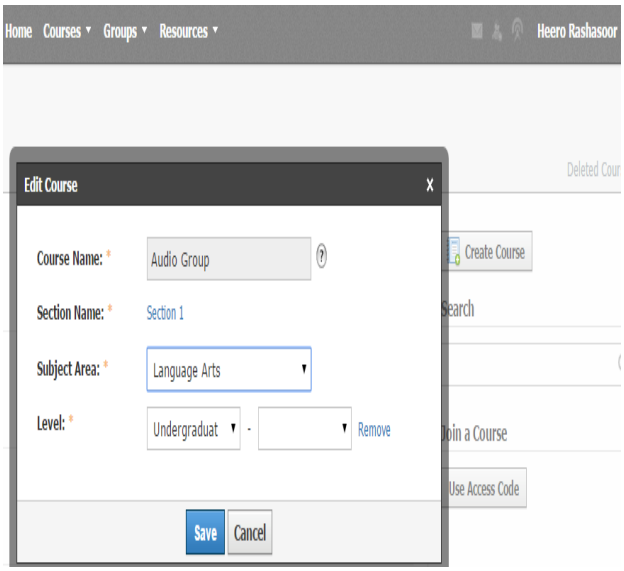

Figure 4. Creating audio-group on Schoology

Students received listening materials five times per week (see Figures 5 & 6) and they answered five questions after listening to each listening material. The Audio Group received audio news, while the Video Group received the same materials (similar to audio group in quantity and content) but in the video presentation mode. At the end of the experiment, a questionnaire was given to the participants to investigate their perception towards the use of Schoology in developing their listening competence.

Data analysis

The collected data through the questionnaire was analyzed descriptively using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The paired-sample t-test was conducted to compare the means of students' pre and post-tests scores. This is to answer the first research objective whether Schoology is effective in enhancing the listening comprehension skill of the ESL undergraduate students or not. Furthermore, the means of the post-tests of the two groups (Audio and Video) were compared using the independent sample t-test.

Figure 5. Uploading audio materials on Audio-Group Course

Figure 6. Uploading video materials on Video-Group Course

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the analysis of results from the data collected to investigate the effect of using Schoology and the students' perceptions. The study also examined the effects of two presentation modes (Audio and Video).The data were gathered from a pre-treatment test, a post-treatment test, and a questionnaire.

Improvement of listening comprehension through Schoology

Both groups received listening comprehension tasks for the duration of four weeks. The pre- and post-tests were based on their listening comprehension tasks. Paired-sample t-test was calculated to compare students' pre- and post-tests. On average, the students performed better in the post-test ($M = 16.2$; $SD = 3.47$) as compared to the pre-test ($M = 8.20$; $SD = 4.12$). Based on the results, statistically significant differences were found since the significant value was smaller than alpha ($.000\ p < .05$). It can be concluded that Schoology had a significant effect on the students' listening comprehension based on the significant gain (see Table 2).

Table 2. Mean differences between the pre-test and post-test

Test type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Paired Differences	
				T Value	Sig.
Pre-test	50	8.20	4.126	-11.646	.000
Post-test	50	16.42	3.471		

*Significant at 0.05 level

With regards to the first objective of the study whether Schoology as an online learning management system develops ESL undergraduates' listening comprehension or not, the results suggest that the use of Schoology did enhance students' listening comprehension. These results are in agreement with other studies, which found significant differences in student performance when they were exposed to online tools (e.g., Al Qasim & Al Fadda, 2013). One of the reasons forth is progressive finding is the fact that Schoology provides numerous opportunities to expose students to listening materials and with increased practice, their listening comprehension improves.

Perception on Schoology

To examine the second objective of the study, the results from participants' post-treatment questionnaire show that the majority of the participants (41 or 82%) were not familiar with the term "Schoology" while the rest heard about Schoology (18%) but did not use it at all. Most of the participants (76%) found it interesting and most of them (80%) considered Schoology as motivating to improve their listening skill. A large number of the participants (47 or 94%) found Schoology useful (20% very useful, and74% useful) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Participants perception to Schoology

Variable		Frequency	Percent (%)
Schoology familiarity	Yes	9	18
	No	41	82
Did you find it Interesting?	Yes	38	76
	No	12	24
Did you find it as encouragement	Yes	40	80
For listening?	No	10	20
How would you describe	Very useful	10	20
Schoology?	Useful	37	74
	Useless	2	4
	Very useless	1	2

The positive findings are in agreement with Hassan et al. (2014) who indicated students are able to learn better outside the classroom, and they liked to communicate with their teacher without the face-to-face interaction. This might have helped students who had low self-esteem and were afraid or shy to express their ideas in the classroom even when they had excellent ideas to contribute. Moreover, Schoology had benefited them in providing them with an alternative platform to communicate with their instructors and peers, and this has certainly help to increase their level of confidence. Furthermore, students had the opportunity to learn by completing exercises and practices online any time at their convenience just by turning on the computers and connecting to the Internet.

At the same time, they had also developed ICT skills required by their future employers when applying for jobs.

Effects of modes on listening

The pre-test was administered and both groups performed similarly. The mean score obtained by the first group for the pre-test (8.16) was lower than the mean of the second group (8.24) (see Table 4).

Table 4. Independent sample t-Test results for the differences between the two groups in the pre-test

Test type	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
					T Value	Sig.
Pre-test	Audio-group	25	8.16	4.356	-.068	.652
	Video-group	25	8.24	3.972		

*Significant at 0.05 level

However, these differences in the pre-test were not statistically significant, as can be seen from the results of the t-test for the independent samples. The significant value is greater than .05 (.652 $p > .05$) that means the variances were equal. Since the pre-tests suggested no significant difference between the two groups; therefore, it is reasonable to claim that any difference between the groups' post-test (Audio/Video) could be considered as a consequence of the listening treatments. In order to investigate the third objective of the study, the means of the post-tests of the two groups were compared by using the independent sample t-test as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Independent sample t-Test results for the differences between the two groups in the post-test

Test type	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
					T Value	Sig.
Post-test	Audio-group	25	17.64	2.79	2.63	.400
	Video-group	25	15.20	3.69		

*Significant at 0.05 level

Overall the Audio Group (M = 17.64, SD = 2.79) scored slightly higher than the Video Group (M = 15.20, SD = 3.69). Based on the results of independent sample t-test, the significant value was greater than alpha at .05 level of significance; therefore, it can be concluded that even though the mean of Audio-Group is higher than the Video-Group, the difference between using either audio or video listening material is not significant.

The analysis shows that the participants in both groups achieved positive agreement, demonstrating that they were motivated by Schoology in their learning. They were able to use Schoology in their learning successfully because it was easy to download and use the materials. The results also show that the Audio Group achieved higher score in their listening post-test but this achievement was not found to be significant.

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study was to investigate whether the use of Schoology could improve ESL students' listening comprehension or not. The study has revealed positive results to support the notion that the use of Schoology as an online learning system can make a positive and significant difference to the listening comprehension of ESL undergraduates. Future research should share from experts the possible ways to use Schoology in ESL instruction, specifically in the universities, it is important to focus on the Schoology pedagogical design. There is no doubt that Schoology can be considered as a valuable LMS for teachers and students, as it increases the probability that students will feel engaged and motivated when they appreciate the online educational tool and its flexibility. It was observed during the study that different presentation modes of the listening materials might have a little effect on the students' listening competence. Listening to news materials (audio-file) had distributed to slightly higher achievement than listening to and watching video materials, but the difference is not significant.

Finally, Schoology was found to connect and control positively with a large number of students than in a traditional classroom. The study is significant because it was tailored to the students' needs, and it analyzed the use of Schoology in ESL students' listening comprehension. Therefore, it is beneficial for ESL learners especially undergraduates to learn the use of Schoology to improve their listening. The study may also benefit policy makers and curriculum designers because unlike previous studies that mainly view online learning as a medium for language skill development, the current study has expanded the conceptual scope of online learning and has attempted to explore Schoology for enhancing listening comprehension.

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ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 85-96 (2016)

HEALING THE SELF THROUGH SPIRITUALITY IN K.S MANIAM'S *BETWEEN LIVES*

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ABSTRACT
The quest for a meaningful life and selfhood is one of the main themes in the works of K.S Maniam, a Malaysian Literature in English author. The main characters in Maniam's works often yearn for an inner fulfillment and enlightenment that cannot be solely addressed through the socio-political and economic means. Thus, issues such as a sense of displacement, anxiety and alienation that haunt the Malaysian Indians in Maniam's works are not just common features of postcolonial and diasporic conditions. Rather, they are symptomatic of an existential crisis. This article explores how spirituality provides a source of healing to Sumitra, the protagonist of his novel *Between Lives.* It uses Advaita Vedanta, an Indian philosophy to understand the genesis of Sumitra's existential crisis and how she can surmount it. In this novel, Maniam uses recurring motifs that eschew subject-object duality such as rites of passage, excursions and mystical experiences. These motifs reflect the concept of "oneness" of Advaita Vedanta that stresses true self (*Atman*) transcends materialism and corporeality. Through her spiritual journey, Sumitra critically re-examines her misidentification with the ego-identity and gains insight into the true nature of "self" and "reality". Consequently, Sumitra finds a more viable sense of selfhood through the Hindu spiritual concept of *Atman.* Finally, this study suggests that spirituality provides a more dynamic view of the Malaysian Indian identity construction.

Keywords: *Advaita Vedanta*, *Atman*, *Between Lives*, identity, Indian philosophy, K S Maniam, spirituality

INTRODUCTION
Between Lives (2003) is a novel by K.S Maniam, a Malaysian Literature in English author. The novel captures the multigenerational Malaysian Indians who struggle to find a viable sense of identity and sense of belonging in Malaysia. The novel centers on the relationship between Sumitra, a modern and educated young Indian woman and Sellamma, a traditional and culture-bound elderly Indian woman. Sumitra, the protagonist, works as a counselor and is a relocation expert for the Social Reconstruction Department. Sumitra is given the task to persuade Sellamma to vacate the land she lives on and relocate her into the welfare house. However, unlike her previous tasks, relocating Sellamma is more challenging. It is through Sumitra's attempts at eliciting the reasons why Sellamma refuses to leave the land that the former's journey towards self-discovery develops. Thus, the process of understanding Sellamma is an introspective experience for Sumitra as the latter begins to reflect on her conflict of identity that hitherto remains unexamined. The novel illuminates Sumitra's endeavor to embrace a more meaningful sense of selfhood.

K.S Maniam's literary works portray the complex issues faced by the Malaysian Indian community. According to Bernard Wilson (2003), Maniam's works "reflect the plight of the marginalized from the perspective of the Indian diaspora in Malaysian society" (p.391). The image of the Indian diaspora is commonly associated with "alienation, displacement, anomie, anxiety, detachment…or marginalized" (Ismail, 1999, p.206). This is due to several historical and political conditions. The voyage out of the oppressive caste system in India gives the Indian migrants hope for a new lease of life, but the colonial system and the subsequent anti-colonial and national movements proved otherwise. The colonial power systematically positioned the Indian community within a small and restricted socio-economic parameter (such as plantation sites) that prevented them from flourishing. The condition resulted in poverty and marginalization and exacerbated the community's psychological inferiority, feeling of helplessness, and diffidence which are already ingrained through centuries of caste dominance in India (Chandra, 1993, p.216). The post-colonial nationalism era and onwards may be perceived to have further marginalized the Indian community, as many scholars of Malaysian literature in English have viewed and positioned Islam and the Malays to be against non-Malay identities. Thus, the inherent colonial mentality in post-independence Malaysia has led to a dichotomous, unstable relationship between the Malays and non-Malays where the state policies and laws are seen to be in favour of the ethnic Malays.

It is within this context that Maniam's literary works have often been situated and analysed. The politics of identity construction in his works remains as one of the most studied areas. Gabriel (2005) argues that *Between Lives* "interrogates essentialist notions of ethnicity and national identity, of home and belonging through a diasporic articulation of reimagined perceptions of national temporality and spatiality" (p.248). In a similar vein, Wilson (2008) states that the novel challenges "the dominant cultural power" (p.420) by presenting "multiple histories rather than a selective poly-ethnic history that perpetuates the dominance of one ethnic group over others" (p. 423). Their analysis consolidate the main features of post-colonial and diasporic writings which frequently attempt to rupture the self-other, native-migrant, and centre-margin dualism. Indeed, Maniam can be considered as the leading Malaysian Literature in English writer who advocates such a revision of identity. This is evident in his essay, "The New Diaspora" in which he asserts the need to go beyond essentialism and communalism, as "it seems unnecessary and fruitless to flog the dead horse of colonialism; nor is it necessary to play up to an ethnocentric nationalism" (Maniam, 1998).

However, focusing mainly on the politics of identity would eclipse the alternative ways through which we can approach Maniam's oeuvres. As a matter of fact, Maniam himself comments that "politics is what people like to see in my work. Yes, it has always been there, but they like to see only that part of it." (as cited in Lim, 2004, p.40). His view on this matter brings us back to one of his earliest essays, in which he states that his literary works "attempt to bring the precision of the English language to the versatility and depth of Hindu mythology and spirituality" (as cited in Quayum & Wicks, 2001, p.264). In this light, Maniam does not only assert the importance of Hinduism in his works but also expand the horizons of the Malaysian Indian identity through Hindu spirituality. Therefore, the conceptualization of the Indian identity in Maniam's works should not be restricted to the political and socio-economic realms. Nor could the Malaysian Indian identity in his works be comprehensively understood using post-colonial and diasporic lenses only. As Maniam states, "I want to see the universe in man…that is the opposite of seeing man in the universe." (Kee, 1992, p.16). In order to view identity in this way, there must be a paradigm shift from that of an external preoccupation with identity to a more interiorized sense of selfhood. In other words, the

'inward turn' as suggested by Maniam necessarily requires us to critically reflect on the nature of existence and "the true value of the self" (Raihanah, 2009, p.58). It is, in Maniam's words "the death of the self- the falling away of a personality as it has been known – and being replaced by a paradigmatic self that is capable of encompassing more" (Kee, 1992, p.4).

Maniam's view of the true self echoes a famous Hindu saying, which is "I am not one of the world, but the world is in my consciousness" (Maharaj, 2006, p.36). Already inherent in this statement is a revision of understanding the nature of one's identity and his or her relationship with the world. Maniam's statement is indeed a reflection of a classic and integral Hindu negation of duality. According to Hinduism, duality is a hindrance to a more inclusive and liberated view of selfhood and identity. The inward turn, as Maniam suggests, requires an epistemic shift that is aimed to unravel "the mystical experience of the larger personality that resides within us" (as cited in Quayum & Wicks, 2001, p.265).

Therefore, an Indian philosophical view of identity would be apt to facilitate our understanding of how spirituality operates within the narrative of *Between Lives.* In this study, we will employ Advaita Vedanta, the main Indian school of thought, as our theoretical framework. Advaita Vedanta's philosophy of identity rests on a different epistemology of identity which repudiates the distinctions between self-other and subject-object duality. This Indian philosophy of the self is very well reflected in Maniam's literary works. As Maniam states, "I don't see why human beings should serve out their lives in this materialistic sense" (Greet, 1991, p.6). Maniam does not reject materialism altogether. His concern is that materialism may create a false "persona" or "sense of self" which proves to be more detrimental to the character's psyche. As Peter Wicks notes, Maniam's works have a particular propensity to "turn from worldly success to spiritual enlightenment, though not...as a reclusive form of escapism" (Wicks, 2002, p.14). Maniam's statement and Wicks' observation of the former's works allow us to reinterpret notions pertaining to post-colonial and diasporic conditions such as alienation, displacement and anxiety and reframe them within Hindu spirituality. Consequently, the study hopes to shed light on Sumitra's identity conflict as symptomatic of an existential crisis and how she can surmount it through spirituality.

ADVAITA VEDANTA: AN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY OF IDENTITY

Advaita is a part of the Indian school or philosophy known as Vedanta. Advaita means "not-two" or "non-dual", while Vedanta means "end of the Vedas". It is a reference to the Hindu Upanishads positioned at the final section of Indian scriptural texts known as the Vedas. Upanishads are sections of Vedic writing devoted to expounding the nature of reality. Vedanta, in a broader sense, refers to the vast body of Indian philosophical discourse and spiritual teachings.

At the heart of the Vedantic conception of self is *Atman*. *Atman* refers to the pure, undifferentiated consciousness that "underlies and support the individual human person" (Deutsch,1969, p.48). *Atman* is "timeless and spaceless, and cannot be an object of thought" (Deutsch 1969, p.48). In Advaita, it is further stated that *Atman* (True Self) is none other than *Brahman* (Absolute Reality) (Deutsch, 1969, p.48).

Since *Atman* and *Brahman* are identical, the discovery of True Self is achieved by dismantling illusionary ideas of differentiated and fragmented identity (e.g. I am "this" or I am "that"). These two terms – *Atman* is *Brahman*, *Brahman* is *Atman* – are used in the Vedantic teaching to describe the absence of a subject-object existence and point to the unity of consciousness and being. Since non-duality is the heart of Advaita Vedanta's

philosophy, thinking about the "self" necessarily replicates the subject-object dualism: the thinker (subject) and the object contemplated by the thinker (object). This dualism, Advaita proposes, causes humans to live in perpetual ignorance about the nature of self through the distinction of the thinking "I" and the search of *Atman* (True Self) who cannot be the object of thought. Advaita Vedanta expounds on intuitive realization, a direct "nowness" and "oneness" of experience (Deutsch, 1969, p.13). Advaita Vedanta's approach to identity is deconstructive in intent because it revises the divide between the thinker and the thought. Hence, its non-dual approach restores the importance of direct experience and intuition.

Advaita Vedanta proposes that humans live in perpetual ignorance about the nature of self. Suffering (*samsara*) occurs when we falsely identify ourselves with the limited mind-body-sense complex. The body-mind-sense complex denotes the limited parameter of how a person perceives his or her identity to be. According to Grimes (1996), "the body-mind-sense complex seemingly limits the infinite (*Atman*), just as a pot seemingly limits the infinite space" (p.71). For an example, one may misidentify with the body when one defines oneself according to his or her biological and physical self and processes. According to Advaita Vedanta, this is a "product of misconstrual" (Paranjpe, 2002, p.169), because one's true self (*Atman*) transcends one's corporeality.

Samsara (suffering) also occurs when we misapprehend *maya* (phenomenal reality) as *Brahman* (Absolute Reality). As the term "phenomena" suggests, *maya* is continuously changing, impermanent and transient. This state of ignorance or *avidya* is caused by the mind's creation of distinction between subject and object, or knower and known. Advaita Vedanta, such an "illusion" occurs when one wrongly perceives the existence of distinctions or differentiations (Potter, 1998, p.6). This identification leads us to believe that we are separate and lack a basic sense of wholeness. Paranjpe (2002) explains:

> The standard Advaitic examples of illusion are mistaking a rope for a snake, where the dangerousness of the snake is mistakenly attributed to a harmless rope, or mistaking a pillar for a man, where the human properties of life and motion are superimposed on an inanimate pillar. Similarly, the *Atman*, which is unchanging and always blissful, appears to be continually changing, now happy then sad, clear or confused and so on, due to the superimposition of the attributes of ego onto it (p.170).

In the state of ignorance, we are propelled naturally on a journey of false pursuits by seeking experiences, objects, and situations that we deem would give us the sense of completeness. Liberation from human suffering therefore can only come from removing this ignorance through the direct awareness of pure consciousness (Potter, 1998, p. 6). This liberation is called *moksha*.

Moksha is not understood as merely an attainment of immortal existence. More precisely, *moksha* is understood as the gain of self-knowledge, since the core problem of identity is ignorance (Rambachan, 1998, p.21). With spiritual knowledge, the limited scope of the body-mind-sense complex and phenomenal reality is transcended. This process includes a restructuring of 'self' and 'reality' according to *Brahman* (Ultimate Reality) and *Atman* (True Self). Only by gaining the right knowledge can one liberate oneself from the chains of sufferings (s*amsara*) caused by misidentification with the body-mind-sense complex and *maya* (phenomenal reality).

DISCUSSION

Sumitra's *Samsara*: The genesis of her suffering

In describing Sumitra, the protagonist of *Between Lives*, Maniam states:

> If you look at the main character, Sumitra, and her friends, they don't seem to have got a bite into life. They're existing at the surface or at the fringe, and they think the fringe is the centre until Sumitra comes across Sellamma (as cited in Lim, 2004, p.41).

Sumitra plays the spiritual aspirant role in this novel who goes through a series of excursions and rites in order to "bring back into life what was not living properly" (Maniam, 2003, p.68). It denotes a rehabilitation of her true self which has been lain dormant due to her distorted view of self and reality. Sumitra's journey requires a reassessment of her identity and attachment to the body-mind-sense complex.

Sumitra is described as a modern, liberal and educated young woman who works as a counsellor and is a relocation expert for the Social Reconstruction Department. She greatly adheres to her work ethics since her profession requires her to maintain objective and impersonal relationships with all her "subjects". Her detached personality has its genesis in her childhood years when her father asserts the importance of keeping a distance from the other neighbourhood girls:

> "What's that Appa, distance?" "Oh, playing with them only when you have to," he said. "Why can't I play with them all the time?" "That's distance. Baby!' he said. "Not showing you want to be with them all the time!" "Why?" "They are *hoi polloi*." "What's that?" "They are not like us!" (Maniam, 2003, p.37).

This exchange of dialogue explains Sumitra's perception of human relationships. She adopts the idea that she should only engage with other people when it is required while at the same time maintain an inner detachment, especially with those whom her father believes are unequal to their socio-economic status. During that time, Sumitra's father's primary pursuit is to establish his socio-economic stature and inculcate character refinement. Thus, her father believes that Sumitra's behaviour of wandering denotes "listlessness" (Maniam, 2003, p.40), a lack of drive and purpose in life. Sumitra is constantly reminded to use her "mind" and focus on her grades (p.40). During her teenage years, Sumitra was made to realize the importance of "keeping your tongue in check" (Maniam, 2003, p.206) and to not "trust feelings all the time" (p.206). Her father still imposes restraint on Sumitra by personally choosing who she should mix with. The only crowd that Sumitra is allowed to mix with is the daughters of his friends at work, who "dressed in jeans and t-shirt, all bright and confident, lounged about sipping Coke, and listening to the latest pop songs" (Maniam 2003, p.206). They represent the modern middle-class people with an "attitude" (p.207) of not letting "things get to them" (p.207).

Since young, Sumitra has been ingrained with the idea that socio-economic status is the key to a successful life, and in so achieving, she must adopt a detached personality and be strictly selective in relationships. Sumitra is well known to be "Queen Blue Ice": "effervescent outside and no absorption inside" (Maniam, 2003, p.83) and is often crowned as "the monarch of inner detachment" (p. 8). Her personality is particularly useful in the social awareness programme which aims "to weed out the social ills and deviations" (Maniam, 2003, p.153). As Sumitra admits, her role is to act as a "mirror to the subject", "a reflector", and maintain the "thin line between yourself and the imagined

realities of the other person" (Maniam, 2003, p.153). Her past experiences using her "detached" and "inner aloofness" approach in handling cases prove successful, which make her believes that she has "the gift for dealing with the recalcitrant" (Maniam, 2003, p.2).

Read from the Advaita Vedanta's perspective, Sumitra limits her identity to the material and corporeal aspects of herself. From the outset, she is described as lacking a sense of empathy and openness. Due to this distant personality, Sumitra frequently feels lonely and isolated. She reflects on the lack of meaningful familial relationship at home. The bungalow her family lives in only induces a sense of loneliness to Sumitra. She wishes that the family had never left the smaller, rented house (Maniam, 2003, p.31) in which the family was livelier and closer. To banish her feeling of loneliness, Sumitra often leaves the house for outside entertainment with Christina, where there are "glitter, music, and noise" (Maniam, 2003, p.31). By doing this, Sumitra hopes to either eliminate or ignore their inner conflicts. Read from the perspective of Vedantic philosophy, the bungalow represents an insatiable desire for *artha.* Dayananda (1997) explains the limitation of *artha*:

> *Artha*…stands for all forms of security in life: wealth, power, influence, and fame. For human beings…there is no end to longing and struggle. The endlessness of human struggle to fulfil the sense of want, can be seen by analysing experience. If it is money I seek, no matter how much I accumulate it never seems enough. Irrespective of how much money I have, I don't feel secure…all these are struggles for security. I have the capacity to feel insecure; I accumulate assets but the accumulation fails to make me secure. The gain is never enough. I am always driven to seek more and different kinds of security in a futile effort to create a condition of security (p.2).

Indeed, the continuous search for security through *artha* is futile as it will not be able to express the true meaning of security. The desire for an external sense of security is driven by a sense of lack. It happens when a person becomes a prey to both his ego-identification and *maya.*

Sumitra's superficial sense of identity is also traceable in her relationships with other characters and working environment. Christina, Sumitra's best friend is described as a flamboyant person who "acts as a PR, besides being an important link in the gossip-net, and sometimes as a go-between" (Maniam, 2003, p.157). As Maniam states:

> Sumitra and Christina, her friend and colleague, have vague or surface longings. Sumitra wants to be popular with her subjects and unconsciously sacrifices honesty for popularity. Christina…also craves attention (as cited in Lim, 2004, p.41).

Her colleagues often engage in frivolous and trivial conversations. Leong, one of Sumitra's colleagues captures the superficiality of their conversations:

> Gloating over English football matches. Bragging about your children's grades…Fashion…The latest in clothers. The latest in communication. But what do you hear? What do you communicate? (Maniam, 2003, p.344).

As Sharrad (2004) duly notes, "The social scene (in *Between Lives*) appears to be quite superficial, characters accessibly uncomplicated and materialistic" (p.130). In a way, Maniam seems to critique modernity symbolized by the modern technologies and infrastructures of Sumitra's workplace, the rampant land development and material acquisitions (such as Sumitra's family bungalow). The undesirable effects of this modernity are seen in the novel's depiction of superficial and hollow human relationships that are bereft of meaningfulness. As for Sumitra, it translates into a form of *samsara* or sufferings, as exemplified by her sense of loneliness and alienation.

Sellamma's land as the metaphor of *Atman and Brahman*

In *Between Lives,* the "land" is not just a socio-political concept frequently linked with the diasporic longing for a sense of home. The land serves as an avenue that allows the characters to experience and gain insight into *Atman* and *Brahman*. Thus, the land is a metaphor of a higher realm where human beings can reclaim their true self. As Lance E. Nelson (2008) states:

> Hindu nondualism, as formalized and elaborately articulated in several schools of theology, sees the world – and indeed the inner spiritual self of all beings (not just human) – as inseparable from ultimate reality. It is this trend of thought in particular that has inspired the idea that Hinduism sees all of nature as sacred and worthy of reverence (p.98-9).

Furthermore, the novel suggests that characters who are spiritually enlightened treat the land differently than those who are not. This can be seen in the way Sellamma, the woman who lives on the land, is described. Sumitra describes Sellamma in a unique way, as she says "the old woman lives, or should I say, hovers about the land" (Maniam, 2003, p.1). The word "hovers" is essential throughout the novel because it reflects Sellamma's mystical and spiritual qualities.

Sumitra is also drawn to Sellamma's other worldly qualities. The fact that the former describes Sellamma as though she is levitating in the air requires us to redefine Sellamma's spectral qualities. Sumitra further substantiates this when she describes Sellamma's voice as "out of this world…it seems to come from a bodiless source, steadily and mesmerizingly" (Maniam, 2003, p.3). Sellamma's voice seems to come from a great distance, making Sumitra feel as though she allows herself to "fall under the spell of a living ghost" (Maniam, 2003, p.8). Another unique quality attributed to Sellamma is how she appears to be intimately connected with the land. Sellamma walks on the land "with light and agile steps, as if she really knows the land she treads on" and she is "treading softly over the land, that they seem joined, twin-like, to the land in some timeless way" (Maniam, 2003, p.4).

Portrayed as the above, Sellamma's relationship with the land strikes just the right balance between ownership and protectiveness. It is her reading of *Ramayana* that instils an awareness and knowledge of human-place relationship. She learns to understand the true nature of all beings, that "a spirit filled everything, whether evoked in those mythical tales or in their actual lives" (Maniam, 2003, p.108), whereas the Divine manifests itself in "every pebble, patch of grass, river, and the sea" (p.108). The knowledge of the "Divine" and the concept of "All is *Brahman*" allows Sellamma to see the truth about self and reality.

As described before, Sumitra and Sellamma have different interpretations of the land's values. Sumitra who is still fixated with her objective to relocate Sellamma could only see the physical and material aspects of the land which she believes to be uninhabitable:

> But as we go deeper into the ruins, I don't even have to pretend to be ashamed. And instead of nostalgia, I only feel the stirring of a faint revulsion. How could people have lived here? (Maniam, 2003, p.40).

Sumitra's view of the land reflects her pride in her "Queen Blue Ice" personality. As a person who is yet to be spiritually enlightened, Sumitra could only see the place's material and economic potentials and benefits once it is converted into a theme park (Maniam, 2003, p.5). She even envisions her endeavour as an act of valour for which Sellamma would be grateful as she is "rescued from the ranks of the living dead" (Maniam, 2003, p.32). With the relocation, Sumitra believes she is doing a favour for the society that would greatly benefit from the development of the land.

On the other hand, Sellamma sees only "emptiness" in Sumitra (Maniam, 2003, p.3) and tells her that she is "still young" (p.22) and "restless" (p.34). For someone who is new to the land, Sellamma stresses that "it takes a long time to be ready" and that one has to "come again and again" (Maniam, 2003, p.35) to really know the true value of the land. In a way, Sellamma sees Sumitra as a naïve young girl lacking in knowledge.

It is when Sumitra momentarily drops her preoccupation with "making things happen" (Maniam, 2003, p.35) that Sellamma suddenly opens up to her and invites her to go for a real excursion into the land. That moment of stillness when Sumitra becomes "motionless as a block of marble" and somehow "enter(s) that marbled stillness" (Maniam, 2003, p.36), symbolises a brief moment of total tranquillity when she is stripped of all of her intents and purposes regarding the land. Sellamma, witnessing the temporary stillness, consequently says, "you're not restless anymore…you're ready" (Maniam, 2003, p.6). The novel implicitly suggests that stillness is one of the keys to fully experience the true value of land which represents the *Atman-Brahman* realm. In the moment of stillness, Sumitra ceases to identify with her professional and detached social worker persona and gains inadvertent yet crucial insight into the *Atman-Brahman* realm. In order to excurse into the deeper realms of the land, Sumitra herself must get involved and modify her methodology to "crack the hard lumps of the soil" (Maniam, 2003, p.63).

Sumitra's journey towards *Moksha* (Liberation)

In order to set the stage for Sumitra's spiritual journey, Maniam employs the journey and rites-of-passage motifs. As Raihanah (2009) notes:

> Many of (Maniam's) characters take a particular journey, akin to a hero's quest towards self-discovery, and each returns in some form or other, better aware and perhaps better prepared to continue their lives. As a consequence, even though the characters may have Indian names and the plots use the Malaysian Indian social and cultural milieu, the conflicts that they face are not altogether foreign to Malaysians regardless of their culture and racial backgrounds (p.58-9).

Raihanah (2009) highlights an important feature of Maniam's works, which is the archetypal motif of the 'hero journey'. However, the journey is not only physical and mental, but also spiritual. The 'inward turn' provides an insight into his characters'

spiritual journeys as they strive to rehabilitate their sense of selfhood and experience spiritual transcendence. In the context of *Between Lives,* Sumitra has to continuously visit the land in order to see her "self-worth" (Maniam, 2003, p.1) and "reconcile" (p.1) with her true self.

The journey motif employed by Maniam in *Between Lives* is aimed at dismantling dualism. In his typology of Asian narrative tradition, Paniker (2003) describes some of the features of Indian narratology such as elastic or non-linear time and plots and events that seem physically or empirically improbable (p.4-5). For instance, the fluidity and elasticity of time and space in Indian narratives are more psychological than logical (Paniker, 2003, p.14). Narrators abandon the supposed time and happenings in an undefined area, shifting the limited concept to an indefinite infinity (Paniker, 2003, p.15). Paniker (2003) argues how these literary strategies are employed by Indian writers to engage with questions of 'reality' and 'self' which have its genesis in the Hindu thought (p.160).

Indeed, some of these features are visible in *Between Lives.* Both the journey and rites-of-passage motifs in the novel deconstruct the linearity of time and space, question the limitations of the body-mind-sense complex, and engage with ontological and spiritual rites-of-passage. These strategies challenge logic and repudiate a dualistic mind set. What arises from *Between Lives* with these strategies is a nuanced spiritual tone that triggers identity transformation through spiritual wisdom.

For instance, after Sellamma acknowledges that Sumitra moves "less awkwardly" on the land (Maniam, 2003, p.62), Sumitra – under the guidance of Sellamma – undergoes her first spiritual rites-of-passage which is the "baptism in the river" (Maniam, 2003, p.68). The river baptism is a process of "enter(ing) it to bring yourself out" (Maniam, 2003, p.64). A symbolic ritual of self-purification, the immersion into water crosses the boundary of "*tirtha*". As Choudhury (1998) explains:

> It symbolises the location of intersection of two realms, the mundane and the spiritual, the profance and the sacred. In that respect the physical journey to the *tirthas* is instrumental in the spiritual progress of the pilgrims (p.235).

During the ritual, Sumitra experiences an alternative paradigm of reality which subverts multiplicities of appearances and duality:

> I really don't know how to explain this to anyone, let alone myself, I remember saying to myself, and giving in to the experience. I am suddenly aware of a teeming noise and a teeming silence. Though I've been itching to reach out for the thundu to dry myself, I resist the desire…Then the head becomes light, and the eyes become clear with impersonal lucidity, so that when I look at the old woman on this slab of stone, I see her not as a person but as some gesture outside time; out of the corner of my eyes, I see Nanda is flesh and fur, and yet only some memorable heaving. I hear myself breathe, and yet only feel a certain indifference. Sitting there, beside her, I'm on the verge of forgetting why I came here at all (Maniam, 2003, p.66-7).

The river bathing scene is without doubt a spiritual experience where ordinary identification with senses become useless. Instead, a complete inclusiveness of all beings emerges from the non-resistance which goes beyond their corporeal properties. In this scene, Sumitra witnesses the event as though she is an all-encompassing omnipresent self

whose personality and intentions has dissolved. Sellamma, and to an extent Nanda (Sellamma's dog), are no longer her "subjects" but part of a unity that eschews the illusions of dualities. This experience instils awareness in Sumitra of a reality that destroys normative notions of time and space, producing only silence and stillness. This is the realm of Absolute Reality (*Brahman*) where all personalities, preoccupations, and attachments are meaningless. In the realm of *Brahman*, Sumitra surrenders without the purpose and persona of a counsellor. In return, she experiences peacefulness, albeit momentarily.

With this experience, Sumitra re-evaluates the foundations of her identity but at the same time tries to reassure herself that she is still Queen Blue Ice (Maniam, 2003, p.83). When she returns to the office after the river baptism, Sumitra no longer feels proud of her work, and instead feels as though "it's somebody else who's being praised, and somebody else who's sitting at my desk" (Maniam, 2003, p.151). She wonders if she has become "only words with empty gestures" (Maniam 2003, p.224), a "voyeur" (p.194), and asks, "in what way can I be more active? Is that why I feel drained all the time, as if I don't have a personality at all?" (p.195). It is this split between True Self and ego-self (Queen Blue Ice) that further generates Sumitra's self-introspection not only about herself, but also the nature of her reality.

The jungle excursion is a form of the journey motif that Maniam employs in order to further enhance the spiritual atmosphere in the novel. Sumitra's jungle excursions with Sellamma seal her fuller understanding of land's significance. In the final excursion, Sumitra attains the spiritual experience of a paradigmatic reality akin to her *tirtha* (rites-of-passage):

> Then the teeming sounds return…No, no, I'm not just frightened for myself; I also want to guard her. I don't mean Sellamma as a person. I remember the story she told me about the stick turning into a golden cobra. I feel, just as she did, when she saw her hand turn into a golden hood, that I, too, am part of the life in that immense darkness all around me. But a tiny, almost negligible part. I slowly feel for my face, in all that darkness, to reassure myself with its shape and warmth (Maniam, 2003, p. 202).

Sumitra breaks the illusion of the separate and objective self and renders herself vulnerable to *Brahman* (Absolute Reality). In this realm of *Brahman*, all personas and attachments disappear and only an awareness of all-inclusiveness prevails. The knowledge of oneness facilitates a crucial transformation for Sumitra. At this point, Sumitra realises the truth behind the superficiality of her identity when she says "Look at me. What am I? … Queen Blue Ice? Anjalai! No nothing. Didn't even know I was nothing. Until recently" (Maniam, 2003, p.350). Her detached and impersonal persona of "Queen Blue Ice" has thus far prevented her from developing meaningful relationships not only with Sellamma, the land and her family, but most importantly with herself. All the while, Sumitra is very careful not to allow Sellamma's personality and spectral-like qualities engulf her. But in actuality, her resistance is provoked by a deep-seated anxiety of inadequacy. By assuming the Queen Blue Ice personality, Sumitra could suppress the undesirable negative feelings stemmed from work and home and instead, portray herself as a successful, modern, and professional young woman. From a Queen Blue Ice, Sumitra is transformed into a person who secures her identity with *Atman*. With the collapse of this binary opposition, Sumitra embraces the true value of the land which symbolises both *Atman* and *Brahman*. It is achieved when Sumitra approaches the land with openness and without the dichotomy of the self-other.

Sumitra's decision to protect and preserve Sellamma's land comes from her deep understanding of the land's true value. Having witnessed Sellamma's unusual affinity with the land, Sumitra is required to reassess her perception of the human-place relationship. The land's value transcends the boundaries of time and place, memories and nostalgias. Sellamma's twin-like relationship with the land is based on spiritual and religious significance as the land provides a continuous avenue for self-renewal and rehabilitation. Sumitra's own experience validates the spiritual value of the land. Her rites-of-passage into the jungle actuates new knowledge about the self and reality. Sumitra is bent to preserve the land - with its simple and unpolluted qualities – as a symbol of *Atman* (True Self) which is untainted by and free from desires, attachments, and ego-identification. The encroaching development on the land symbolises human desire to attach to *Atman* temporary and phenomenal attributes (material and economic values). In actuality, *Atman* always inevitably escapes such notions. Hence, to preserve the land is to preserve the wholeness of the *Atman-Brahman* realm.

CONCLUSION

In *Between Lives,* Maniam points to the transformative capacity of spirituality in addressing the inner identity crisis of the Malaysian Indian community, rather than the identity politics which continues to thwart national identity integration. Maniam's literary strategy in this novel, through the employment of journey motif and rites-of-passage which obliterate dualism, reflect the Vedantic philosophy of "oneness." As Sumitra's experience attests, spirituality revolutionises the way she perceives and comprehends the notions of "self" and "reality". Consequently, she is able to surmount her identity crisis and affirm her new sense of selfhood according to the Hindu concept of *Atman* (True Self). Reading Maniam's *Between Lives* using Advaita Vedanta gives us an insight into the esoteric dimension of the Malaysian Indian identity which goes beyond the normative attachments to the socio-political and economic realms. It thus adds to the dynamism of Malaysian Indian identity discourse.

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ISSN: 2289-649X
Journal of Language and Communication, 3(1), 97-108 (2016)

HIERARCHY OF NEEDS IN RESIDENTIAL ADVERTISEMENTS

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ABSTRACT
This study explored how advertisements emphasise individuals' needs as a way to persuade them. More specifically, it investigated which 'need' is addressed more commonly by web advertisements according to the 'Ideal' and 'Real' concepts respectively. For this purpose, five web advertisements related to residential areas were analysed qualitatively based on Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. Based on Maslow's five-stage model (1954), individuals have biological and physiological needs (e.g., air and food), safety needs, love and belongingness needs, esteem needs (e.g., self-respect and prestige), and self-actualization needs (e.g., self-fulfilment). The results showed that the advertisers tend to focus on the individuals' esteem needs compared to others. This research opens up a different perspective to view persuasion in advertisements. Further studies are required to investigate individuals' needs reflected in other types of advertisements using different methods.

Keywords: advertisements, hierarchy of needs, persuasion

INTRODUCTION
The study of discourse analysis as well as language and power has been done extensively over the years (Hoey, 1979; Hoey, 1983; Fairclough, 1992; Bhatia, 1993; Jones, 2012). These studies are inter-related because they show how language can influence people in everyday life. Discourse analysis focuses more on how language can influence a person's ideology and cultural background as well as his or her perception of certain issues (Jones, 2012). Language and power generally deal with how language can influence individuals, give dominance to the speaker, persuade the listeners or readers, and take control of their perceptions or beliefs towards a particular topic (Simpson & Mayr, 2010).

Advertisements are one of the good examples that showcase how language can manipulate and empower a person's state of mind or ideology. Over the past years, many linguists have taken an interest in the language of advertising (Leech, 1966; Vestergaard & Schrøder, 1985; Dyer, 1988; Cook, 1992). Advertising is simply the promotion of goods and services through media. Advertisements are designed to persuade consumers to buy a certain product (van Mulken, van Enschot-van Djik and Hoeken, 2005). Ideology, on the other hand, is a specific set of beliefs and assumptions people have about things such as what is good or bad, what is right or wrong, and what is normal and abnormal

(Jones, 2012). This study examines the way a number of advertisements put together the visual and verbal aspects of the product or service they provided to control or manipulate their readers' ideology by addressing their needs. By combining a concept introduced by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954) and the 'Ideal' and 'Real' concepts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996), this research seeks to unravel how advertisements persuade customers.Based on McLeod (2007), Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a five-stage model (1954) including:

1. Biological and Physiological needs – air, food drink, shelter, sex, warmth, sleep, and the like.
2. Safety needs – protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear.
3. Love and belongingness needs – friendship, intimacy, affection and love (from work group, family, friends and romantic relationship).
4. Esteem needs – achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, self-respect, and respect from others.
5. Self-actualization needs – realizing personal potential, self-fulfilment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996), 'Ideal' concept is said to be the top part of an advertisement whereas the bottom part is called 'Real'. They argued that for something to be 'Ideal', the information that this part carries is presented as the idealised or generalized essence of the information, or in other words, it is presented as the most salient part. 'Real' on the other hand, presents more specific information or details, more 'down-to-earth' information, or in other words, the most practical information.

This study attempts to unravel which 'need' the advertisers' addresses most frequently as far as the 'Ideal' and 'Real' concepts are concerned, in order to persuade and influence their readers' ideology thus convincing them to buy the product. 'Need' in this particular study is defined as the knowledge that the advertisers' have of the readers on what they think is a necessity and essential to have in their life. Persuasion in this context is the readers' thought on the advertisement, whether or not the advertisement can persuade them into buying their product by addressing the needs of the readers. The research questions for the current study are:

1. Which need(s) do residential web advertisements address on the most according to the 'Ideal' concept?
2. Which need(s) do residential web advertisements address on the most according to the 'Real' concept?

PAST RESEARCH ON PERSUASION IN ADVERTISEMENTS

Various research has been conducted on the elements of persuasion in advertisements including the study by Fuertes-Olivera, Velasco-Sacristán, Arribas-Baño, and Samaniego-Fernández (2001). Their study focused on the interpersonal metadiscourse devices in slogans and headlines. Their findings showed that copywriters rely on person markers, hedges and emphatics to create a writer-reader relationship and prevent the feeling of

distrust on the part of the addressees. This notion is similar to the current study in which the study looks into how advertisers indirectly manipulate their audience.

Another research that is also related to persuasion in advertisements was done by Pathong (2008). This study aimed to provide a tri-stratal exploration of persuasive language that was illustrated through an analysis of selected talisman advertisements. The findings of this study indicated that in the context stratum, the persuasive goal of advertising is motivated and highlighted by talisman advertisement attribution and production. Readers were persuaded by a high expectation of possible success, and felt as though they had an achievement in life when they purchased or used the product.

In a study on the discourse of femininity in advertisements in Thai health and beauty magazine, Phakdeephasook (2009) examined how advertisements used linguistics strategies to lure the audience to endorse in the advertisers' product or services. More specifically, this study looked at how advertisements created a 'desirable women' ideology. The results revealed that women's need to be desirable was addressed in advertisements through the use of lexical selection, claiming, metaphor, overstatement, presupposition manipulation and intertextuality.

All of the studies being reviewed addressed the topic of persuasion in advertisements. The only difference that they had was methodological and the way the analysis had been carried out. This current study is about exploring how advertisements can indirectly persuade their audiences by stressing on their needs. The findings will reveal what type of needs is commonly addressed by the advertisers to help them persuade buyers' purchase properties. In the previous literature, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory (Maslow, 1954) as well as the 'Ideal' and 'Real' concepts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) had not been applied as the analytical frameworks. Therefore, this research is expected to lessen the gap in the field of persuasion in advertisements.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach with purposeful sampling method was employed for this study. According to Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007), sample sizes in qualitative research should not be so large because it will become difficult to extract thick and rich data (Gray, 2009). For this reason, five web residential advertisements that followed the criteria of the 'Ideal' and 'Real' concepts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) were selected.

The advertisements were divided into two sections, top and bottom, with a vertical layout. They were all taken from a similar source which is www.thinkproperty.com.my. This website is owned by Think Media Sdn Bhd, a Malaysian based company that provides real estate listing services. All of the adverts collected were from local real estate developers and the adverts were selected without taking into consideration of the time and types of residential advertised. This ensures that the results obtained can be related to the Malaysian context. A descriptive design was utilised to analyse the samples. The analysis included matching the information obtained from 'Ideal' and 'Real' concepts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) with the individuals 'needs according to Maslow's theory. The research questions were answered based on the results obtained.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results obtained revealed that in both the 'Ideal' or top and 'Real' or bottom part of the advertisements, five out of three mainly emphasised on peoples' esteem needs. For the 'Ideal' section, the advertisements are photos 1, 2 and 5 respectively while 'Real' section are photos 1, 3 and 5 (Appendix). In photos 1 and 5, both sections of the advertisements have stressed on the same needs which is peoples' esteem needs. This need is only emphasised on the 'Ideal' section for photo 2 and 'Real' section of photo 3. In photo 2, the 'Real' section stresses on safety needs while the 'Ideal' section in photo 3 emphasises on love and belongingness needs. In photo 4, both the 'Ideal' and 'Real' sections emphasise on peoples' safety needs. A detailed description of each photo and the discussion on why esteem needs are emphasised the most in both 'Ideal' and 'Real' sections will be further explained.

Photo 1. One Legenda Bungalow
(http://thinkproperty.com.my/new-development-watch/advertisement-one-legenda-cheras-kuala-lumpur.html)

In photo 1, the emphasis on esteem needs can be seen through the numerous images that the advertiser has used for the top part and the major information the advertiser has given out at the bottom part. There are numerous images in the top part of the advert but what stands out the most are the images of the swimming pool and the woman meditating on a chair at the end of it. These particular images occupy a large

portion of the advert which indicates the advertisers' attention to let the readers know what they might get by purchasing this specific residential. The overall surroundings in this photo with the addition of the glass walls and the view of a very neat and clean space represent a prestigious, classy and modernised style of living. The image of the woman meditating shows that by being in this sort of environment she has achieved serenity in life. In the bottom part of the advert, there is a statement that goes; limited to 3 units only. This statement actually emphasises on how this place is an exclusive residential with only three units available. By purchasing it quickly, he or she will have the respect from others as he or she is one of three lucky people that can own this custom-made residential. Owning this place gives the readers a sense of prestige and high social status.

Photo 2. Armanee Terrace ‖
(http://thinkproperty.com.my/new-development-watch/advertisement-armanee-terrace-ii-petaling-jaya.html)

The 'Ideal' part in photo 2 shows a living room that is filled with modern and expensive looking furniture. There is also a grand piano placed within that particular living room. The dining table is placed under a beautiful chandelier and is equipped with a full set of nice looking and high quality dinnerware. It can be seen that the advertiser

portrays the room as having a peaceful and comfy ambiance with a touch of classy and modern style of living. Besides that, the phrase Living Luxuriously! is placed at the very top of the advert indicating the advertisers' attempt to grab the readers' attention. All of the elements by the advertiser in this advert portray how the readers can have a comfy, modernised and luxurious lifestyle if they purchase it. In the bottom part of the advert, the advertiser is simply sharing the details concerning the residential. Among the information given, the one the advertiser is stressing on the most would be the secured investment scheme. This part stresses on peoples' safety needs because the advertiser is assuring the readers that they offer an investment scheme that can be trusted. In addition, the readers will have a sense of security and freedom from the fear of getting cheated on. Moreover, the advertiser points out that by living here, the residents will achieve stability in their spirit and mind as the place is surrounded with nature.

Photo 3. M City Private Garden Home
(http://thinkproperty.com.my/new-development-watch/advertisement-garden-suites-exclusive-units-with-private-garden-m-city.html)

Photo 3 is the only one that stresses on love and belongingness needs. It can be seen through the image of a woman and a girl sitting intimately while reading a book together. Although it is not a big image as the rest of the elements present in this section of the advert, the reason why it stands out the most is because it is different from all the

other elements presented here. Immediately readers will be drawn to this image as it seems out of place. That is one of the advertisers' strategies to grab the readers' attention. This part showcases the building's grand infrastructure that is surrounded by the beautiful view of the city and the overall lovely surrounding of the residential area. However, amongst all of those elements the advertiser placed the image of what seems to be a mother and a daughter spending some quality time together. Both of them can be seen smiling and that indicates the wonderful relationship the mother has with her daughter. Thus, the advertiser is pointing out that even with a busy and hectic lifestyle, the readers can still spend quality time with their family if they become a resident in the private garden home. As for the 'Real' section in this photo, the advertiser is stressing on peoples' esteem needs. This can be seen from the font used to describe the prestigious part of the residential is bigger compared with the font used to describe the conveniences it has to offer. Bigger fonts can attract the readers' attention more compared with normal sized fonts. Consequently, it shows that the advertiser is more interested to show potential buyers that they can be guaranteed of a luxurious and fancy lifestyle by being a part of the society there.

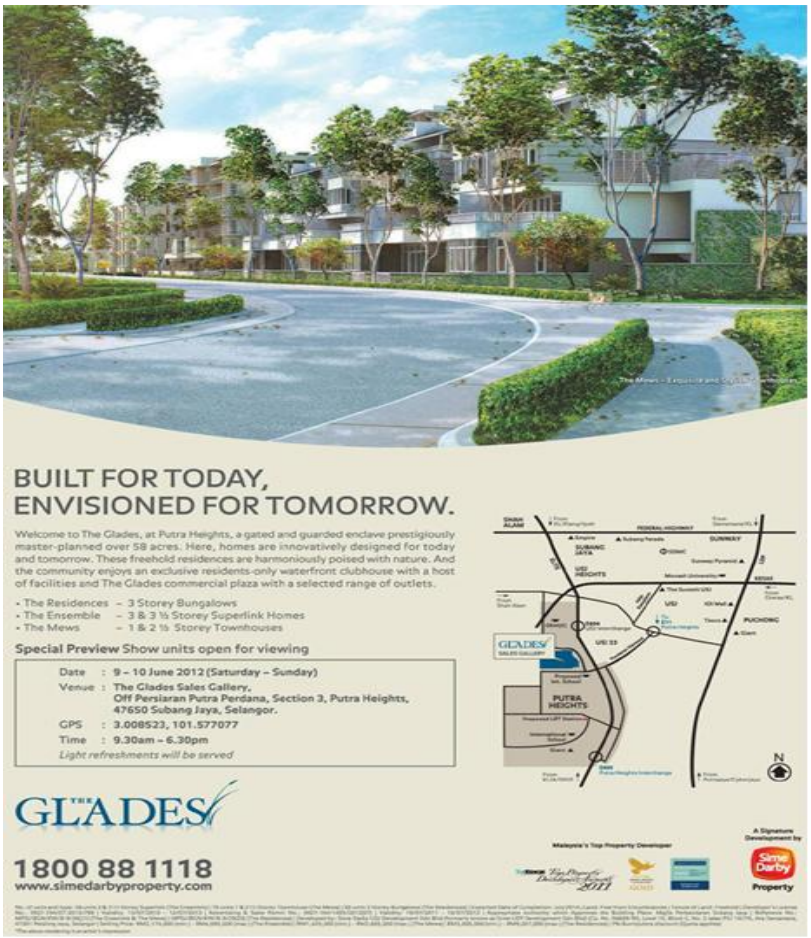

Photo 4. The Glades (The Mews) Townhouse
(http://thinkproperty.com.my/new-development-watch/advertisement-the-glades-putra-heights-selangor.html)

Photo 4 is different than all the other photos because the advertiser is stressing on the safety needs in both 'Ideal' and 'Real' sections of the advert. As explained, safety needs have to do with protection from elements, having a sense of security, stability and freedom from fear, and the like. In the 'Ideal' part, the advertisers did not rely on big fonts or flashy images but they used images that portray a sense of stability, comfort and nurturing environment. They focused on showcasing the nature that surrounds the residential making the overall ambiance of the place to seem calm and peaceful and free from any form of danger. In the 'Real' part, the statement…welcome to The Glades, at Putra Heights, a gated and guarded… already signified that the advertisers address peoples' safety needs. Based on this statement alone, the readers will have the impression that this residential is a safe and secured place to live in. Overall, this photo shows the advertisers' attempt to create harmony and stability from the colour choices and the positioning of each of the elements by them.

Photo 5: Univ 360 Office Suite
(http://thinkproperty.com.my/new-development-watch/advertisement-univ-360-place-seri-kembangan-selangor.html)

In photo 5, both sections of the advertisements emphasise peoples' esteem needs. In the top part, the main factor the advertiser is addressing would be the overall

atmosphere of the residential. This can be explained with the selection of images that portrayed the residential as a beautiful, modern and luxurious residence to live in. The advertiser used the viewpoint from someone sitting near the swimming pool to create an image of what it could be like if the reader is a resident there. In addition, the headline of the advert pointed out that by being a part of this residential, the readers can begin an exciting new chapter of their life. This headline indicates the advertiser's attempt to persuade the readers by emphasising how their life can change for the better just by becoming an official resident there. Since this information is placed in the top part, the readers might not get the exact deal that this advert has to offer. Esteem needs are emphasised in the bottom part of the advert through the information presented by the advertisers. They pointed out that this particular residential was built and designed exclusively to meet the needs of professionals, entrepreneurs and artists who are keen into finding versatile spaces to match their unique, cosmopolitan lifestyle. In other words, they are targeting high status people to be residents there. Nevertheless, if people of a normal status happen to purchase it, they are most likely to be surrounded by elite society thus making them feel as though they are a part of that community as well. They will have an impression that they will gain the respect from others as they are a part of the wealthy and elite society too. The advertiser can guarantee that the readers will get this kind of lifestyle by purchasing and living in this residential because it is placed in the 'Real' section of the advertisement.

Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that esteem needs is the need that residential web advertisements address the most according to the 'Ideal' and 'Real' concepts. There is one common trait present in all of the photos associated with this need. The advertisers can be seen stressing on the esteem needs of their audiences by showing them how they can have a luxurious, comfortable and modern lifestyle if they purchase and live in the residential areas being advertised. It can be observed that advertisers used this strategy in both the 'Ideal', which is the top part of the advertisement and 'Real', which is the bottom part, to convey a message to their audiences, and the message is, in order for them to achieve a fulfilling life, it is crucial for them to have a luxurious and wealthy style of living.

Clearly, there is a reason why esteem needs are emphasised the most compared with the other needs. One reason could be the fact that in today's society, most people are concerned with becoming rich and wealthy. Nowadays, being respected by others and having a good social status are some of the goals that most people seek. Having a luxurious style of living is viewed to be something that is important for one to be successful in life due to the economy and other factors. Therefore, it can be considered that the advertisers are well aware of the current situation and they have taken this opportunity to persuade the readers by stressing on their esteem needs in both 'Ideal' and 'Real' parts of the adverts. Based on the analysis done in the current study, it can be seen that the advertisers themselves acknowledged the fact that being wealthy and having a modernised lifestyle is the way to go in today's society. It also shows the advertisers assumption that the current society can afford to have this kind of lifestyle.

In the analysis of talisman advertisements, Pathong (2008) reported that the advertisers focused on one specific need which is the esteem needs. The researcher stated that the persuasive goal of advertising is motivated and highlighted by talisman attribution and production. They are endorsed by shared experiences of successful worshippers. With that, the readers are persuaded by a high expectation of success. This evidently stresses on their esteem needs as they aim towards success. Furthermore, it can also be deducted that most people crave to have some form of achievement in life and have respect from others as well as self-respect.From this perspective, our findings confirm those of Pathong's (2008) study.

Likewise, Phakdeephasook (2009) analysed the discourse of femininity in Thai health and beauty magazines. Although this study's main focus was on ideology, indirect persuasion can also be identified in it. Phakdeephasook's (2009) study indicated that advertisers frequently stress on two needs which are love and esteem needs. Taking one example from this study, women are categorised as 'desirable women' when they fulfil the ideological concepts being portrayed in the adverts. It can be concluded that women are chasing the 'desirable women' label to be considered as beautiful in order to find that special someone. Besides that, if a woman managed to obtain that label, she would feel as though she accomplished an achievement after a battle with what the magazine considered as women's "problems" and "enemies".

Considering the previous research done on persuasion in advertisements, none of them applied Maslow Hierarchy of Needs theory (Maslow, 1954) in the light of the 'Ideal' and 'Real' concepts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996) to conduct their analysis. Most of them analysed the linguistic features in the advertisements. With the application of different theories proposed by different scholars, different persuasive strategies may be detected which were used by advertisers to trigger the audience's. Since this research applies a theory that is unfamiliar in this field of study, the results obtained differ from those of other researches. Not only does this research unravel the advertisers' intention in producing such adverts, it also discloses the advertisers' ideology on how they think luxury and wealth can bring comfort, joy and fulfils todays' society's desires in life.

In conclusion, any advertisement has a form of persuasion in it, in a direct and/or an indirect way. In the current study, individuals' needs were emphasised by the advertisers in order to lure the readers into becoming their potential customers. As society nowadays has a modernised mind-set, due to the 21st century evolution, it is not surprising why advertisers are emphasising more on peoples' esteem needs rather than the other needs as proposed by Maslow (1954). Based on these findings, Maslow's theory can provide a useful framework to analyse advertisements.

CONCLUSION

This research looked into persuasion in advertisements from a different aspect which is how persuasion can be achieved by stressing on the needs of individuals in their life. A total of 5 web residential advertisements were analysed. The samples that were purposively selected all had a vertical layout and a clear distinction between the upper and lower parts. This research also utilized Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs as a framework

to analyse which needs advertisers stress most frequently in both 'Ideal' and 'Real' parts of advertisements.

The findings showed that in both 'Ideal' and 'Real' parts of the advertisements, the advertisers' focus was mostly on the peoples' esteem needs which comprise ones' achievements, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, self-respect, and respect from others. These results explained the advertisers' view on what the society is mostly concerned about. Advertisers are aware that people nowadays crave for a luxurious life; therefore, they commonly showcase luxury and prestigious background and setting in their advertisements.

Various parties can benefit from this research. Marketers could use this research as a guide to better understand how by emphasizing the peoples' needs in their products or services that they provide, they can persuade their costumers into purchasing them because they think it is a necessity for them. Other than that, the marketers would find this research useful as they can fully understand that in order to get their potential buyers' attention, they need to distinguish their needs. In addition, advertisement designers can take into consideration what to highlight in advertisements to make them more appealing and marketable.

This research could also benefit buyers' by helping them to better understand the way advertisements are presented so that they would not be fooled or easily persuaded. This research would also help buyers to view the advertisement in a way that they gain the necessary information first rather than they just simply believe in what the advertisers' claim to be selling. This will help the buyers greatly by not letting them buy out of impulse or make rash decisions. It will make the buyers have more sensitive to what they truly want and not be easily be deceived by what the advertisers want them to believe.

As for researches in the area of language studies, this research opens up a different perspective to view persuasion in advertisements. This research showed how persuasion can be delivered in advertisements by stressing on peoples' needs. Based on Maslow's theory, it can be concluded that people can be persuaded into purchasing a product or services offered by what they see if those products or services fulfil their needs in life. Past researches pay more attention to the use of linguistic strategies in advertisements that can influence their potential buyers' decisions to purchase the target products or services as well as Aristotle's persuasive appeal to name a few. This research also revealed that persuasion can be achieved with the use of verbal and non-verbal elements by stressing on the needs of people as well.

This current research did an in-depth analysis on five web residential advertisements that were purposively selected regardless of the time and date of their publication, respective companies, the type of residential building, location, as well as the residential criteria. In order to make future studies more comprehensive and detailed, the aforementioned parameter scan be taken into consideration. Besides that, the current study used a qualitative approach. The samples were analysed descriptively and interpretatively. No questionnaire was administered to any participants. Future studies can be conducted using quantitative methods.

Persuasion in advertisements can be studied not only by analysing the linguistic features but also by looking onto the way advertisements present themselves to be seen as what the viewers need to see. It is expected that this research will provide some insight and useful analytical tools for future researches concerning persuasion in advertisements.

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REFEREES FOR THE JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION VOL. 3(1) MARCH 2016

The Editorial Board of the Journal of Language and Communication wishes to thank the following:

Afida Mohamad Ali
Universiti Putra Malaysia

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Universiti Putra Malaysia

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