

Balancing Acts: Harmony & Collaboration in Education

In accordance with the UN 17 SDGs





VESAL -2024 Abstract Book of 2024

14th International Conference on Educational Studies and Applied Linguistics

Oct 23rd-24th, 2024

Erbil, Kurdistan Regional Government, Iraq

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WELCOMING REMARK



Asst. Prof. Dr. Idris Hadi Salih Head of Board of Trustees, Tishk International University

It is a pleasure and privilege to welcome you to this most innovative and forward-thinking venue where you will have time to consider and formulate what higher education will look like as emerging technologies, economy, and policies continue to catapult it into the future. In many ways, one's career during this evolving information age seems more like a foot race. We have been challenged to remain relevant in our disciplines and at the same time are compelled to adopt and use current technologies. The changes have been exciting and profound and have transformed how we do business. We now have learning environments that include online classrooms, MOOCs. cellphone response systems, and countless other instructional technologies dramatically changing how and engage with students and deliver education. As administrators. professors. and public leaders, what must we consider as the academy's core missions of teaching, research, and outreach move into the future? To mission discuss the core of education and language teaching learning, the Faculty Education at Tishk International University has organized International Visible Conference on Educational Studies and Applied Linguistics (VESAL), which is entering its 14th year of successful organization. The conference has already become a considerable brand and is improving year by year. The aim of VESAL 2024 is to attract the research communities to promote connections between theory and practice and explore different perspectives on applying research findings to different practices. I kindly welcome scholars coming from the international and local regions as well as experts, educators, linguists, lecturers, and senior lecturers to Erbil, Iraq. The Conference aims to open channels, roads for academic pave collaboration, and bring experiences together with expertise for further innovative thoughts and creative research. Dr. Idris Hadi has now been the Head of the Board of Trustees of Tishk International University since November 2016.

Previously he worked as the first Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Kurdistan Regional Government - Erbil from 2006 till November 1st, 2009. Then he worked as the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs in the first elected government of Iraq - Bagdad between 2005-2006. Dr. Idris Hadi is a founding member of the Human Rights organization in the Kurdistan region and was elected as the president of the organization from 1991 to 1993. During this time, he actively participated has conferences and workshops related to human rights, women's rights, and children's rights and joint projects with international Human Rights Watch such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Human Rights organization of UN and other organizations. After that, Dr. Idris Hadi worked as the Minister of Transportation and

Communication in the first cabinet the Kurdistan regional government – Erbil in 1992. Then he Minister worked as the Transportation and Communication in the second cabinet of Kurdistan regional government - Erbil in 1993. Later, Dr. Idris Hadi worked as the Minister of Industry and Energy in the third cabinet of the Kurdistan regional government -Erbil in 1996. Then he worked as the Minister of Municipalities Tourism in the Kurdistan regional government - Erbil in 1998. Dr. Idris Hadi received his bachelor's degree from Sulaimani University/ Iraq in 1976 and his master's degree in communication engineering at Leningrad University in 1982, then he received his PhD Degree in Engineering Communication (Technical Science) at Leningrad University in 1985. Dr. Idris Hadi and his family live in Erbil-Iraq.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The Organizing Committee of The International Visible Conference of Educational Studies and Applied Linguistics (VESAL 2024) is composed of distinguished academics who are experts in their fields. The Organizing Committee is responsible for nominating and vetting Keynote and Featured Speakers; developing the conference program, including workshops, panels, and targeted sessions; undertaking event outreach and promotion; recommending and attracting future Organizing Committee members; working with Tishk International University to select PhD students and early career academics for Tishk International University-funded grants and scholarships for teaching profession as careers; and reviewing abstracts submitted to the conference.

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VESAL 2024 CONFERENCE THEME

Dr. Venera Ulker, Head of English Language Teaching Department – Tishk International University, Erbil, Iraq

"Balancing Acts: Harmony and Collaboration in Education" in accordance with UN 17 SDGs

The world is changing increasing speed - the way we communicate, find information and work has been massively transformed the past decade. Education in systems, however, are struggling to catch up with an overwhelming amount of information at students' fingertips. There is a growing need for soft skills such as empathy and creativity; educators at every level are facing the challenge of reinventing the classroom and reshaping the very system itself. During the changing times the educators should rethink and rebuild the executive education that will help the learners to integrate global citizenship and social justice into their lives. A nation that effectively utilizes their resources is closely aligned with the thoughts, and culture concepts. οf individuals who make up the society and with the prudence, foresight, and sincere devotion of those in power. administrators The responsible for the level of care given to individuals and their efforts toward

becoming a social entity will be an indication of how closely aligned they are with the prophetic principle that "All of you are shepherds, and all of you are responsible for those under your care" and that "being glad with making others happy instead of selfconcerns. If the new generations' minds are equipped with the sciences of their time and their hearts are not lit up with breezes from beyond and if they are provided with an ample education. with all their needs opportunities fulfilled and all available for them to succeed then they can look forward to a bright future. These future generations will be able to stand up to every kind of obstacle in the struggle of life, they will be able to overcome – material or spiritual – every kind of difficulty and will never give in to despair. All the hardships that we will encountered along the wav in providing our children with a better education will have been worth it.

CONFERENCE GUIDE

Registration and Payment: Oct 23-24, 2024 at 08:30-09:45

REGISTRATION & ACCESS

You will be able to pick up your registration pack and name card at the Conference Registration Desk. The Conference Registration Desk and Publications Desk will be situated in the Tishk International University, Education Building, Entrance Hall) during the conference. When you register for the conference, you will pay the conference fee. If you have any questions or concerns, the Education Faculty staff will happily assist you.

Name Badges

When you check in at the registration desk, you will receive a registration pack, which includes your name badge. Wearing your badge is required for entrance to the sessions. You must wear your badge at all times during the conference.

Certificates

Certificates for the Participants will be delivered during the closing ceremony. A certificate for each Presenter will be delivered at the end of his or her presentations. Certificates for Session Chairs and Organizing Committee members will be delivered during the closing ceremony.

Lunch (Day 1 | 23rd October 2024)- Wednesday, 12:35–13:30

VESAL 2024 is a highly anticipated event held over two days, with the first day dedicated to the speakers and organizing committee at Tishk International University, where they will be treated to a lunch specially arranged for them. The Conference Lunch is a free-of-charge service provided by the conference.

Lunch (Day 2 | 24th October 2024)- Thursday, 12:10-13:30

Lunch on the second day is included in the conference registration fee. Lunch will be provided at Tishk International University, which will serve different local dishes prepared by a talented team of chefs. Lunch service includes drinks (non-alcoholic), a coffee station, and a dessert table. Please remember to bring your name badge with you, as this will act as your lunch ticket. Attendees can look forward to a productive and informative experience filled with engaging discussions, networking opportunities, and thought-provoking presentations.

PRESENTATION GUIDE

Conference Abstracts

The conference abstracts are accessible in hard copy format. The presentation sessions will commence after the opening ceremony on **Wednesday** morning and are typically arranged into concurrent sessions. Each concurrent session comprises three presentations, with two sets of four presentations scheduled for **Concurrent Session I and Concurrent Session II**, respectively. To ensure equal time allocation for each presentation, the session duration will be divided equally among the presenters. For optimal delivery and interaction, we recommend that an Oral Presentation should last no longer than **15 minutes**, with an additional **5 minutes** for **questions and answers**. Should there be any remaining time in the session, it may be utilized for further discussion.

Equipment

All rooms will be equipped with an all-in-one computer, featuring your interactive presentations. We advise you to use the computer provided by plugging in your USB flash drive. We recommend that you bring two copies of your presentation in case one fails and suggest sending yourself the presentation by email as a third and final precaution.

Session Chairs

Session Chairs are asked to introduce themselves and other speakers (briefly) using the provided printouts of speaker bios, hand out the provided presentation certificates at the end of the session, and ensure that the session begins and ends on time and that the time is divided fairly between the presentations. Each presenter should have no more than **20 minutes** in which to present his or her paper and respond to any questions. The Session Chair is asked to assume this timekeeping role. Please follow the order in the program, and if for any reason a presenter fails to show up, please keep to the original time slots as delegates use the program to plan their attendance.

Certificates

All presenters will receive a certificate of presentation from their Session Chair or a member of staff at the end of their session.

Publication

Accepted papers at VESAL 2024 will have the privilege of being published in one of the following prestigious venues:

International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies (IJSSES): The IJSSES is a reputable scholarly journal that covers a wide range of topics in social sciences and educational studies. It is indexed by DOI (Digital Object Identifier), ensuring the permanence and accessibility of published articles. Authors whose papers are selected will have the opportunity to contribute to the academic discourse in their field through this esteemed journal.

• The VESAL2024 Book of Proceedings: The conference proceedings will be compiled into a comprehensive book. Manuscripts reviewed by the VESAL Editorial Board will be eligible for inclusion in the VESAL2024 Book in cases where the manuscript does not meet the criteria for submission to the IJSSES journal. Manuscripts that do not meet the approval of the IJSSES editorial board will be considered for inclusion in the VESAL2024 Book of Proceedings. Each accepted paper will be assigned an ISBN (International Standard Book Number), making it a valuable scholarly resource. The proceedings book will serve as a reference for researchers, educators, and practitioners interested in educational studies and applied linguistics.

Conference Proceedings

The Conference Proceedings will be published with a DOI number in **November 2024** and can be freely accessed as part of the Faculty of Education's research archive. All authors may have their full paper published in the online Conference Proceedings

A Polite Request to All Participants

Participants are requested to arrive in a timely fashion for all presentations, whether on their own or to those of other presenters. Presenters are reminded that the time slots should be divided fairly and equally between the number of presentations and that presentations should not be overrun. Participants should refrain from talking amongst themselves and ensure that mobile phones are switched off or set to silent mode during presentations.

VISION & MISSION

VISION



In order to enable knowledge and information to be accessible to Tishk International everyone, University partnership with in Salahaddin University-Erbil, holds its annual conference on Educational Sciences and Applied Linguistics. The International Visible Conference aims to gather researchers. practitioners, educators, and scholars with interests in any field of teaching

explore different perspectives on the application of research findings into different practices. We kindly welcome scholars coming from the international and local regions as well as teachers and prospective teachers to Erbil, Iraq. The VESAL 2024 conference aims to contribute to the region and educators through international experts and researchers. The VESAL 2024 conference plans to



at all levels from around the world. The VESAL 2024 conference is designed to attract research communities to promote connections between theory and practice and

remain open to educational studies, language teaching, and/or languageeducation-related topics broadly defined, looking more closely into the current dynamics in the world between old and new trends, local and global tendencies, progressive and conservative views, stabilization and destabilization patterns, national and global identities It is expected that VESAL 2024 conference will be a

magnet for a significant number of front-ranking academics, professionals and policymakers working in the broad areas of Educational Environment.

MISSION



To develop highly qualified individuals who will contribute to the future of the country by making utmost use of the knowledge gained in fields of science, technology, and

arts in the light of universal values; offer learning opportunities in the fields of research, education, and service for the benefit of the wider community.

JOIN US TO HELP TURN THE TIDE IN EDUCATION

SPECIAL THANKS - SESSION CHAIRS

We, at the Tishk International University Faculty of Education, would like to recognize the Session Chairs for all of their hard work in coordinating his/her respective Concurrent Sessions. We know that it is difficult to stop Academicians from presenting the research they love. Thank you for ensuring that the sessions ran on time and smoothly.

Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Altun

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Dr. Rawand S. Ahmad

Mr. David Wafula Waswa

Mr. Adem Deskan

Ms. Soma Hassan Mrs. Shohidahon Nurmatova

Ms. Lydya Aso

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SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Conference Agenda Day 1 | 23rd October

TIU Education Building/#302		
Hour	Event	
08:30 - 09:30	Registration	
Opening Ceremony		
09:30 - 09:45	Conference Introduction	
09:45 - 10:00	Plaque Awarding/ Sponsor Speech	
10:00 - 10:40	Keynote Speech I: Asst. Prof. Dr. Hawraz Qader Hama-	
	Dean of Education Faculty, University of Raparin, Iraq	
10:40- 11:00	Coffee Break	
11:00 - 11:40	Keynote Speech II: Dr. Meret Gurban- Dovletmammet	
	Azadi Turkmen National Institute of World Languages,	
	Turkmenistan	
11:45 - 12:35	Concurrent Session I	
12:35-13:30	Lunch (TIU Dining Hall)	

Conference Agenda Day 2 | 24th October

Tishk International University		
Hour	Event	
08:30 - 9:30	Registration	
Opening Ceremony		
9:30 - 9:35	National Anthem	
9:35- 9:40	Introducing the Conference by Dr. Venera Ulker, Head	
	of the English Language Teaching Department, TIU	
9:40- 9:45	Welcome Speech by Dr. Dogan Ozdemir, Dean of	
	Faculty of Education – Tishk International University,	
	Erbil, Iraq	
9:45- 9:50	Promotional Video: TIU	
09:50 - 09:55	Speech of the KRG Minister of Higher Education and	
	Scientific Research	
09:55 - 10:00	Welcome Speech by Dr. Idris Hadi, Asst. Prof. Dr. Idris	
	Hadi Salih – Head of the Board of Trustees of Tishk	
	International University	

10:00 – 10:05	Welcome Speech by Prof. Dr. Sultan T. Abu- President of Tishk International University
10:05 – 10:35	Keynote Speech III: Prof. Dr. Lynn Rose- Professor of History and Disability Studies, American University of Iraq, Sulaimani, Iraq
10:35-10:50	Coffee Break
10:50 – 12:10	Keynote Speech IV (Literature): Fatima al Moufridji – Leiden University, Netherland
	Concurrent Session II
12:10-13:30	Lunch (TIU DINING HALL)
13:30- 14:30	Concurrent Session III
14:30- 14:45	Coffee Break
14:45-15:30	Closing Ceremony- Conference Hall- 302

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Wednesday, October 23rd 10:00 - 10:40 | HALL 302

Enhancing Communication and Collaboration in Microteaching Through Instructional Technology



Asst. Prof. Dr. Hawraz Qader Hama, Dean of Education Faculty, College of Education, University of Raparin, Iraq

English language teacher education programs, microteaching has been used as an effective technique to bridge theory to practice and prepare the preservice teachers for real classrooms. The potential benefits of a 15minute microteaching are communication and collaboration among the students and supervisor and reflection on the teaching. However, in many universities in the Kurdistan region, these benefits may not be obtained easily due to some problems such as crowded classrooms and limited class time. Therefore, a web-based instructional learning environment was designed and implemented to explore how it helped the preservice teachers develop communication. collaboration. and reflection in the

microteaching process. After collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from 52 preservice English language teachers (i.e. users of the intervention), the results of the data analysis revealed that the web-based instructional learning environment has been highly effective in enhancing communication, collaboration, and reflection among the preservice teachers.

Keywords: Microteaching, Instructional Technology, Preservice Teachers, Communication and Collaboration, Web-Based Learning Environment

Wednesday, October 23rd 11:00 – 11:40 | HALL 302



Dr Meretguly Gurbanov Head - Science (Research) Department and Senior Lecturer- Department of Theory and Practice of Translation, School of English Language and Literature, Dovletmammet Azadi Turkmen National Institute of World Languages, Turkmenistan

Enhancing Quality Education (SDG4) through Quality Teacher Training: Developing Inservice Teacher Training for English Education

This project directly addresses Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) - ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. This proposal is for a two-year-long inservice teacher-training program. The main purpose of this project is to advance the quality of English language instruction all around the country. Acknowledging the central role of teachers in achieving this goal, the program aims to equip them with the essential pedagogical and area-related knowledge, skills, and best practices to advance the effectiveness of English language learning among their students. This project is planned as an urgent requirement to address the specific needs of teachers. These needs will be identified through

a comprehensive needs assessment conducted at the program's beginning through online platforms to increase the number of participants and to save time. The results will help to create training content and delivery methods that are directly connected to the challenges and opportunities encountered by teachers in various parts of the country. The nature of the program promotes continuous professional development (CPD) throughout the teachers' careers. While doing that, it also promotes a culture of lifelong learning, which aligns with the core principles of SDG4 and guarantees the long-term sustainability of the project's influences. Through equipping teachers with the essential pedagogical tools and nurturing a culture of continuous learning, this project aims to achieve considerable developments in the quality of English language education (ELE). This will directly interpret to improved learning results for students, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable education system and ultimately supporting the broader goals of SDG4.

Keywords: English language education, in-service teacher-training program, continuous professional development, Quality education, SDG4.

Thursday, October 24th 10:05 – 10:35 | HALL 302

Universal Design, Education, and Community



Professor Lynn Rose Professor of History and Disability Studies American University of Iraq, Sulaimani, Iraq

The principles of UD (Universal Design) and UDL (Universal Design for Learning) are sensible and elegant in their common sense of including everyone in the community. Yet when we even glance at the architectural infrastructure of the built environment or the curriculum design of the learning environment, we can see that significant portions of the population are banned. Access and inaccessibility are statements of who is welcome and who is not. Just as public space was segregated in recent United States history, reflecting a culture of racism and signifying that people of color were unwelcomed, inaccessibility

sends a clear message: people with disabilities are not worth including. Architects are not consciously hostile towards people who use wheelchairs when they provide stairs without ramps; teachers are not purposefully punishing students with learning disabilities when they teach in the traditional way that they have been taught to teach. Rather, society as a whole is undereducated about ability and disability. Laws exist that mandate accessibility, but it takes a determined community to enact such laws, which are presently almost completely ignored. Disabled and nondisabled people need to work together as advocates and allies to promote inclusion, and this must begin with pervasive and sustained education. A critical mass of such people who stand behind a universally designed community can be a powerful force.

Keywords: Universal Design (UD) Inaccessibility, Disability Inclusion, Advocacy and Education

Thursday, October 24th 10:50 – 12:10 | HALL 302

The West Meets the Wonders of the East: Early Medieval England's Perception and Attitude Toward the Foreign Other



Fatima al Moufridji -Leiden University, Netherlands

The Wonders of the East (henceforth Wonders) is an Old English text within the Nowell Codex, a manuscript better known as the Beowulf Manuscript. The text creates a narrative of a wonderous, and dangerous East filled with immense wealth and marvelous monsters, including places such as Babylon, Persia, and Egypt. The monstrous beings listed in this text include strange animals like dog-sized ants and exploding chickens amongst many others whilst also narrating in a way that reads like a medieval Pokedex. In the Wonders, the East is also shown as a realm of boundless wealth in addition to being a territory brimming with monsters. For example, "The ants dig gold up from the earth

[...]," and the berries grown there are up to 150 feet and grow like "cende saragimmas" [curious gemstones]. This paper argues that Wonders provides insight into early medieval England's perceptions and viewpoints on the East. The creatures depicted, portrayed as vicious and even cannibalistic, offer insight into the early medieval England's perspective of the foreign "other." Therefore, *Wonders* offers an interesting glimpse into how the people in Early Medieval England perceived the world outside their borders.

Keywords: Wonders of the East, Old English Text, Monstrous Beings, Medieval Perceptions, Foreign "Other"

ABSTRACTS

Enhancing Language Proficiency and Critical Thinking: Implementation of the Capstone Project in the EFL Context– Students' Perspectives

¹Fatimah Saadi Ali & ²Shohidahon Nurmatova

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Abstract

Having students do projects in the form of posters, interviews, and video presentations has been widely spread around all educational settings around the world. While secondary and high schools have implemented Project-Based Learning (PBL) into their curriculum, higher educational establishments still remained loyal to getting students to write research papers at the academic level as a graduation project. This research study aimed to examine the initiation of the Capstone project for senior ELT students as a graduation project at Tishk International University in Erbil, Iraq, and then conclude whether the project piloting was beneficial or detrimental to be implemented in the future. The study employed a mixed methods approach to determine the results of an online survey questionnaire and a face-to-face interview with a total of 8 senior ELT students as a focus group. The findings of this research work revealed that respondents favored the implementation of the Capstone project, for it greatly contributed to the development and enhancement of their critical thinking skills, self-confidence, and collaboration among their peers.

Keywords: Capstone Project, English Language Teaching, Critical Thinking Skills, Self-Confidence, Undergraduate EFL Students.

Bridging the Divide: Grouping EFL Undergraduate Students Based on Their Language Proficiency

¹Osman Albdulkadir Ahmed & ²Shohidahon Nurmatova ^{1, 2}English Language Teaching Department, Faculty of Education, Tishk International University, Erbil, Iraq osmanaus20@gmail.com, shahida.nurmatova@tiu.edu.iq

Abstract

Grouping students based on their abilities has been a long-standing practice and grouping them based on their English language proficiency has not been an exception. While teachers and some students believe that it is a very good concept to be practiced, and it is very beneficial, others argue that it is detrimental to students and mainly to their mental health. The purpose of the research was to explore the concept, assess its advantages and disadvantages of practicing it, and then conclude whether it is beneficial or detrimental to the academic status of teachers and students. Two survey questionnaires - one for the teachers and one for the students – were distributed in the context of Tishk International University in Erbil, Kurdistan Regional Government to obtain their perspectives regarding grouping students based on their English language proficiency. A total of 15 university teachers and 125 students participated in this study. A mixed-methods approach was used to analyze quantitative and qualitative data to get more comprehensive and detailed results. The results and findings of this research revealed that the majority of the study samples expressed their approval regarding the concept, for it was beneficial for both parties. The foremost reason for teachers was they would be able to prepare and teach customized topics for each group depending on their needs, which will help them improve at a faster pace and see progress earlier.

Keywords: English as A Foreign Language, English Language Proficiency, Grouping the Students, Undergraduate EFL Students.

Unveiling University Students' Needs and Educators' Strategies for Ideal Learning Environments: A Mixed-Methods Study

¹Mohammed Yaseen Abdulqader, ²Osman Abdulkadir Ahmad, & ³Shohidahon Nurmatova

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Abstract

To establish an ideal classroom environment, multiple educational factors and techniques need to be implemented. Some of those key aspects of building an ideal learning environment include students' educational needs, language proficiency, and motivation. Also, instructors and students usually have differing perspectives regarding this matter. Both perspectives need to be considered when trying to achieve an ideal learning environment. The purpose of our research was to bridge the gap between what students consider an effective learning environment that meets their educational needs and what teachers already implemented pedagogical and instructional methods. An online survey was shared with 104 TIU undergraduate students, and interviews were held with university teachers to gain their perspectives regarding an ideal classroom environment. Results showed that students' and educators' thoughts regarding the necessary teaching methods in class did not align with each other. Also, some challenges faced by the two parties included students' adherence to memorization. Both parties, however, emphasized the importance of holding extracurricular activities. This research will benefit students, teachers, as well as university faculty members, and administrative officials in general in contributing to an effective learning environment in the university context.

Keywords: Ideal Classroom Environments, Educators' Perspectives, Students' Perspectives, Teaching Techniques, Guidance and Counseling.

The Factors Affecting Grade Progress in Language Proficiency of Undergraduate Medical Students

¹Aivar L. Surji, ²Hannah K. Surji, ³Soma Hassan Hussein, Aziza Kavlu ^{1,3}Tishk International University, Faculty of Education, English Language Teaching Department, Erbil, Iraq ²Catholic University, Erbil, Iraq <u>aivar.lukman@tiu.edu.iq</u>

Abstract

Language Proficiency is necessary to communicate and comprehend educational concepts. Consistent language practice and routine is essential to maintain growth; hence, an abundant number of breaks can be a hindrance to reaching proper proficiency. This study aims to analyze students' progression and perspective regarding factors that affect their growth. The contributors were 19 dentistry freshmen from Tishk International University who had limited English language ability. They were assigned to take a supportive foundation English course alongside their medical courses to support their development. Quantitative and Qualitative methods were used to gather data. SPSS was used to analyze grade progression and the effects of breaks on scores. Interviews were applied to grasp the contributors' experience with language learning and the factors they encountered. The contributors' responses presented that massive workload and constant lengthy breaks were the factors that affected their language development. The first pair of SPSS data showed that there was not a significant difference (p-value of .05) between the two sets of guizzes as the break was shorter. However, the SPSS results showed that there was a significant difference (p-value of .001) amid the scores of midterms and finals which had a lengthy break between. Therefore, it was found that breaks, workload, and other factors did result in a decline in scores and pupils' academic progression.

Keywords: Breaks, Language Proficiency, Medical, Students

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Teaching Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) to Young Learners Through Short Stories: A Conceptual Framework and Practical Guide

¹Soran Mustafa Kurdi & ²Hardi Jasim Hamad ^{1, 2,} English Language Teaching Department, Faculty of Education, Tishk International University, Erbil, Iraq Soran.mustafa@tiu.edu.iq

Abstract

This study provides a foundational framework for how Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) can be taught to young learners through short stories. SEL teaches five important skills: self-awareness, selfmanagement, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. This research specifically investigates teaching these skills using the short story "The Little Black Fish". It aims to evaluate how effectively short stories can develop SEL competencies, thereby enhancing the social and emotional well-being of young learners. The study provides valuable insights into the practical application of SEL competencies in educational settings by providing a framework and a lesson plan sample. Qualitative content analysis was employed, complemented by quantitative analysis to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the samples in the short story. This analysis was based on a template designed around the five competencies developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). Thirty-one passages from the story were analyzed according to the template. The findings suggest that short stories are an effective tool for promoting SEL skills among young learners. Additionally, the designed template and lesson plan offer a practical guide for teachers teaching SEL through short stories.

Keywords: Social and Emotional Learning, The Little Black Fish, young learner, lesson plan

High School Scores to College Performance: Exploring the Predictive Validity of Grade 12 Standardized Test Scores for University GPA

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Abstract

This study explores the correlation between High School Scores (HSS) and academic achievement in the ELT Department at Tishk International University in Erbil, Iraq, aiming to assess the validity of HSS as a predictor of university GPA. Utilizing both traditional statistical methods and advanced AI models, the analysis sorts the data into different categories based on student scores and grades to provide a comprehensive understanding of this relationship. Findings reveal a weak to moderate correlation, which is also inconsistent across all ranges, indicating that other factors may significantly influence GPA. Notably, the number of students with very high HSS is small, suggesting that admission and scholarship policies focusing solely on high HSS could impact only a limited group. The study concludes that while HSS can serve as an initial indicator of potential academic success, it is not a definitive predictor, suggesting the need for a more comprehensive approach to evaluating student performance in the ELT program.

Keywords: high school score, college admission, university GPA, machine learning, AI predictive model

Dialogic Teaching: Boosting Learner Agency in English Language Teaching (ELT) Classrooms

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Abstract

In this research, Bakhtin's dialogism is employed to design a dialogical model that helps promote learner agency in language learning classrooms. The proposed model conceptualizes that each classroom and within it each learner, in the course of their learning, have the potential to display unique and if not extinguished the advantage of commensurable unities idiosyncratic learning styles in novel dialogical learning ecologies. Learning environments have increasingly become novel socio-cultural contexts that help propound proactive contextual learning identities and have the potential to pre-position a collective attitude on determining learning levels. In this project, Bakhtin's dialogism is used in a second language learning context to pre-empt the typical monologist discourse of both lecture-style instruction and prevailing educational paradigms. As such, the monological classroom is considered to idealize an educational system that coincides with prevailing mythologies that predate novel production. A mixed-methods strategy was adopted to analyze the institutional demand for learners to adhere to the educational system agency and the so-called standardized and experimented teaching practices. To discourse the research questions, researchers conducted a structured interview with 23 teachers from the five high schools and observed 18 teachers in the KRI (Kurdistan Region of Iraq). A qualitative analysis of interviews was carried out by first reading the transcripts as they were recorded and then annotating the transcripts. Second, they conceptualized the data and then segmented it using an Excel spreadsheet to examine the segments and write the results from the observations. The findings demonstrate that the proposed model, at a micro-level, promotes learner agency. The results of the first question discovered the five challenges of teachers using dialogic teaching in their classrooms. The second question's results revealed the four main strategies teachers use to enhance student-learner agency in the classroom. The unique culture of each classroom, at a macro-level, operates on an individual level at which the learners invest

their attention and draw on their cultural values and personal viewpoints in a novelistic, dialogical sphere. This results in a seismic shift in fundamental attitudes about learners and learning as it bids for a studied portioning of the shares of various educational stakeholders. Language learning, according to the dialogical model, is one of many other elements (such as beliefs, talents, and so on) that contribute to personal evolution and the development of individual identity.

Keywords: Dialogic Teaching, phonological awareness, monologist, translanguaging, English as a Second Language

From Theory to Practice: A Mathematics Pre-service Teachers' Pedagogical Practice Dilemma

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Abstract

There are many theories on how students acquire knowledge and how instructions should be conducted in the classroom. Research has presented clear instructional strategies appropriate for students in diverse circumstances. However, most of these instructional strategies are not implemented in the classrooms. This research aims to investigate the missing link between theory presented in the lecture rooms and actual teaching in the schools and to examine the effect of this disconnect on the pre-service teacher. Data was collected through questionnaires answered by students from 11 universities in Kurdistan, Iraq. Results indicate existence of a gap between theories in the lecture halls and actual practice in classrooms. Large curriculum content, perceived insufficient time for instructors, actual insufficient time allocated to the practicum course, cultural influences, and inadequate qualified and experienced mentor teachers are some of the suggested reasons for the missing link between theory and practice. Recommendations for stakeholders and suggestions on the way forward are discussed.

Keywords: Pre-service teacher, Missing link, Self-efficacy, Performance, Theory-to-practice.

Reviewing the Impact of Generative AI on Language Learning and Teaching: A Synthesis of Potentials and Pitfalls

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Abstract

The role and implementation of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools have sparked researchers to delve into this multifaceted area of study. This thematic literature review aims to study the role of GenAI in education, exploring the challenges and benefits in the context of language learning and teaching. This comprehensive literature review is centered on thematic analysis where scholarly publications were selected and analyzed based on predetermined themes including characteristics, challenges, benefits, current practices, and future directions of GenAI in education with a particular emphasis on language learning and teaching. The study presents the common characteristics of GenAI pertaining to the aspects of education. The study also highlights the common challenges investigated by researchers such as academic integrity, especially for written assignments, accuracy, overreliance, transparency, privacy, and the potential disruption of the existing assessment, which could diminish the perceived importance of acquiring knowledge encountered by the major stakeholders in education. The benefits of GenAI include providing personalized education, increasing productivity, providing instant feedback, creating teaching materials efficiently, and improving various language aspects. Having all that considered, stakeholders are recommended to integrate and implement GenAI in their education with a conscious consideration of the posed challenges and the benefits to maximize learning and teaching effectively.

Keywords: Generative Artificial intelligence, AI, Language Learning and Teaching, Advantages, Challenges.

Classroom Management Challenges Encountered by Novice Teachers: Insights from Experienced Teachers

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Abstract

Classroom management is one of the most prominent challenges that teachers in general, particularly novice teachers, face in teaching. Classroom management means how to have an environment in class that is under the control of the teacher. It also denotes that the teacher directs the class towards a common goal or activity. There are many principles for classroom management that different people propose. Classroom management can be attributed to "your attitude, intentions and personality and your relationship with the learners" (Scrivener, 2012, p.54). The main objectives of the research are to identify some techniques and strategies that teachers use to manage their classes effectively and to shed light on the most prominent challenges in classroom management. A mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative is used to obtain experienced teachers' insights through a questionnaire designed and distributed to illustrate how to manage classes successfully. The most prominent findings are: that establishing rapport or relation with students has a positive impact on classroom management, and using reward and punishment techniques for classroom management. Furthermore, classroom management has different interpretations by different teachers. It is concluded that for some teachers classroom management means all the students equally participate in and engage with the activities while for others it means all the students sit idly in class.

Keywords: Classroom management, carrot and stick technique, motivation, rapport.

The Role of Religion in Shaping Utopian Narratives

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Abstract

The current paper explores theological and sociopolitical outlooks on religion within both the conceptual framework of "Utopia" and the specific context of Thomas More's literary work "Utopia". The analysis presents a definition of "utopia as a philosophical concept that envisions a perfect society, establishing a foundation for understanding how religion functions within such an ideal state. The study further concentrates on Utopia, More's distinct work of English literature, evaluating the religious structure of its society, the roles played by various religious groups, and the conduct of religious ceremonies by the Utopians. Therefore, the study investigates how religion is portrayed in Utopia, drawing on interpretations from various religious scholars. Among the key highlights are the three functions of utopias like, change, criticism, and compensation. Additionally, the article studies how different religious utopias have been conceptualized both before and after More's work, including the Garden of Eden, the Millennium, Paradise Lost, and the contemporary vision of the New Jerusalem.

Keywords: Utopia, Religion, Thomas More, Ideal state, Religious groups, Atheism

Challenges Kurdish EFL Learners Encounter When Learning the English Language Program: A Survey Study

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Abstract

English is a global language widely used for communication across the world, impacting various fields such as technology, science, business, and education. Kurdistan, a region located in the Middle East with its own independent government and educational system, has seen a growing interest in learning English. Kurdish EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners seek to advance in English for various reasons, including self-improvement, hobbies, and career opportunities. This study, conducted through a questionnaire survey with 110 students from different departments at Tishk International University, identifies the major challenges EFL learners face while learning the language. The study concludes that the primary issues include lack of confidence, speaking anxiety, and insufficient learning resources. By investigating these obstacles, the study recommends new strategies to support Kurdish learners in their journey to language proficiency.

Keywords: Kurdish, English As A Foreign Language, Lack Of Confidence, Language Anxiety

The Metalinguistic Awareness of Kurdish EFL Undergraduates on Pragmatic Markers

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Abstract

Pragmatics markers are linguistic units of multiple functions as they are used to meet different needs in both writing and speaking. Thus, this linguistic set is an inevitable part of learning for foreign language learners. Thus, from a metalinguistic perspective, they are supposed to be aware of identifying and using such markers relying on the knowledge they already provided in the class. Identifying this assumption, this paper investigates the metalinguistic awareness of Kurdish EFL students in manipulating the pragmatic markers in the English language. Recognizing the gaps related to this lexical area can guide EFL instructors to train their students to be better communicators in the English language. To meet these aims, a test has been designed in which the students were required to identify the appropriate pragmatic marker to use in a suitable context. The results indicate that EFL learners require more focused exposure to pragmatic markers to enhance their proficiency in both academic and everyday English communication. To achieve this, teachers need to highlight the materials with pragmatic content in the modules they teach to enable learners to consciously internalize them. To a reasonable extent, the EFL undergraduates could identify the pragmatic markers for being not part of the sentence structure, but their functions were not equally accessible to them.

Keywords: Metalinguistic, Pragmatics Markers, Discourse, Communication, Knowledge.

Language Dynamics in Zora Neale Hurston's *Spunk*: Exploring Code-Switching

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Abstract

The interaction of language and cultural identity is central to the themes that are portrayed in the literature of the Harlem Renaissance. The cultural element and interaction among Blacks during the Harlem Renaissance are illustrated in Zora Neale Hurston's short story Spunk. This paper aims to focus on the language dynamics, specifically codeswitching, in the short story Spunk. As part of her depiction of her characters' multilingual identities, Hurston emphasizes code-switching between Standard English and African American Vernacular English within the context of what may be characterized as quotidian discursivity. She also makes connections between the code of speech and issues of class, power, and subject positioning. The study is mainly qualitative and text-based; it utilizes code-switching to understand the motivations, interpersonal dynamics, and inner struggles of the characters. Hurston was already using language to portray the characters' socioeconomic positions and identity problems as they negotiated a racist society, according to the research, she effectively portrays a more sophisticated and perceptive understanding of language as a tool for plot advancement and symbolic cultural history definition in the play. From a perspective on the power dynamics in language and culture, this paper concludes that Hurston had a significant impact on the growth of African American literature and that her distinctive depictions of the Black experience remain influential.

Keywords: African American English, Code Switching, Cultural Identity, Language Dynamics, *Spunk*, Zora Neale Hurston

Conceptual Blending and Meaning Construction in Kurdish Jokes: A Cognitive-Analytical Study

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Abstract

This study analyzes selected Kurdish jokes using the cognitive linguistic theoretical framework of conceptual blending, which relies on mental spaces as cognitive packets of information used to interpret the world around us and within us. The dynamic nature of language as an interactive and situational phenomenon is addressed by conceptual integration, often referred to as conceptual blending theory. The productivity of newly emerging linguistic structures is explained by this principle. It is claimed that jokes have not been correctly distinguished from other linguistic structures in the sense that Blending Theory has not profiled their humorous character, despite jokes being a paradigmatic discursive form that can be recognized intuitively. The analysis is used to find out whether Kurdish learners could comprehend the jokes in their native language and if the concept of conceptual integration, which is the process of identifying the input spaces that make up a joke's blended space, would be applied to their analysis of jokes. Fourth-year students from the University of Garmian, Department of English Language and Literature, were chosen to examine cognitive processes involved in the comprehension of jokes. They were given four Kurdish jokes, specifically jokes from the Central Kurdish dialect, and attempted to articulate the thoughts that run through their minds when reading them and which discordant elements are responsible for their funny effect. Taking into account the participants' answers, the input spaces (by naming their constituents) and the blended space were defined. Additionally, the participants' answers were evaluated depending on their background knowledge, which is necessary to comprehend the joke. The study's findings support the assertions made by Fauconnier and Turner

that conceptual integration is a general cognitive process by which people, including Kurds, produce meaning.

Keywords: Conceptual Blending, productivity, mental space, jokes, Kurdish language.

Effectiveness of Direct Teaching of Apology Speech Act Strategies in Improving Kurdish Students' Pragmatic Competence

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Abstract

Grammar rules are essential for acquiring knowledge of any language. In the learning process, the difficult respect is the pragmatic principle of language, which brings about several challenges to language learners. Teachers should look for the most influential approach in instructing pragmatic skills to cope with this issue. To do so, the study aimed to investigate the effect of direct teaching of the apology type of speech act on the Kurdish students' development in apology strategies. A total number of 73 Kurdish students took part in a pretest, treatment, and posttest teaching that was divided into four groups. Two experimental groups of intermediate and advanced levels and two control groups of intermediate and advanced levels. To collect the data, a Discourse Completion Test (DCT) composed of ten open-ended apology discourse scenarios was used. To select the apologetic situations, social and distance status variables were employed. The results showed that direct teaching was effective in facilitating and developing apology strategies and pragmatic competence for Kurdish EFL learners in various contexts.

Keywords: Direct teaching, Apology speech act, Apologetic strategies, Pragmatic competence, Pragmatic expectation, Kurdish students

The Essential Role of Modern Women in *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill

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Abstract

This article investigates the comprehensive representations of modern women in Caryl Churchill's play *Top Girls*. The study starts by looking at how feminist ideals evolved, then examines feminist literary criticism and how it may challenge patriarchal narratives, especially via theatre and literature. The paper investigates significant characters from Churchill's *Top Girls*, including Marlene, Joyce, Win, and Louise, to emphasise their opposing views on the profession, parenting, and social class. It highlights Churchill's criticism of the neoliberal concept of meritocracy and the limits of capitalist feminism, which often sacrifices human ties and women's solidarity. Churchill's character dynamics and conversation call into question the concept of universal sisterhood, highlighting the differences produced by different social, economic, and political environments. Finally, the paper asserts that "Top Girls" promotes a more inclusive vision of modern women's various roles and problems, pushing for unity that limits class, culture, and individual ambition

Keywords: Top Girls, Career, Caryl Churchill, modern women, motherhood, feminism.

Student's Perspective on Flipped Classroom as an Innovative Approach in English Foreign Language Classes: A Selective Literature Review

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Abstract

The last decade was the time of the Internet rebellion, which had huge control over learning. Models in teaching languages are continuously discovering new training to join innovative technology with their teaching. Delivering lectures and doing activities are exchanged in the flipped classroom method. It means that learning occurs at home while giving clarifications and tasks in classes. The researchers in EFL classrooms investigated all skills, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Students' perception is the vital point. This review article focuses on students' perceptions regarding the flipped method in EFL classes, which were published in the last four years. Five articles were chosen with focus criteria: flipped classroom, students' perceptions, and English as a Foreign Language. This review study used thematic analysis to analyze the review articles. The results of the study revealed that 2023 was the lucky year to have two published papers and grammar skills were mostly used in these five articles. Iran, as the setting of the studies, was localized more than other countries in these selectively reviewed papers. It also showed that students had positive views toward the flipped classroom and improved their academic performances. Moreover, English foreign classrooms were mostly implemented in flipped classrooms rather than separate skills like writing, reading, and grammar.

Keywords: Student perspectives, flipped classroom, EFL classrooms, innovative approaches

Exploring Alternative Assessment Approaches in EFL: A Selective Literature Review

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Abstract

Recently, many researchers in EFL classes have integrated alternative assessment. This study aimed to review international perspectives on empirical studies on alternative assessment and its effectiveness in language learning in EFL contexts. The study used thematic analysis to analyze the empirical studies on alternative assessment in EFL settings. There were many studies, but only five of them were chosen according to the criteria. It limited to explore on also aimed to explore the methods, the limitations of the studies, alternative assessment strategies in the articles, and the findings of the chosen papers. This term was as used to gain a reliable source from alternative assessment, teachers' perception, students' perception, and its effectiveness in language skills via Google Scholar and Research Gate. This review found that in most articles, implementing alternative assessment methods was positively successful. It also found declared the qualitative method to be the main method among the revised articles. The study further included alternative assessment methods in EFL classes and the limitations of the study.

Keywords: Alternative assessment, systematic review, EFL Classes.

Optimizing Classroom Dynamics: Strategies for the Effective Management of Student Behavior

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Abstract

Classroom dynamics as an interplay of multiple variables within a significantly influences the overall school classroom setting. environment, quality of education, and the overall teaching and learning effectiveness. This is why it is necessary to look closer at what influences classroom dynamics the most - misbehavior problems: inside and outside a classroom, how to prevent them, deal with them, and what strategies to apply. The purpose of this study was to reveal the most common types of misbehavior teachers face in classrooms in Erbil city, Kurdistan Region, Iraq, and provide recommendations for educators with a comprehensive list of strategies for misbehavior management in a classroom. To achieve this, a survey was designed and distributed among teachers from schools, universities, and institutes in Erbil. The results show that, first, classroom environment and teachers have a profound impact on classroom dynamics. Second: the most common type of student misbehavior is punctuality; however, teachers also face other misbehavior problems such as talking out of turn and being out of task. This research is expected to be particularly useful for teachers, school principals, and researchers.

Keywords: Classroom Management, Classroom Dynamics, Misbehavior

The Role of Social Media Platforms in Enhancing Language Learning Practices: A Case Study

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Abstract

In this globalized world, language learning is not merely bound to traditional classroom learning. Social media platforms have brought about a substantial change in language learning since it is utilized by individuals worldwide. Since the benefits of social media for enhancing EFL are ignored by learners, the recent paper aims to look into how social media can be effective in learning and improving English as a foreign language (EFL) in terms of language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical comprehension. The data were collected through mixed methods. The quantitative data was collected through a 28-item questionnaire and analyzed by SPSS 27. And semi-structured interview was used for collecting qualitative data. Fifty-one participants in Erbil filled out the online questionnaire and four participants were interviewed for the qualitative phase. The findings of the study illustrate that learners have favorable perspectives toward social media platforms in enhancing EFL in terms of language skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar knowledge. The results of the paper can help teachers, curriculum creators, and course designers to include social media in their teaching to improve students' EFL proficiency. Also, they can increase learners' understanding of how to use social media platforms effectively to enhance EFL.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language, Social Media, English Language Learning

Conference Extended Program

Concurrent Session I 23/10/2024

HALL NO. 302 11:45– 12:35			
Chair of Session	Mr. David Waswa		
PRESENTER(S)	TITLE OF PRESENTATION		
Abdurrahman	High School Scores to College Performance: Exploring		
Ahmad Wahab &	the Predictive Validity of Grade 12 Standardized Test		
Hemin Ibrahim	Scores for University GPA		
Chovin Awat	The Role of Social Media Platforms in Enhancing		
Abdullah	Language Learning Practices: A Case Study		

Concurrent Session II 24/10/2024

HALL NO. 302 10:50– 12:10			
Chair of Session:	Dr. Sami Hussein		
PRESENTER(S)	TITLE OF PRESENTATION		
Fatima al Moufridji	The West Meets the Wonders of the East: Early Medieval England's Perception and Attitude Toward the Foreign Other		
Liva Adil Shareef & Soran Abubakr Abdulrahman	The Essential Role of Modern Women in <i>Top Girls</i> by Caryl Churchill		
Dana Shamsaddin Muhammed Sharif	The Role of Religion in Shaping Utopian Narratives		

HALL NO. 210 10:50–12:10			
Chair of Session	Dr. Mustafa Altun & Shohidahon Nurmatova		
PRESENTER(S)	TITLE OF PRESENTATION		
Fatimah Saadi Ali &	Enhancing Language Proficiency and Critical Thinking:		
Shohidahon Nurmatova	Implementation of the Capstone Project in the EFL		
	Context– Students' Perspectives		
Aivar L. Surji, Hannah	The Factors Affecting Grade Progress in Language		
K. Surji, Soma Hassan	Proficiency of Undergraduate Medical Students		
Hussein, & Aziza			
Kavlu			
Gashbin Dler	Challenges Kurdish EFL Learners Encounter When		
	Learning the English Language Program: A Survey		
	Study		
Venera Ulker & Noor	Optimizing Classroom Dynamics: Strategies for the		
Shahin & Lydya Aso	Effective Management of Student Behavior		

HALL NO. 207 10:50– 12:10				
Chair of Session:	Dr. Rawand Sabah			
PRESENTER(S)	TITLE OF PRESENTATION			
Khoshi Anwer Hasan Al-Jaf & Midya Rafiq Majeed	Conceptual Blending and Meaning Construction in Kurdish Jokes: A Cognitive-Analytical Study			
Burhan Saleh Sulaiman & Paiman Zorab Azeez	Effectiveness of Direct Teaching of Apology Speech Act			
Ibrahim Mohammed Ali Murad	The Metalinguistic Awareness of Kurdish EFL Undergraduates on Pragmatic Markers			
Khelan Mohammed Salih, Shokhan Mohammed Fatah & Sipal Baderkhan Yousif	Language Dynamics in Zora Neale Hurston's <i>Spunk</i> : Exploring Code-Switching			

Concurrent Session III 24/10/2024

HALL NO. 207 13:30–14:30					
Chairs of Session Ms. Soma Hasan					
PRESENTER(S)	TITLE OF PRESENTATION				
Fatima Saadi	Student's Perspective on Flipped Classroom as an Innovative Approach in English Foreign Language Classes: A Selective Literature Review				
Bandar Abdul- Qahhar Muhammed,					
Lana Amanj	Classroom Management Challenges Encountered by				
Mahmood, Muhammad Hidayat Ahmad & Hawraz Rashad Muhammad	Novice Teachers: Insights from Experienced Teachers				
Soran Mustafa Kurdi & Hardi Jasim	Developing a Conceptual Foundation for Teaching SEL to Young Learners Through Short Stories: A Practical Guide				

HALL NO. 210 13:30– 14:30			
Chair of Session	Mr. Adem Daskan		
PRESENTER(S)	TITLE OF PRESENTATION		
Osman Abdulkadir Ahmad & Shohidahon Nurmatova	Bridging the Divide: Grouping EFL Undergraduate Students Based on Their Language Proficiency		
Fatima Saadi	Exploring Alternative Assessment Approaches in EFL: A Selective Literature Review		
Mohammed Yaseen Abdulqader, Osman Abdulkadir Ahmad & Shohidahon Nurmatova	Unveiling University Students' Needs and Educators' Strategies for Ideal Learning Environments: A Mixed- Methods Study		

HALL NO. 212 13:30–14:30				
Chair of Session	Ms. Lydya Aso			
PRESENTER(S)	TITLE OF PRESENTATION			
Mr. David Wafula From Theory to Practice: A Mathematics Pre-ser				
Waswa	Teachers' Pedagogical Practice Dilemma			
Ismail Mohammed	Dialogic Teaching: Boosting Learner Agency in			
Noriey & Mohammad	Mohammad English Language Teaching (ELT) Classrooms			
Sedigh Javanmiri				
Hewa Fouad Ali &	Reviewing the Impact of Generative AI on Language			
Zahra Abdulmutalib	Learning and Teaching: A Synthesis of Potentials and			
	Pitfalls			



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