

Assessing the Impact of Humanistic Teaching Approaches on English Language Performance and Identifying the Most Effective Strategies for Fostering a Supportive and Engaging Learning Environment at Al Khaleej Institute in Riyadh

Reia ALblaihi¹

Abstract

This study aimed to assess the impact of humanistic teaching approaches on students' English language performance and identify the most effective strategies for fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment. Conducted at Al Khaleej Institute in Riyadh, the research involved 15 female students aged 15 to 17, utilizing a quasi-experimental method. Data collection tools included observations, interviews, focus groups, and reflective journals, providing a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences with humanistic teaching. The findings revealed that humanistic approaches significantly improved students' motivation, engagement, and confidence in using English. Among the most effective strategies were cooperative learning, which fostered collaboration and peer support, and reflective journals, which encouraged self-expression and personal reflection, enabling students to track their progress and emotional growth. Additionally, personalized feedback from researcher proved essential in creating a positive, supportive environment, as students felt valued and heard. These strategies shifted the focus from traditional rote learning to a more holistic educational experience, where students were encouraged to take ownership of their learning and explore English in meaningful, real-world contexts. Students reported that the humanistic approach allowed them to feel comfortable and supported, reducing anxiety and fostering a sense of belonging. This positive emotional environment contributed to higher levels of participation and engagement, further strengthening their language skills and personal development. In conclusion, the study highlights the value of integrating humanistic teaching approaches into English language education. Not only did these strategies enhance language proficiency, but they also nurtured students' emotional well-being and personal growth. Future research should continue exploring humanistic methods across different educational settings to further understand their potential for transforming the learning experience and addressing both cognitive and emotional needs.

Keywords: Humanistic teaching approaches, English language performance, Affective teaching strategies, Emotional well-being, Self-directed learning

تقييم أثر استخدام طرق التدريس الإنسانية على أداء الطالبات في اللغة الإنجليزية وتحديد أكثر الاستراتيجيات الإنسانية
فعالية لتعزيز بيئة تعليمية داعمة وجذابة في معهد الخليج للرياضة.

المخلص:

هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تقييم تأثير مناهج التدريس الإنسانية على أداء الطالبات في اللغة الإنجليزية وتحديد الاستراتيجيات الأكثر فعالية لتعزيز بيئة تعليمية داعمة وجذابة. أجريت الدراسة في معهد الخليج للرياضة، وشاركت فيها 15 طالبة تتراوح أعمارهن بين 15 و17 عامًا، باستخدام طريقة شبه تجريبية. وتضمنت أدوات جمع البيانات الملاحظات والمقابلات ومجموعات التركيز والمجلات التأملية، مما يوفر فهماً شاملاً لتجارِب الطالبات مع التدريس الإنسانية. كشفت النتائج أن الاستراتيجيات الإنسانية المحددة حسنت بشكل كبير من أداء الطالبات وشاركت في تحسين دوافعهم وتحميهم في استخدام اللغة الإنجليزية. ومن بين أكثر الاستراتيجيات الفعالية التعلم التعاوني، الذي عزز التعاون ودعم الأقران، والمجلات التأملية، التي شجعت التعبير عن الذات والتأمل الشخصي، مما مكّن الطالبات من تتبع تقدمهن ومهامهن العاطفية. بالإضافة لذلك، أثبتت الملاحظات الشخصية من الباحث أنها ضرورية لخلق بيئة إيجابية داعمة، حيث تشعر الطالبات بالتقدير والاستماع إليهن. وقد أتت هذه الاستراتيجيات بالنحو بل تركز من التعلم التقليدي لتجربة تعليمية أكثر شمولاً، حيث تم تشجيع الطالبات على تحمل مسؤولية تعليمهن واستكشاف اللغة الإنجليزية في سياقات ذات معنى واقعية.

وأفادت الطالبات بأن النهج الإنساني ساعدهن على الشعور بالراحة والدعم، مما قلل من قلقهن عزز الشعور بالانتماء وساهم في تعزيز بيئة عاطفية إيجابية في مستوى أبحاثهن عن المشاركة، مما عزز مهاراتهن اللغوية وتطورهن الشخصي.

¹ College of Education, Curricula, and Instruction Department, Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. <https://orcid.org/my-orcid?orcid=0009-0003-5475-9901>. Email: ribelehi@imamu.edu.sa.

وفي الختام، تسلط الدراسة الضوء على قيمة دمجنا هاجال تدر يسا للإنسانية في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية . ولتعمل هذا الاستراتيجيات لتعزز الكفاءة اللغوية فحسب، بل إنها غذت أيضاً الرفاهية العاطفية والنمو الشخصي للطلاب . وينبغي أن تستمر الأبحاث المستقبلية في استكشاف الأساليب الإنسانية عبر مختلف البيئات التعليمية لفهم إمكاناتها بشكل أكبر لتحويل تجربة التعلم مع معالجة الاحتياجات المعرفية والعاطفية

Introduction

Humanism was originated with the Renaissance concept of stadia humanities. It evolved into a broader philosophy that values human reason, science, and democratic ideals while recognizing the importance of emotions and personal fulfillment. Humanism is both a professional philosophy and a practical implication for individuals seeking a fulfilling and ethical life.

Humanism emphasis on reason, scientific inquiry, and ethical development, and supports the potential of humans to solve their own problems. It promotes freedom of choice, ethical values based on earthly experiences, and the pursuit of personal and communal happiness (Kristjansson, 2013). Humanism is associated with beliefs about freedom and autonomy, positing that human beings are capable of making significant personal choices within the constraints imposed by heredity, personal history, and environment. Humanistic principles emphasize self-discovery, introspection, self-esteem, and recognizing positive qualities in oneself and others (Moskowitz, 1994; Mishra, 2000) .

Emerging prominently in the latter half of the twentieth century, humanistic approaches to education prioritize the inner potential and personal growth of learners. The paradigm shift extends beyond the traditional emphasis on cognitive and intellectual development to embrace the holistic growth of individuals. Humanistic education aims to nurture personal development, stimulate creativity, and promote self-directed learning (Abd Qodir, 2017).

In the context of education, the humanistic approaches are rooted in an integrative perspective that amalgamates knowledge, learning, and development. By emphasizing individual needs, fostering intrinsic motivation, and integrating both cognitive and emotional learning, this approach aims to unlock each student's potential and cultivate a lifelong passion for learning. It emerged as a response to more deterministic views like behaviorism and psychoanalysis, advocating for a more holistic and optimistic perspective on human development. Central to this approach is the goal of cultivating individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also emotionally and socially adept (Rogers, 1969; Maslow, 1970).

The humanistic approaches emphasize a student-centered pedagogy, wherein learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their educational journey and are motivated by intrinsic rather than extrinsic factors. This approach underscores that students who possess a positive self-image are better positioned to realize their full potential (Brown, 2007). Such self-perception involves awareness of personal talents, strengths, and weaknesses, alongside confidence in one's capacity for self-improvement (Chris, 2010). According to Veugelers (2011), students are inherently predisposed to making sound decisions when their needs are met. Humanistic theory advocates for the creation of a classroom environment that fosters comfort and safety, thereby optimizing learning conditions (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

The theory also highlights five key emphases: feelings, social relations, responsibility, intellect, and self-actualization (Moskowitz, 1978). Rogers (1969) further underscores the importance of individuals connecting with their true selves to achieve deep satisfaction and self-actualization. Humanistic education is characterized by five core emphases: (1) Feelings, which prioritize emotional experiences and aesthetic appreciation; (2) Social Relations, which promote friendship, cooperation, and the removal of barriers to social bonds; (3) Responsibility, which acknowledges accountability and ethical behavior; (4) Intellect, which stresses knowledge, reason, and intellectual freedom; 5) Self-Actualization, which focuses on realizing one's full potential and individuality (Moskowitz, 1978).

Central to Humanistic Theory is the commitment to addressing learners' needs for positive growth, subjective feelings, personal choice, self-concept, and interpersonal relationships (Hedge, 2001). Humanizing the classroom involves adapting teaching methods to meet students' characteristics and needs, fostering a collaborative environment where both teachers and students co-create meaningful learning experiences (Shih, 2018).

Implementing humanistic methods in the classroom involves fostering student autonomy, personal growth, and a supportive learning environment. This includes deviating from rigid curricula to design flexible, interest-responsive learning experiences (Crain, 2015). By allowing students to guide their own learning journeys and offering diverse formats for assignments, educators can enhance intrinsic motivation and engagement. Such

an approach also encourages inquiry-based learning, which promotes deeper understanding and critical thinking (Suyatno & Wantini, 2018) .

Humanistic educational practices reflect a shift from traditional authoritative teaching to a more facilitative role. Teachers are now seen as supporters who provide resources, guide inquiries, and encourage exploration rather than solely disseminators of knowledge (Ellis, 2003 & Harmer, 2009) .Veugelers (2011) argues that human behavior is driven more by intrinsic desires than by external rewards and punishments. Humanistic theory advocates for creating a classroom environment that fosters comfort and safety to facilitate optimal learning conditions.

Principles of Humanistic Theory: Foster mutual respect and enhance self-awareness. Address both emotional responses and cognitive processes. Emphasize learners' personal experiences over traditional models. Focus on learners' personal development and interpersonal relationships. Recognize that emotions are central to learning and communication (Chiu, Moorhouse, Chai, Ismailov, 2023). Allow learners to choose what and how they learn. Teachers act as guides rather than authoritative figures. Use motivational strategies to enhance learning. Recognize and nurture each learner's individuality. Involve learners in setting learning goals and processes Allow time for learners to explore and discover. Use meaningful contexts for activities (Salomone, Salomone, 2022). Build strong relationships to facilitate learning. Ensure that learning experiences are enjoyable. Create contexts that stimulate learners' interest and engagement (Crystal, 2006).

A core principle of humanistic education is the encouragement of learners to assume responsibility for their educational journey, fostering intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation. Students who maintain a positive self-concept are better positioned to realize their full potential, which involves a clear understanding of their talents, strengths, and areas for improvement. Educators, therefore, tailor instruction to the individual interests and preferences of learners, granting them autonomy in their educational experiences. This approach emphasizes self-assessment, focusing on personal growth rather than merely achieving high grades, and promotes learning driven by personal satisfaction and self-fulfillment (Seery, Andres, Moore Cherry, O'Sullivan, 2021).

Research indicates that various forms of engagement—behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and agentic—are essential for academic success(Brown,2007). High levels of engagement are strongly correlated with improved learning outcomes, while disengagement is often manifested through passivity and apathy, which hinder academic performance (Ryan, Deci, 1985).

Key elements of effective classroom management according to the humanistic approach include balancing strictness with friendliness. Maintaining firm rule enforcement while remaining approachable helps manage disruptions and build connections with students. A blend of authority and humor fosters a positive classroom climate (Alqahtani, 2018).

Humanistic education centers on helping individuals reach their fullest potential. It views education as a process that facilitates learners' growth toward self-actualization, encouraging them to realize their capabilities and aspirations. This approach emphasizes student autonomy, encouraging learners to make decisions about their studies, manage their learning processes, and evaluate their progress, thereby promoting independence and personal responsibility (Harmer, 2009).

Carl Rogers (1969) described this as an inherent core that propels individuals towards their full potential, while Abraham Maslow (1968) referred to it as "self-actualization," representing the natural progression towards one's highest state. In contrast, external coercion and motivation often diminish students' enthusiasm and engagement with learning. True authority in the classroom arises from mutual respect rather than fear. Effective classroom management hinges on creating an environment where respect is earned through supportive interactions rather than authoritarian control (Hasbi, Muthmainnah, 2022). Teachers who embrace the humanistic approach, display enthusiasm, and employ engaging teaching methods significantly boost student motivation and interest, which enhances engagement and fosters a more interactive learning environment (Moskowitz,1978).

Carl Rogers' humanistic approach to education advocates for the development of student autonomy, personal growth, and the creation of a supportive learning environment. This can be realized by moving away from rigid, predetermined curricula in favor of flexible, responsive learning experiences that align with students' interests. Providing diverse assignment formats and fostering an inquiry-based learning environment further empower students to take ownership of their education and pursue deeper understanding (Suyatno & Wantini, 2018). Practical applications of this approach include the promotion of learner-centered methodologies, the minimization of standardized testing, and the encouragement of creativity and critical thinking. In humanistic education, evaluation emphasizes holistic development and self-assessment rather than mere academic achievement (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The connection between engagement and academic success is well-documented (Ryan, 1985). Engagement involves behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and agentic dimensions, while disengagement is characterized by passivity and a lack of emotional involvement. Humanism emphasizes the uniqueness of each learner and promotes the development of lifelong learning skills. Rogers (1969) posits that enhancing self-esteem through unconditional positive regard is crucial, advocating for inquiry-based learning that supports intrinsic motivation and exploration over traditional, uninspiring methods. Within the humanistic learning framework, teachers fulfill several essential roles, including modeling appropriate behaviors and clarifying the motivations behind tasks. Engagement is central to this educational approach, necessitating that teachers provide motivating activities and choices that align with students' interests. Educators are encouraged to maintain unconditional positive regard, thereby fostering intrinsic motivation and self-regulation (Vygotsky, 1978; Piaget, 1952).

In addition to academic benefits, humanizing classroom practices also address students' emotional needs, creating a supportive environment that contributes to their mental well-being. By reducing feelings of isolation and stress, these practices enhance students' overall experience and performance (Freeman, 2000). Teachers who demonstrate respect, empathy, and support cultivate stronger, more trusting relationships with their students, which in turn fosters a more open and communicative classroom environment (Al-Seghayer, 2011).

Within the humanistic learning framework, teachers play a multifaceted role that includes modeling appropriate behaviors, explaining task motivations, teaching general learning strategies, fostering collaboration, and offering diverse task choices (Hedge, 2001).

Students who engage in humanistic classroom environments often experience reduced anxiety and increased confidence, particularly when they are involved in setting learning goals and deadlines. These practices foster a sense of ownership, contributing to enhanced academic performance. Moreover, humanizing practices facilitate the development of interpersonal skills, enabling teachers to better understand and respond to their students' needs and preferences (Byram, Hu, 2013).

The quality of teaching is also enhanced through humanistic approaches, as teachers benefit from a more appreciative and engaged student body, leading to a more rewarding teaching experience. The ability to connect with students on a personal level and address their individual needs fosters a more effective teaching and learning dynamic (Deci, Ryan, 1985). Additionally, the incorporation of humanizing values contributes to the development of a democratic classroom environment, where students actively participate in shaping their learning experiences. This democratic approach not only enhances student engagement but also promotes a more collaborative and interactive learning environment (Suyatno & Wantini, 2018).

Educators who embrace these aspects can significantly enhance student engagement and achievement, illustrating those humanistic principles can lead to meaningful educational outcomes (Wang, 2022). In a humanistic approach to education, self-assessment is often prioritized over traditional grading methods. This allows students to reflect on their own learning journeys, emphasizing personal satisfaction and intrinsic motivation rather than external validation (Hadley, 2003).

Such an approach encourages learners to be driven by personal interests and internal satisfaction, leading to more meaningful and engaged learning experiences. A fundamental tenet of humanistic education is the belief in each individual's capacity for growth and self-improvement, asserting that all learners possess the potential for positive development (Abdulhasan, 2024). To foster a sense of community and belonging, it is important to involve students in setting classroom rules, celebrating their achievements, and encouraging collaborative activities (Veugelers, 2011).

The long-term benefits of a humanistic approach are profound. Students who experience humanizing practices in the classroom are more likely to carry these positive experiences forward, leading to greater academic and professional success. Enhanced student engagement improved academic performance, positive emotional impacts, and stronger teacher-student relationships are just a few of the significant outcomes associated with this approach. By fostering a supportive and inclusive classroom environment, humanistic education not only improves immediate learning outcomes but also contributes to the long-term well-being and success of students (Cassidy, 2023).

According to Aloni (2007), humanistic psychology can be distilled into three key principles: the recognition of individual self-worth, the importance of emotions alongside facts, and the elevation of personal, social, and moral development to levels equal to academic development. Firstly, humanistic education emphasizes the intrinsic value and dignity of each student, acknowledging their rights and uniqueness as individuals on a journey towards self-actualization. Secondly, it respects students' feelings and aspirations, valuing the emotional dimension of learning which contributes to positive self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy development (Chen, Vicki, Widarso, Sutrisno, 2020).

Furthermore, humanistic education creates a moral environment where participants are free from coercion and deception, fostering objective evaluation, openness to diverse perspectives, and critical self-reflection. Creating optimal conditions for behavioral change and self-improvement is central to humanistic theory, which emphasizes self-directed learning and higher needs (Tolstikh, 2020)

Munyua (2020) links humanistic education closely with the human potential movement, emphasizing the importance of feelings and the exploration of one's authentic self. The approach aims to uncover and honor the unique qualities of each individual beyond surface behaviors. Educators are encouraged to design curricula that support these needs and foster self-regulation and active participation (Khatib et al., 2013). By focusing on humanizing the learning experience, educators can enhance students' overall development and well-being (Ellis, 2003).

Concerning a foreign language classroom harmonious teacher-student relationship, characterized by empathy and respect, is essential for creating an effective learning environment. In contrast, traditional, exam-oriented methods often foster a hierarchical dynamic that can undermine student engagement and self-expression (Moriska, 2017). By valuing emotional engagement and personal growth, this approach not only improves language acquisition but also contributes to the development of empathetic and self-aware individuals (Harmer, 2009).

Building a harmonious teacher-student relationship characterized by empathy and respect is crucial for creating an effective learning environment in foreign language classroom. Thus, the focus shifts from teacher-directed instruction to facilitating self-discovery and personal growth (Duchesne, McMaugh, 2016). Emphasizing self-assessment and personal reflection helps students measure their progress against personal benchmarks, promoting intrinsic motivation and responsibility. Encouraging students to engage in self-evaluation through portfolios and reflective notes fosters self-awareness and illustrate weakness points, and personal development (Ryan, Deci, 2000).

By creating a supportive and non-threatening classroom atmosphere, students feel more comfortable participating and expressing themselves, which can lead to improved language skills and a more positive attitude toward learning English (García-Moya et al., 2020). Overly rigid methods can harm the foreign language classroom atmosphere and relationships. Stevick (1990) highlights that essential components of humanistic language teaching include language mastery, proficiency in teaching methodology, emotional intelligence, and a realistic understanding of learners' cognitive and affective needs (Em, Nun, Phann, 2021).

This approach recognizes that language learning is intertwined with the need for self-acceptance (Ellis, 1997). This approach supports students in controlling their learning content and motivation, leading to deeper and more enduring learning experiences in using the foreign language. Despite the success of humanistic approach, traditional methods still prevail, particularly in English as a Foreign Language context, highlighting the need for a shift towards more humanistic approaches (Lojova, 2016).

In humanistic classroom students should be afforded as much autonomy as possible regarding what they learn, how they learn, and how they demonstrate their learning. Choice should be adapted to the situation, ranging from no choice to total choice, with the goal of providing the least restrictive environment necessary for a positive learning experience. The subject matter should be relevant to students' lives and personal interests (Ellis, 2003). Education should encompass the full spectrum of human experience, including emotions, relationships, creativity, intuition, and real-life problems. Humanistic educators aim to create conditions where students use their intellect, emotions, and intuition to solve problems and understand the world. The curriculum should be explored in a multidimensional context, incorporating arts and experiential learning methods. Humanistic education builds on students' intrinsic desire to learn by making content relevant to their lives and teaching them how to learn effectively (Florence, Boit, 2024). This includes acquiring information, critical analysis, evaluation, and application of knowledge. Learning environments should be free from physical, social, emotional, and self-esteem threats (Gardner, 1985). Excessive competition and the focus on measurement can lead to failure and negative experiences. A supportive environment is essential for fostering effective and meaningful learning. According to Rogers (1961), respect is characterized by unconditional positive regard. By demonstrating genuine respect, educators foster students' self-respect and self-efficacy, which in turn supports and enhances their learning experiences (Dörnyei, 2001).

Teachers should be approachable and proactive in providing support. Being available for one-on-one assistance and showing a willingness to listen and provide guidance fosters a trusting relationship where students feel valued. While offering support, teachers must maintain professional boundaries, especially concerning personal issues outside their professional scope (Farrokhnia, Banihashem, Noroozi, Wals, 2023). Striking a balance between support and professional boundaries is crucial for maintaining effective and respectful educational relationships. Teachers can humanize their approach by sharing personal experiences and demonstrating

vulnerability. This transparency helps establish genuine connections with students, fostering trust and encouraging open engagement in the learning process. (Zhou, Li, 2023).

Embracing humanistic principles fosters deeper student engagement, enhances academic achievement, and promotes overall personal growth. Teachers who effectively implement these strategies build stronger, more empathetic connections with their students, leading to a more meaningful and successful educational experience. To incorporate Humanistic principles into foreign language teaching, educators should prioritize learning outcomes. The focus shifts from merely covering content to achieving tangible results in students' learning (Wantini, Suyatno, 2018).

English teachers in traditional classes predominantly utilize a grammar-based approach, which often results in a less engaging learning atmosphere (Stevick, 1980). This traditional method can create a burdensome experience for students, impeding their ability to master English despite years of instruction from elementary through senior high school (Panggabean, 2015). This approach is heavily influenced by rigid curricula, prescribed textbooks, and national exams, which restrict teachers' creativity and flexibility in teaching methods (Maia, 2015).

Teachers in humanistic classroom embody their authentic selves in their teaching practice. They remain attuned to their own feelings and experiences, reacting in an authentic manner. Genuine teachers rely on their emotional responses and personal experiences to guide their teaching rather than solely depending on methods or techniques (Tolan, 2017). Teachers who adopt these methods are attuned to students' perspectives and strive to create an environment conducive to active participation, self-expression, and mutual respect (Ushioda, 2023).

Traditional approaches to education often emphasize strict adherence to curriculum guidelines and assessment criteria, which can sometimes result in a less dynamic and flexible classroom environment (Rosselli, Uribe, Ahne, Shihadeh, 2022). In such settings, social and emotional aspects of learning are frequently regarded as secondary to academic achievement (Suyatno, Wantini, 2018). In contrast, approaches that integrate social and emotional learning as central components recognize that students' interactions, attitudes, and self-perception significantly influence their academic success.

While many educators intuitively implement these techniques, they frequently encounter challenges due to curriculum constraints and external pressures. Teachers who excel in creating a positive learning environment are those who effectively balance cognitive goals with emotional and social considerations, thereby fostering a classroom atmosphere where students feel valued and motivated (Stevick, 1990). Effective teaching extends beyond the mere delivery of content; it involves a deep understanding of students as individuals, the creation of a supportive environment, and a flexible response to their unique needs. Recognizing successes, providing constructive feedback, and setting high expectations help build students' self-esteem and encourage perseverance. Specific and meaningful praise can also be a powerful motivator, reinforcing students' confidence in their abilities (Rivers, 1981).

Humanistic language teachers often exhibit characteristics that enhance the learning environment. Humor, for instance, plays a crucial role in making learning more enjoyable and reducing stress, thereby creating a relaxed atmosphere conducive to learning. Fairness in grading and interactions fosters trust and respect between students and teachers, contributing to a positive classroom dynamic. A democratic approach, where teachers share decision-making responsibilities with students, empowers learners by giving them a voice in their educational process. Additionally, relatability is important; teachers who connect with students on a personal level can build stronger relationships and engage students more effectively (Yan, 2023).

To ensure the effectiveness of humanistic language teaching, several key strategies should be employed; Personal relevance is essential for enhancing learner engagement. Educators should integrate content that resonates with learners' personal experiences, paying close attention to their interests, feelings, and individual strengths. Activities that invite students to share their personal views and experiences can make the content more relatable and engaging. Understanding the purpose and nature of classroom activities promotes motivation. Teachers should clearly explain the goals and relevance of activities to students and occasionally discuss the nature of tasks to ensure students understand their value. Learner-training sessions can help align students with the educational objectives of the program, preventing activities from becoming monotonous and increasing their perceived value. Imaginative activities foster holistic development and engagement (Zarin, Risala, 2022). Incorporating elements such as role-plays, language games, and narratives into lessons encourages students to use their creativity and engage in playful language use. For example, using fictional scenarios to practice new language structures can help reinforce language skills through varied and enjoyable contexts (Hedge, 2001). Viewing students as active participants rather than passive learners encourages greater engagement. Teachers should treat students as language users with equal participation rights, facilitating conversational exchanges and avoiding the domination of classroom interactions. Creating an egalitarian atmosphere where students can take the initiative in

discussions and activities is crucial for fostering a dynamic and inclusive learning environment (Irene, Fiona, Carmen, 2020).

Humanistic teaching approaches prioritize small group tasks, encourage collaboration through diverse activities, and promote peer support and feedback. These approaches allow learners to explore different perspectives and engage actively in language use through role-playing and games (Katherine, 2019). A key aspect of this methodology is respectful and individualized personal interaction, which emphasizes the importance of teachers connecting with students on a personal level rather than treating them as anonymous members of a class (Vygotsky, 1978). This includes addressing students by name, recognizing their individual contributions, and showing genuine interest in their progress and experiences (Veugelers, 2011b).

Teachers in a humanistic classroom demonstrate empathy by understanding the challenges students face and adjusting their teaching methods accordingly. Students particularly value teachers who can empathize with their situation, especially when they struggle with the material or face personal issues. Support from teachers extends beyond academic assistance; it involves being approachable and available to help students with both academic and non-academic issues. This includes offering extra help, demonstrating care for students' overall well-being, and being flexible with deadlines, while remaining open to discussing students' academic and personal needs (Abdulhasan, 2024).

To make interactions more personal and relatable, teachers can incorporate informal conversations, humor, and personal anecdotes into their lessons. In the implementation of humanistic approaches in the classroom, teachers actively listen to and engage with students' ideas, responding to their work by focusing on both content and language. This encourages students to express their ideas freely and reflect on their learning. By providing opportunities for students to select topics and activities that interest them, teachers can promote motivation and personal relevance.

Active methodologies are used to create an engaging and supportive learning environment that caters to the whole person. Teachers provide choices to increase learner autonomy and motivation, offering students options regarding materials, topics, and learning activities ([Kanat-Maymon](#), Roth, 2023). They encourage self-initiation, allowing students to select activities that align with their interests and readiness. However, teachers also balance freedom with structure to ensure that these choices contribute to meaningful learning outcomes.

Recognizing that emotional well-being significantly impacts learning, humanistic educators create supportive environments that minimize negative emotions such as anxiety and foster positive emotions like self-esteem and motivation. They recognize and address students' emotional needs, using both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to enhance engagement and commitment to learning (Khatib, Sarem, Hamidi, 2013).

A well-developed sense of self-awareness is crucial, as it allows individuals to relate better to others and achieve meaningful communication, which is the ultimate goal of language learning. Humanistic education aims not only to develop linguistic competence but also to foster personal growth and effective interpersonal skills. Integrating humanism into language teaching helps learners understand how language functions in real contexts, promoting a deeper understanding of language use beyond mere vocabulary and grammar. This empowers learners to communicate effectively and meaningfully in diverse situations (Kristjánsson, 2013).

These principles advocate viewing the learner first and foremost as a human being, rather than merely as a student. According to Wang (2005), if individuals cannot satisfy their basic physical and psychological needs, their ability to engage fully in language learning may be compromised. Aloni (2007) contrasts humanistic education with authoritarian traditions, highlighting its commitment to creating a social and intellectual environment that protects students from intellectual oppression, physical punishment, and indignity. Today, there is a notable shift in education towards emphasizing personal development, self-acceptance, and acceptance by others, with the aim of cultivating students' humanity (Al-Khotaba, AbdulHamid, Ibrahim, 2020).

In humanistic classrooms students are engaged in self-evaluation and collaborate with peers, and promote peer support and feedback, learners are allowed to explore different perspectives through role play (Alaudin, 2015).

Lei (2007) underscores that humanistic education aims to develop both the personal and linguistic capabilities of learners. Humanistic principles have profoundly influenced second language education by emphasizing the holistic development of learners as individuals with unique inner worlds, emotional needs, and capacities for growth and adaptation. In both the Humanistic-Psychological Approach and the Communicative Approach to language teaching, learners are viewed not merely as linguistic targets but as complex human beings whose dignity, integrity, ideas, thoughts, needs, and emotions deserve respect (Nunan, 2006).

Humanistic education contrasts sharply with deterministic behaviorist perspectives by prioritizing personal growth and emotional well-being alongside academic content. While academic content is not neglected in humanistic classrooms, students are encouraged to engage openly, share personal experiences, and express their feelings. Feedback from students typically characterizes humanistic education as sensitive, empathetic, loving, and fair, highlighting the nurturing and supportive environment it fosters (Rundell, Potter, Carey, Nicholls, 2009).

In essence, humanistic education strives to cultivate well-rounded individuals who are not only academically proficient but also emotionally aware, morally grounded, and self-confident. The foundation of humanistic education rests on several core premises that shape its approach to teaching and learning: *Holistic Development*: Education's primary aim is to create an environment that enables students to reach their full potential. This involves not only fostering cognitive or intellectual growth but also promoting emotional and personal development (Lightbown, Spada, 2013). *Emotional Integration*: Emotions are integral to meaningful learning. Acknowledging and utilizing emotions within the learning process enhances the depth and impact of educational experiences (Mark, 2021). *Active Learning*: Significant learning occurs when individuals actively discover knowledge for themselves, rather than passively receiving it. This learner-centered approach encourages exploration, critical thinking, and personal engagement with the material. *Innate Potential*: Human beings naturally strive to realize their full potential and grow as individuals. Education should support this innate drive, helping students to develop their strengths and capacities (Rustamov, 2022).

Positive relationships with peers and educators enhance learning outcomes and contribute to a conducive learning environment. The social and emotional dimensions of learning are as important as the intellectual ones. *Self-Understanding*: Learning about oneself and increasing self-esteem are powerful motivators for learning. Education that incorporates self-reflection and personal growth can lead to more meaningful and lasting educational achievements. *Emotional and Affective Learning*: Integrating emotional and affective aspects into education is essential for fostering effective learning. By recognizing and addressing the emotional needs of students, educators can create a more engaging and supportive learning experience (Du, 2012).

These principles of humanistic education advocate for a comprehensive approach to teaching that respects and nurtures the whole person, ensuring that students are not only successful in their academic pursuits but also in their personal development and emotional well-being (Rahman, 2013).

Moreover, humanistic education is regarded as both enjoyable and engaging, as it prioritizes the affective domain alongside cognitive and linguistic development (Richards, Schmidt, 2010). By shifting away from traditional teacher-centered approaches to placing learners at the heart of the educational process, humanistic education has led to significant transformations in language education, influencing instructional methods and practical applications (Shyam, Sreeramana, 2024).

In the context of language learning, humanistic principles suggest several important strategies: *Meaningful contexts*: Language learning should take place in authentic and meaningful contexts that simulate real-life communication. Activities such as discussions, role-plays, and projects that involve the practical use of language skills are essential to this approach (Roy, Misra, Keer, 2022). *Student-centered learning*: Learners should be empowered to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers act as facilitators, guiding and supporting students as they discover and construct their own understanding of the language (Shih, 2018). *Encouraging Critical Thinking*: Humanistic education promotes the development of critical thinking skills, such as analyzing, inferring, synthesizing, and evaluating information. In language learning, this involves encouraging students to question and explore language patterns, cultural nuances, and diverse perspectives (Richards, Rodgers, 2001). *Approaches Promoting Interaction*: Language proficiency is greatly enhanced through social interaction. Humanistic approaches emphasize collaborative learning environments where students can interact with each other and with native speakers to practice and refine their language skills. *Respecting Individuality*: Every learner is unique, with their own pace, preferences, and strengths. Humanistic education respects and supports this diversity by offering flexible learning opportunities and adapting teaching methods to suit individual needs. *Emphasizing Self-Expression*: Language learning goes beyond mastering grammar and vocabulary; it also involves the effective expression of thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Humanistic approaches encourage learners to express themselves in the target language without fear of judgment (Richards, Burns, 2023).

Overall, applying humanistic principles in language education can create a more supportive and enriching learning environment. This approach shifts the focus from rote memorization to holistic development, where learners not only acquire language skills but also gain confidence, independence, and a deeper understanding of cultural contexts.

In the realm of language education, these principles underscore the importance of authentic communicative contexts, collaborative learning environments, and the cultivation of learners' critical inquiry abilities. Stevick (1980) emphasizes the importance of interpersonal dynamics within the classroom, arguing that

the success of language learning depends less on instructional materials, techniques, and linguistic analysis, and more on the quality of interpersonal interactions among participants.

Teachers are encouraged to adopt facilitative roles rather than traditional authoritarian positions, with a focus on nurturing students' self-directed learning skills rather than merely imparting knowledge (Hanafy, 2014). By fostering a nurturing and inclusive learning environment, humanistic language teaching aims to optimize affective factors, cultivate positive attitudes toward language learning, and accommodate diverse learning styles, thereby promoting sustained engagement and progress among learners (Oxford, 2023).

Unfortunately, some educators overlook these emotional aspects, attributing difficulties solely to cognitive or linguistic issues. It is essential for teachers to allocate time for self-reflection on their role and classroom dynamics (Maslow, 1970). By exploring their own emotional responses to students and understanding how these responses impact classroom dynamics, educators can enhance their personal and professional development, ultimately facilitating the growth of students' knowledge and skills (Biesta, 2010).

An important consideration in humanistic language teaching is the provision of genuine challenges to students. Educators should incorporate supplementary materials that present real-world challenges, such as debates, role-plays, speech contests, and press conferences (Drew, 2022). These activities require students to collect information, collaborate, practice oral skills, and simulate authentic language use, thereby sustaining student interest and fostering autonomy in learning (Arabai, 2016).

Humanistic approaches represent a transformative paradigm in language teaching, prioritizing student-centered learning and encouraging active engagement over passive reception. In language teaching, engaging materials and activities are crucial for maintaining learners' interest and avoiding monotonous drills. By humanizing activities—incorporating affective, engaging elements and accommodating diverse learning styles—teachers can enhance learning outcomes (Handayani, Widiastuti, 2019). Harmer (2009) advocates for the use of multiple senses and emotional engagement to foster deeper learning and achieve a state of "flow." Environments that support these needs enhance self-regulation and positive outcomes, while controlling environments hinder them (Misra, 2000).

Personalized feedback and formative assessment are key components of humanistic education, focusing on constructive, ongoing support rather than relying solely on summative evaluations. Teachers act as facilitators, creating supportive environments that encourage creativity and critical thinking, while learners actively participate, set goals, and engage in self-directed learning (Mercer, MacIntyre, 2023). Dörnyei (2003) highlights the importance of prioritizing external factors related to the learning process and teaching methodologies to ensure that language instruction is both effective and efficient.

Humanizing practices significantly enhance student engagement, as personal connections between teachers and students foster a sense of belonging, leading to increased active participation in the learning process. Furthermore, personal interactions and empathetic understanding can positively influence academic outcomes, as students who feel supported and understood are often more motivated and better equipped to navigate academic challenges.

Despite the significant emphasis on English language education in Saudi Arabia and the Ministry of Education's ongoing efforts, research consistently reveals low levels of English proficiency among students in Saudi schools (Al-Sulaiti, 1993; Al-Ahdal & Abduh, 2021 & Alghonaim, 2021 & AlHarbi, 2021). Consequently, many Saudi university graduates struggle with effective communication in English, with most only capable of using very basic language skills. This presents substantial challenges for educators striving to enhance students' language proficiency (AlAhdal, Al-Ma'amari, 2015; Bin-Hady & Abduljalil, 2021 & Alhajailan, 2020, & Elyas, Picard, 2013).

Moreover, the positive impact of humanizing classroom practices extends well beyond the immediate educational setting, influencing students' future academic and professional endeavors. Students who experience a supportive and inclusive environment are more likely to carry these positive experiences into their subsequent educational and professional lives (Bestable, 2006).

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to integrate humanistic approaches into English language education to enhance teaching quality. The primary objective was to improve students' English language performance through using humanistic approaches, and to identify which humanistic strategies are most effective in fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment.

Research Questions:

1. How do humanistic approaches impact students' overall performance in English language learning?
2. Which humanistic strategies are most effective in fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment?

Research Design and Methods

Research Methodology

This study employed a Quasi-Experimental research method, with a single group, to assess the impact of humanistic teaching approaches on students' overall performance in English language. The research also aimed to identify the humanistic strategies most effective in fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment for English language learners.

Participants

The study involved 15 female students, aged 15 to 17, from various neighborhoods in Riyadh. These students attended Al Khaleej Institute in the eastern part of the city during their holiday period from June 23, 2024, to August 8, 2024. The selection of both the institute and the class was conducted randomly to ensure the credibility and generalizability of the research findings.

Data Collection

Instruments:

- **Observation:** Observations were conducted to gather data on student participation, engagement, and interaction within the classroom. This method provided valuable insights into the practical implementation of humanistic approaches and their effects on students' performance and involvement in learning activities.
- **Interviews:** Following the observation phase, individual interviews were conducted with all students to clarify any incomplete or ambiguous data. These interviews delved deeper into students' experiences with humanistic teaching methods, exploring their perspectives on the approach and identifying which strategies were perceived as most effective in creating a supportive and engaging learning environment.
- **Focus Groups:** Small focus groups were organized to facilitate in-depth discussions among students regarding their experiences with humanistic teaching methods. This method enabled the exploration of collective insights and group dynamics that might not have emerged in individual interviews. The focus groups also served to validate findings from the interviews, providing additional context for understanding the effectiveness of various humanistic strategies.
- **Reflective Journals:** Students were encouraged to write down reflective journals throughout the study period. These journals offered continuous and personal insights into their learning experiences, providing a longitudinal perspective on how their attitudes, motivation, and language skills evolved over time under the influence of humanistic teaching approaches.

By integrating these diverse data collection methods, the study provided a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of humanistic teaching approaches on students' performance in English language, and identified the most effective humanistic strategies in fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment.

Data Collection and Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted to systematically examine the data gathered from all four instruments. The researcher first collected and organized the data, then proceeded to analyze the responses. Data was meticulously recorded, and coding was applied to the transcribed data for detailed analysis. Each transcription underwent a line-by-line analysis to identify key themes related to students' language performance and to pinpoint the most effective humanistic strategies for fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment. The interpretations and findings were then derived, with key observations summarized comprehensively.

Limitations

A primary limitation of this study is the small sample size, which may affect the generalizability of the findings.

Findings and Conclusion

Findings:

The findings indicate that addressing students' emotional and psychological needs is essential for fostering a positive and productive classroom atmosphere. Students expressed feeling more at ease, supported, and confident in their learning, with the focus shifting from merely acquiring language skills to creating a more relaxed and supportive environment.

"Speaking English became less about being perfect and more about trying, learning, and improving. That took away my fear of making errors. It felt amazing to be in a space where I was understood and respected rather than judged". "I felt like an individual, not just another student in a classroom. I even started to feel proud of my progress, no matter how small it was."

"The reflective journals were another highlight. Writing down my thoughts made me realize how much I was progressing—not only in English but in how I viewed myself". "It was like a personal diary where I could track my growth and think about what I had learned. Looking back at what I wrote, I could see how much more confident I had become. The process really made me think about my journey as a learner and how far I had come."

"Working together taught me that learning can be a shared experience, where we all contribute and grow together". I found that the lessons were not only about language; they were about building trust, cooperation, and empathy. The teacher always considered how we felt, and that made me feel supported". "I wasn't just learning English—I was learning how to be more confident, how to work with others, and how to express myself clearly". "I felt like I was growing as a person, not just as a student". "I feel much more motivated now, because I've realized how important it is to be engaged and to enjoy what I'm learning". "I truly hope more teachers adopt this way of teaching because it changed my entire experience of education".

In focus group, students also expressed their benefit and comfort with humanistic approaches, "We felt a noticeable change in our learning experience. It wasn't just about memorizing grammar rules or vocabulary; we were encouraged to use English in ways we hadn't before". "At first, I was forced to go to the institute, but now I'm excited to come here. I feel it's okay to make mistakes, and all my points of view are acceptable. Expressing ourselves made learning English much more interesting."

"We really appreciated how the lessons considered our feelings and emotions. The atmosphere in the classroom was so different—supportive, engaging, and even fun at times". "This made us want to participate more, and we felt like our opinions and ideas mattered. The teachers didn't just focus on our mistakes; they helped us learn from them in a positive way."

"This approach made us feel more confident in speaking and writing in English because we weren't afraid to make errors." "It was refreshing to be part of a learning environment where we felt understood, not pressured. We felt like valued individuals, not just students in a classroom."

"The reflective journals allowed us to express our thoughts and feelings regularly, and looking back on them, we can see how much we've grown. Writing in those journals also made us think more about how we were improving in English, not just academically, but personally too".

"Working in groups was another highlight. We learned how to cooperate with each other, share ideas, and even help one another. It made the whole learning process feel like teamwork rather than competition, which we really enjoyed."

"In his course, we did not only improve our English skills, but it also helped us feel more motivated and connected to what we were learning. It was more than just language classes—it was an opportunity for personal growth. We hope that more teachers adopt this approach, as it truly made a difference in our education."

"The classroom felt different. It wasn't a strict, boring environment; it was welcoming, supportive, and even fun." "We could share our thoughts freely, and the teachers really listened. They didn't just point out our mistakes; they used them as opportunities to help us grow, which made us feel more confident". "Speaking English became less about perfection and more about trying, learning, and improving. That made us less nervous about making errors. It was amazing to be in a place where we felt understood and respected rather than judged. We felt like individuals, not just students who needed to follow rules."

"The reflective journals were another great part. Writing down our thoughts made us realize how much progress we were making—not only in English but in how we saw ourselves. It was like a personal diary where we could track our growth and think about what we'd learned". "We also loved working in groups. We got to share ideas, help each other, and it felt more like a team effort than a competition. This made learning feel natural and fun. We built stronger relationships with each other, and that sense of community was something we hadn't experienced before."

It's notable from the verification of the observation note, and the reflective journals, and interviews, and group focus, that the most effective humanistic strategies in fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment are the follows :

Building positive student-teacher relationships: "I think what helped me the most was how the teacher really cared about us. It wasn't just about learning English; she took the time to get to know us and made me feel comfortable. I felt like she understood me, and that made me want to participate more." Personalized learning: "One of the best things was how the lessons were adapted to suit our individual desires. I could tell the teacher was paying attention to what worked best for each of us. This made me feel like I wasn't just part of a big group but that my learning actually mattered".

Fostering intrinsic motivation: "Instead of focusing on grades, we were encouraged to think about why learning English was important to us personally. This made me enjoy the lessons more because it wasn't about just passing a test, it was about growing as a person." Promoting emotional safety: "What I liked the most was the atmosphere in the classroom. We were never scared of making mistakes because the teacher created a space where everyone felt safe to speak up and share their ideas. That made me more confident and engaged in class".

Active listening and empathy: "Our teacher was always listening to us. Even if we had small issues, she made us feel heard. It wasn't just about the subject but about how we were feeling. That made me feel more connected and eager to participate." Encouraging self-reflection: "Keeping a reflective journal really helped me understand my progress. Writing about what I learned and how I felt made me think about how far I had come, and that motivated me to keep going".

Cooperative learning: "I really enjoyed working in groups. We had the chance to share ideas and help each other out, and that made learning feel more fun. It was like we were all in it together rather than competing against one another." Fostering autonomy: "I loved that we got to make choices about what we were learning. It wasn't just the teacher deciding everything for us. We got to explore topics we were interested in, which made me feel more responsible and excited about my learning." Using positive reinforcement: "The teacher didn't focus on our mistakes; instead, she highlighted our progress and improvements. This made me feel more confident and eager to keep improving because I knew I was getting better every day".

Integrating real-world applications: "What made it more interesting was when the teacher connected the lessons to real-life situations. We talked about things we actually care about, so learning English didn't feel disconnected from the rest of my life." Encouraging creativity and critical thinking: "I felt more engaged when we were asked to think critically and come up with our own ideas instead of just following instructions. It made the lessons more interactive, and I felt proud when I could contribute something new."

Providing consistent and constructive feedback: "The feedback we received wasn't just about what we did wrong but about how we could improve. The teacher always gave us constructive advice, and that motivated me to keep trying and improving." Emphasizing holistic development: "I liked that the lessons weren't just about language skills but also about personal growth. The teacher cared about how we were developing as people, not just students, and that made me feel more supported." Creating a flexible and adaptable curriculum: "What I loved was that the lessons weren't rigid. The teacher would change the plan based on how we were doing and what we were interested in, so it felt like the course was made for us".

Incorporating mindfulness and well-being practices: "Our teacher introduced mindfulness practices like deep breathing during class. It really helped me focus and stay calm when I felt nervous about speaking in English." Encouraging open dialogue and discussion: "We were always encouraged to ask questions and share our thoughts. I felt like I had a voice in the classroom, and that made me feel like my ideas were important, which made learning more engaging for me".

These student perspectives highlight the effectiveness of various humanistic strategies in creating a learning environment that is supportive, engaging, and empowering.

Conclusion

This research sought to explore the impact of humanistic teaching approaches on students' English language performance and to identify the most effective strategies in fostering a supportive and engaging learning environment. Conducted with 15 female students at Al Khaleej Institute, the study demonstrated that humanistic approaches had a profound effect on students' language learning experiences, significantly enhancing their motivation, engagement, and overall performance in English. By promoting active listening, fostering positive student-teacher relationships, and encouraging autonomy, the humanistic approach helped students not only improve their English proficiency but also build self-confidence and motivation to learn.

Moreover, strategies such as cooperative learning, reflective journals, and personalized feedback were found to be particularly effective in engaging students and promoting a deeper connection to their learning. These methods allowed students to take ownership of their progress, feel validated in their efforts, and collaborate meaningfully with their peers.

The study underscores the importance of integrating humanistic strategies into language teaching. This approach not only improves language acquisition but also nurtures students' emotional and personal development, making the learning process more engaging and meaningful. The results suggest that humanistic approaches can play a vital role in transforming language education, leading to a more holistic and effective learning experience that benefits both the cognitive and emotional well-being of students. Holistic development and self-actualization. However, it is essential to balance the freedom these methods offer with structured guidance to ensure all students benefit. Teachers must act as active facilitators, offering support while granting students the autonomy to shape their own learning journeys. This approach aligns with humanistic psychology's focus on personal growth and intrinsic motivation, ultimately helping students realize their full potential.

The findings reveal that addressing students' emotional and psychological needs is essential for creating a positive and productive classroom environment. Students expressed that they felt more comfortable, supported, and confident in their learning, as the focus shifted from simply acquiring language skills to fostering personal growth and development. By promoting active listening, building strong student-teacher relationships, and encouraging autonomy, the humanistic approach helped students not only enhance their English proficiency but also build self-confidence and motivation to learn.

Moreover, strategies like cooperative learning, reflective journals, and personalized feedback were particularly effective in engaging students and fostering a deeper connection to their learning experience. These methods empowered students to take ownership of their progress, feel validated in their efforts, and collaborate meaningfully with their peers, creating a more dynamic and involved learning environment.

The study highlights the importance of integrating humanistic strategies into language teaching. This approach not only facilitates language acquisition but also supports students' emotional and personal development, making the learning process more engaging and meaningful. The results suggest that humanistic approaches can play a pivotal role in transforming language education, leading to a more holistic and effective learning experience that benefits students' cognitive growth and emotional well-being. Policymakers should empower teachers through professional development programs and resources that emphasize the practical application of humanistic principles in teaching. Providing teachers with continuous support and training will strengthen their capacity to effectively integrate these values into their classrooms.

Humanizing educational practices require a deep recognition of students' prior knowledge, cultural backgrounds, and life experiences. These elements are essential in creating a learning environment where students actively engage with challenges and work towards resolving them which involves unveiling reality, fostering critical consciousness, and enabling students to intervene actively in their learning processes. This method stands in stark contrast to the "banking" model of education, where students are seen as passive recipients of information, leading to stifled cognitive development.

In classroom, teachers should emphasize activities that encourage the free flow of ideas, empowering students to fully engage with and take ownership of their learning. It should also prioritize social interactions as a means to achieve educational objectives, recognizing that collaborative efforts are key in addressing the real-world challenges encountered in the English language teaching process, where students can effectively apply their knowledge and skills. Encourage Student Autonomy: Teachers should design classroom activities that allow students to take ownership of their learning. This can be achieved through project-based assignments, choice in learning topics, and opportunities for self-directed study. Encouraging autonomy helps students feel more invested in their education and supports their personal growth.

Foster Positive Student-Teacher Relationships: Building strong, respectful relationships between students and teachers is crucial. Teachers should engage in active listening, offer constructive feedback, and show genuine interest in students' perspectives and experiences. This approach enhances student comfort and confidence, contributing to a more effective learning environment. **Promote Reflective Practices:** Encourage students to maintain reflective journals to document their learning experiences, challenges, and progress. Regular reflection allows students to assess their development, set personal learning goals, and gain insights into their emotional and cognitive growth. **Support collaborative learning:** implement cooperative learning strategies that promote teamwork and peer support. Group activities and collaborative projects not only enhance language skills but also help students develop interpersonal skills and a sense of community within the classroom.

Integrate emotional support resources: schools should provide resources and support systems to address students' emotional needs. This could include counseling services, peer support groups, and programs designed to enhance emotional well-being and resilience. **Evaluate and adapt teaching methods:** Regularly assess the effectiveness of humanistic strategies through feedback from students and evaluation of their learning outcomes. Adapt teaching methods based on these evaluations to continuously improve the learning experience and address any emerging needs.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends the use of humanistic teaching approaches, particularly in foreign language instruction, due to the challenges of engaging students without sufficient motivation to learn. Foreign language learning has a unique nature, as it can only be effectively acquired in two scenarios: when the student is fully immersed in an environment where the language is spoken, or when there is a communicative goal, such as asking for or requesting something.

Based on the research findings, several limitations emerge when applying the humanistic approach in educational settings. One notable concern is that an overemphasis on emotional development may come at the expense of cognitive growth, potentially leading to an imbalance in the overall learning process. The lack of structured guidance inherent in this approach may also cause confusion or frustration for students who respond better to more traditional, directive teaching methods. Additionally, the focus on student autonomy may not be appropriate for all learners, particularly those who require explicit instruction or are not yet prepared to take full responsibility for their learning.

Moreover, the successful implementation of humanistic strategies demands considerable time and effort from educators, who must carefully strike a balance between encouraging independence and providing necessary support. This approach also requires smaller class sizes and sufficient resources to effectively address students' individual emotional and psychological needs—conditions that may not be feasible in larger or underfunded educational institutions. Critics further argue that an overemphasis on emotional and personal growth can detract from academic rigor, potentially limiting students' opportunities for broader language practice or mastery of specific content, particularly in contexts where measurable outcomes through standardized assessments are prioritized. Consequently, while humanistic approaches offer significant advantages, their efficacy may vary based on the specific educational context and the diverse needs of the student population.

Recommendation for further studies

Longitudinal studies: conduct longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of humanistic teaching approaches on students' language proficiency, motivation, and personal development. Tracking students over extended periods can reveal how sustained exposure to humanistic methods influences their educational outcomes and personal growth.

Comparative Studies: implement comparative studies to evaluate the effectiveness of humanistic teaching approaches against other pedagogical methods. Such research could provide insights into the relative strengths and weaknesses of humanistic strategies compared to traditional or other alternative teaching approaches. **Quantitative analysis:** incorporate quantitative methods to complement qualitative findings. Surveys, standardized tests, and statistical analyses can provide measurable data on the impact of humanistic approaches, enabling a more comprehensive evaluation of their effectiveness in improving language proficiency and student engagement.

Investigate implementation challenges: research should explore the practical challenges and barriers faced by educators when implementing humanistic teaching approaches. Identifying these challenges can inform the development of support systems and strategies to facilitate the effective application of humanistic methods in the classroom.

References

- Abd Qodir, A. (2017). Humanistic learning theory in improving student achievement. *Pedagogic Journal*, 4(2).
- Abdulhasan, H. (2024). The importance of using humanistic theory in teaching English. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380539965>
- Abdulhasan, H. (2024). The importance of using humanistic theory in teaching English: Chapter One. *ResearchGate*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/380539965>
- Ahmad Al-Khotaba, H. H., Alkhataba, E. H. A., AbdulHamid, S., & Ibrahim, B. (2020). Foreign language speaking anxiety: A psycholinguistic barrier affecting speaking achievement of Saudi EFL learners. *Arab World English Journal*, 10.
- Alaudin, T. (2015). Principles and implications of humanistic learning theory in learning. *Iqra Education Journal*, 3(1).
- Alghonaim, S. (2021). Intrinsic motivation and speech production in Saudi EFL college students. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 50(5), 1137–1157. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-021-09807-z>
- Alhajailan, D. (2020). A syntactic analysis of Arabic language interference in the written English of Saudi female college students (Doctoral dissertation, University of Roehampton).
- AlHarbi, A. (2021). EFL teacher preparation programs in Saudi Arabia: An evaluation comparing status with TESOL standards. *Pegem Journal of Education and Instruction*, 11(4), 237–248.
- Alqahtani, A. (2018). Teaching English in Saudi Arabia. In *English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia* (pp. 107–126).
- Alrabai, F. (2016). Motivation and the L2 self: A systematic review of motivation research in applied linguistics. *Springer*.
- Al-Seghayer, K. (2011). *English teaching in Saudi Arabia: Status, issues, and challenges*. Riyadh: Hala Print Co.
- Bestable, S. (2006). *Essentials of patient education*. London: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.
- Biesta, G. (2010). The most influential theory of the century: Dewey, democratic education, and the limits of pragmatism. In D. Trohler, T. Schlag, & F. Osterwalder (Eds.), *Pragmatism and modernities* (pp. 207–224). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Byram, M., & Hu, A. (Eds.). (2013). *Routledge encyclopedia of language teaching and learning* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- Cassidy, C. (2023, January 10). Australian universities to return to ‘pen and paper’ exams after students caught using AI to write essays. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/>
- Chen, H. L., Widarso, V., & Sutrisno, H. (2020). A chatbot for learning Chinese: Learning achievement and technology acceptance. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 58(6), 1161–1189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0735633120929622>
- Chiu, T. K., Moorhouse, B. L., Chai, C. S., & Ismailov, M. (2023). Teacher support and student motivation to learn with artificial intelligence (AI)-based chatbot. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10494820.2023.2172044>
- Chris, A. (2010). Conceptualizing humanistic competence in the language classroom: A Chinese case. *International Education Studies*, 3(4), 113–125.
- Crain, W. (2015). *Theories of development: Concepts and applications* (6th ed.). Routledge.
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Crystal, D. (2006). *How language works*. Penguin Books.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Plenum Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2023). *Motivational dynamics in language learning: Concepts, studies, and applications* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003123351>
- Drew, C. (2022). What is the humanistic theory in education? Retrieved from <https://helpfulprofessor.com/humanist-theory-in-education>
- Du, J. (2012). Application of humanism theory in the teaching approach. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 3(1), 32–36.
- Duchesne, S., & McMaugh, A. (2016). *Educational psychology: Understanding student learning and development*. Cengage Learning.
- Ellis, R. (1997). *Second language acquisition*. Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Elyas, T., & Picard, M. (2013). Saudi Arabian educational history: Impacts on English language teaching. *Education, Business and Society: Contemporary Middle Eastern Issues*, 6(2), 136–156.
- Em, S., Nun, N., & Phann, S. (2021). Qualities, personal characteristics, and responsibilities of qualified teachers in the 21st century. *Cambodian Journal of Educational Research*, 1(2), 49–63.
- Farrokhnia, M., Banihashem, S. K., Noroozi, M., & Wals, A. (2023). A SWOT analysis of ChatGPT: Implications for educational practice and research. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2023.2195846>

- Florence, C., Boit, J., & Kipro, C. (2024). Effectiveness of school boards in setting strategic direction and its effect on students' achievement in selected counties of the North Rift, Kenya. *Creative Education, 15*(8), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2024.158101>
- Freeman, D. (2000). *Techniques and principles in language teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. Edward Arnold.
- Hadley, A. (2003). *Teaching English in context* (3rd ed.). Heinle & Heinle.
- Hanafy, M. (2014). Learning and learning concepts. *Lantern Education, 17*(June).
- Handayani, N., & Widiastuti, I. (2019). Integrating quantum learning to improve students' linguistic competence. *International Journal of Linguistics and Discourse Analytics, 1*(1), 22–28.
- Harmer, J. (2009). *The practice of English language teaching* (4th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Hasbi, M., & Muthmainnah, N. (2022). Can humanizing the classroom meet EFL learners' needs? *Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan, 27*(1), 53–64. <https://doi.org/10.24090/insania.v27i1.6490>
- Hedge, T. (2001). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford University Press. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/355409307>
- Irene, G., Fiona, B., & Carmen, M. (2020). Humanizing and conducive to learning: An adolescent students' perspective on the central attributes of positive relationships with teachers. *European Journal of Psychology of Education, 35*(5), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10212-019-00413-1>
- Johnson, K., & Johnson, H. (1998). *Encyclopedic dictionary of applied linguistics: A handbook for language teaching*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Kanat-Maymon, Y., Assor, A., & Roth, G. (2023). Conditional regard in development and relationships. *The Oxford Handbook of Self-Determination Theory*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197600047.013.24>
- Katherine, E. (2019). Humanistic learning theory in counselor education. *The Professional Counselor, 9*(4), 358–368. <https://doi.org/10.15241/ke.9.4.358>
- Khatib, M., Sarem, S., & Hamidi, H. (2013). Humanistic education: Concerns, implications, and applications. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 4*(1), 45–51.
- Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
- Kristjánsson, K. (2013). *Virtues and vices in positive psychology: A philosophical critique*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lightbown, P., & Spada, N. (2013). *How languages are learned* (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Maslow, A. H. (1968). *Toward a psychology of being* (2nd ed.). Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Motivation and personality* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.
- Mather, P., & McCarthy, P. (2006). *Paragraphs and essays: With integrated readings* (10th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- Matthews, B., & Ross, L. (2010). *Research methods: A practical guide for the social sciences*. Pearson Education.
- McCombs, B., & Whisler, J. (1997). *The learner-centered classroom and school: Strategies for increasing student motivation and achievement*. Jossey-Bass.
- McIntosh, C. N., & Harrison, J. P. (2020). Humanistic psychology and organizational leadership. In J. Murphy (Ed.), *Handbook of humanistic psychology* (pp. 379–392). SAGE.
- Mercer, S., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2023). *Language learner psychology: Bridging affective and cognitive dimensions*. Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788922981>
- Milton, J. (2010). Measuring the contribution of vocabulary knowledge to proficiency in the four skills. In *The role of vocabulary knowledge in second language proficiency* (pp. 37–54). British Council.
- Misra, K. (2000). *Understanding mineral deposits*. Kluwer Academic Pub. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-3925-0>
- Moskowitz, G. (1978). *Caring and sharing in the foreign language classroom*. Newbury House Publishers, Inc.
- Muthmainnah, N., & Hasbi, M. (2022). Can humanizing the classroom meet EFL learners' needs? *INSANIA: Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan, 27*(1), 53–64. <https://doi.org/10.24090/insania.v27i1.6490>
- Myles, J. (2009). Second language writing and research: The writing process and error analysis in student texts. *TESL-EJ, 6*(2), 1–20.
- Nunan, D. (2006). *Second language teaching & learning*. Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Oxford, R. L. (2023). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know* (2nd ed.). Heinle ELT. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315669633>
- Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. International Universities Press.
- Rahman, M. (2013). Humanistic approaches to language teaching: From theory to practice. *Stamford English, 4*(1), 77–110. <https://doi.org/10.3329/see.v4i0.1349>
- Richards, J. C., & Burns, A. (2023). *The Cambridge guide to learning English as a second language*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108961849>
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman dictionary of language teaching & applied linguistics* (4th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.
- Rivers, W. (1981). *Teaching foreign-language skills* (2nd ed.). The University of Chicago Press.

- Rogers, C. R. (1969). *Freedom to learn: A view of what education might become*. Charles Merrill.
- Rosselli, M., Uribe, V., Ahne, E., & Shihadeh, L. (2022). Culture, ethnicity, and level of education in Alzheimer's disease. *Neurotherapeutics*, 19(1), 26-54.
- Roy, S., Misra, S., & Keer, K. (2022). Technological impact in learning and development for Millennials. *International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education*, 14(3), 239-249.
- Rundell, M., Potter, L., Carey, S., & Nicholls, D. (2009). *Macmillan dictionary*. Macmillan.
- Rustamov, I. (2022). Teaching English as a foreign language. *Journal of Foreign Languages and Linguistics*, 4(4). <https://fl.jdpu.uz/index.php/fl/article/view/7228/4946>
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (1985). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Ryan, R. & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>
- Salomone, R., & Salomone, C. (2022). *The rise of English: Global politics and the power of language*. Oxford University Press.
- Seery, C., Andres, A., Moore Cherry, N., & O'Sullivan, S. (2021). Students as partners in peer mentoring: Expectations, experiences, and emotions. *Innovations in Higher Education*, 46, 663-681.
- Shih, Y. (2018). Rethinking Paulo Freire's dialogic pedagogy and its implications for teachers' teaching. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 7(4).
- Shyam, B. & Sreeramana, A. (2024). Understanding self-theory: "I" or "me" to self & the relationships of "I" & "me" to others from the character sketch of Mahabharata. *International Journal of Philosophy and Languages (IJPL)*. <https://doi.org/UnderstandingSelfTheory.pdf>
- Stevick, E. W. (1980). *Teaching languages: A way and ways*. Newbury House.
- Stevick, E. W. (1990). *Humanism in language teaching: A critical perspective*. Oxford University Press.
- Suyatno, & Wantini, S. (2018). Humanistic learning approaches: Applications and challenges in modern education. *Journal of Educational Practice*, 9(1), 45-57.
- Tolan, J. (2017). *Skills in person-centered counseling & psychotherapy* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Ushioda, E. (2023). *Exploring motivation in language learning: A critical perspective*. Palgrave Macmillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-16921-3>
- Veugelers, W. (2011). *Education and the humanizing approach: Rationality, autonomy, creativity, affection, and concern for humanity*. Sense Publishers.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Wang, Z. (2022). The effect of EFL teacher apprehension and teacher burnout on learners' academic achievement. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 839452. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.839452>
- Wantini, W., & Suyatno, S. (2018). Humanizing the classroom: Praxis of full day school system in Indonesia. *International Education Studies*, 11(4), 115. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v11n4p115>
- Yan, D. (2023). Impact of ChatGPT on learners in a L2 writing practicum: An exploratory investigation. *Education and Information Technologies*, 28(4), 1-25. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-023-11742-4>
- Zarin, T., & Risala, A. (2022). Rise of humanistic education: Are learners 'humans' or simply 'machines'? *Crossing*, 13(1), 106-117.
- Zhou, L., & Li, J. J. (2023). The impact of ChatGPT on learning motivation: A study based on self-determination theory. *Education Sciences & Management*, 1(1), 19-29. <https://doi.org/10.56578/esm010103>