



The use of silence as a monitor in EAL Australia

Gail Ekici^{a,1,*} 

^aLatrobe University, Australia

¹G.Ekici@latrobe.edu.au*

* corresponding author

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ABSTRACT

This mixed methods study has highlighted that students in lower level of EAL in Ausytalia have used silence to monitor their speeches. The study surveyed 148 student and teachers and results highlighted that teachers did not know about the adult silent period. Findings show that that their silent period was not treated by their teachers due to 'pedagogical barriers'. Competent Bilinguals said that there was too much emphasis on form rather than meaning. The main reason for paucity on the this topic is because for several decades the teaching of English as an additional language (EAL) has focused on communicative language teaching (CLT) to encourage students to use English to make meaningful conversations. Proficiency silence as an adult learnier in EAL is crusal and needs to understood by educators.



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1. Introduction

Silence is perceived as a problematic phenomenon by language teachers in education [1], [2]. There is an inherent disparity between teachers' experiences of periods of student silences' during communicative language teaching sessions and students' experiences of their silences. This disparity of students and teachers experiences and understanding of silences in class is unknown by teachers when they encounter it (see for example, Ollin, [1], [3]. Students in English as an Additional Language (EAL) classes are expected to communicate in class despite having lower level proficiencies and teachers usually expect meaningful responses and conversational talk to take place by language students as a part of the language curriculum and pedagogy. Despite teachers not knowing the reason for students' silences during their silent period in Australian language classes, they are expected to comply by communicative language teaching and learning. Learning a language as an Adult required silent monitoring, silence can be used as a perfect tool to monitor grammar of thought before dispensing speech. This study examines ways in students use silence as a monitor during their silent period by exploring reflections of advanced students' previous experiences in lower levels in overcoming their silent proficiency barrier and what role the teacher played despite the unknown nature of silence in the context of beginner level language learning.

There has been a limited amount of writing on silence and pedagogy [4] when learning English as an adult. King and Harumi [1] emphasised that: "teachers [are] less familiar with the field of silence in language learning and teaching" (p. 59). This confirms Ollin's [3] past advice that to continue to present 'what is happening' as business as usual when there is silence in an EAL pre-intermediate classroom literally continues the pedagogical status quo and therefore has become an obstacle to change. Silence has been mainly researched from an ideological and philosophical viewpoint, undermining firsthand research or engagement with classroom practice during the early stages of language learning. A researched viewpoint on silence has not adopted in Education nor in language of thought and puts a psycholinguistics onus on students (see for example willingness to participate). Still to date, the study of silence amongst teachers and students is neglected despite, it being a well-established fact in the literature that students are silent when they do know the language and go through a stage called the silent period originally observed in children later applied to adults [5]. The question

is, how are they treated pedagogically when they are in their (POS) Proficiency- Oriented Silence [6], and what pedagogical tools help them break there silences when they are in lower levels of English learning. To explore students' perception of POS, a mixed methods study was undertaken to explore how silence is perceived in a lower level EAL class by advance students reflecting back on their language learning experiences and also teachers' perceptions about student silences.

2. Method

The mixed methods data was collected by an an online survey snowballed amongst advance level English Language speakers Bilingual Survey Participants.

2.1. Competent bilinguals' demographic data

The demographic information includes age, gender, highest qualification, and occupation, these data are considered to be important variables in educational research. Table 1 to Table 3 show the gender, age range, and qualifications of the advanced Competent Bilinguals. Fig. 1 to Fig. 5 provide information on occupation, first language, second language, the number of languages they know. Table 1 shows the gender of Competent Bilinguals, this helps to understand the respondents.

Table 1. Gender demographics of competent bilinguals

Participants	N= 105	71% of the data set of 148
Male	16	11%
Female	89	60%

The majority of respondents (60%) identified as female. The next Table 2 shows the age breakdown of Competent Bilinguals

Table 2. Age breakdown of competent bilinguals

Participants	N= 105	71% of the data set of 148
Age <26 yrs	22	14%
Age 26-35 yrs	30	20%
Age 36-45 yrs	41	28%
Age 46-55 yrs	11	8%
Age >56 yrs	1	0.68%

Of the 105 Competent Bilinguals, 28% (41) were within the 36–45 year age group with 20% (30) younger aged 26–35 years and 14% (22) under 26 years, see Table 3. One outlier was more than 56 years of age.

Table 3. Qualifications of Competent Bilinguals

Qualification	Count	Percentage
School certificate (1)	10	6.76%
Bachelor's degree (2)	31	20.95%
Master's degree (3)	43	29.05%
PhD (4)	14	9.46%
Other (5)	5	3.38%

Of the 105 Competent Bilinguals a tenth of them (9% (14) held a PhD and almost a third 29 % (43) held a Masters degree. A fifth of the participants had gained a Bachelors degree (21% (31) while a minority of 7% (10) had a School Certificate. A further 10% did not specify, and the remainder did respond to this question. Fig. 1 to Fig. 5 provide the occupation, the first language, second language and the number of languages in the Competent Bilinguals' repertoires.

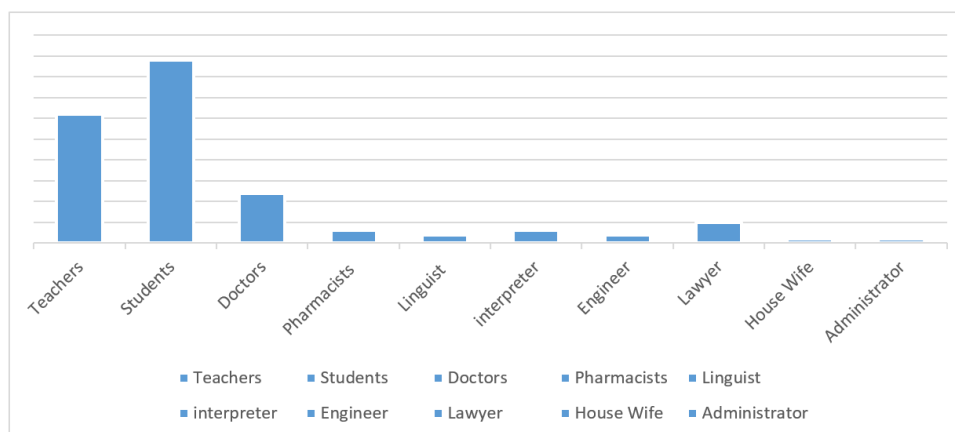


Fig. 1. Occupations of the advanced Competent Bilinguals

The Competent Bilinguals representing 70% (103) of the respondents came from a diverse range of professions. The largest group (44) were continuing students in higher education, 31 were teachers in the education industry. There were 12 doctors, five lawyers, three pharmacists, two engineers, two interpreters, two linguists, one administrator, and one identified as a housewife. Their perceptions on breaking their silence in English classes are therefore representative of a diversity of people employed across a wide range of fields. The next Fig. 2 shows the Competent Bilinguals first language. The data was gathered from advanced level EAL Competent Bilinguals who potentially would have experienced the silent period breakthrough who have now advanced in their careers. They were asked: How many languages do you have the ability to speak?

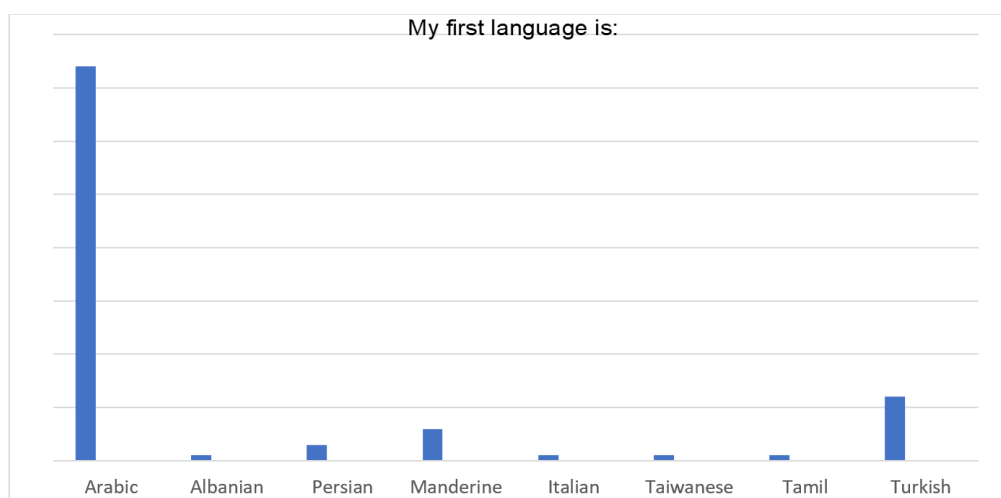


Fig. 2. First language of the advanced Competent Bilinguals

Fig. 2 shows the first language of 70% (103) of the 148 Competent Bilinguals who responded. The majority spoke Arabic (73;70%) as their first language. Eleven Competent Bilinguals spoke Turkish, seven were Farsi speakers, five spoke Mandarin including one Mandarin-speaking respondent who identified as Taiwanese, and four were Italian speakers. The remainder represented one Tamil, one Albanian speaker and one who spoke Sinhala. Fig. 3 indicates that of the 104 Competent Bilingual respondents, almost half (or 48.65%; 72) had learnt English as a second or additional language in a native English-speaking country. Just over a fifth (21.62%; 32) were reported to have learnt English as their foreign language, making this the second largest group in the survey responding to this question (the remainder did not respond to this question). The next Fig. 4 displays answers for the question: How many languages do you have the ability to speak? This figure shows the diversity of the language backgrounds of the Competent Bilinguals.

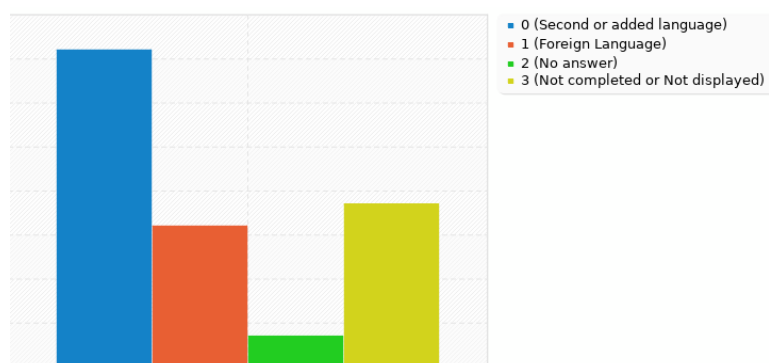


Fig. 3. English as a second or additional language of Competent Bilingual

The Fig. 4 displays the graph indicating that of 104 participants, the numbers of languages spoken varied from two to five languages. The majority, 70 participants declared they spoke two languages, 25 spoke three languages, seven spoke four languages and two spoke five languages

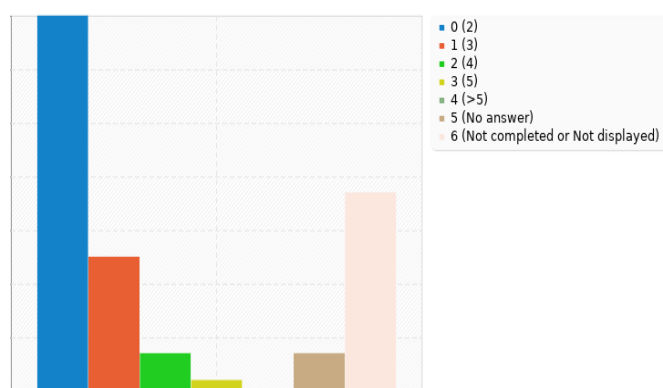


Fig. 4. The number of languages the Competent Bilinguals could speak

Fig. 5 shows a breakdown of the qualifications of 105 of the Competent Bilinguals respondents' qualifications. As advanced level English speakers they had high qualifications: 14 gained a PhD, 43 had a master's degree, 31 a bachelor's degree and 10 a School Certificate. A tenth of them (9.46%; 14) hold a PhD. Additionally, almost a third (29.05%; 43) held a master's degree. A fifth of the participants held a bachelor's degree (20.95%; 31). A School Certificate was the highest qualification held by a minority of (6.76%; 10). A further 10% replied 'other' and did not specify, and the remainder did not answer this question. In summary, the demographic data show that the Competent Bilinguals responses reflected diversity in culture, gender and languages spoken with a majority in the professions at the time of the study.

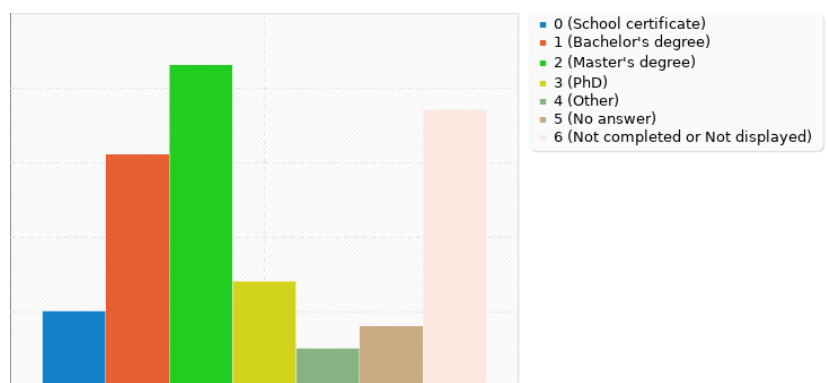


Fig. 5. The highest qualification of the Competent Bilinguals

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The summary of Competent Bilinguals' problems in various dimensions

The Competent Bilinguals answered the questions in the survey, which are grouped in six dimensions. The dimensions were created to measure how they felt when they experienced breaking their silences in class as a beginner, such as feelings of anxiety, if they had knowledge of conversational topics, timing skills, organisation of thoughts, delivery skills, and memory. Under each dimension there are two or three items created to explore each dimension. When the Competent Bilinguals replied 'sometimes', it was assumed that they had issues in breaking their silent period. The selected aspect(s) in that particular dimension on the frequency scale show the issues they experienced. On the contrary, if they answered either 'very rarely' or 'never' to the questions, they were counted as less silent or not silent (*i.e.* not having any issues breaking their silent period) under the particular dimension. As seen in Table 5, in relation to delivery skills, the Competent Bilinguals, which is equivalent to 82.19%; 60, 51.94%; 40 and 50.7%; 36 of those surveyed who answered this question) reported that respectively 'very often' or 'often' or sometimes found it easier to talk in their native language. In addition this applied to the frequency of them muddling their words when talking in English, and stumbling over their words when talking in class. The dimensions of anxiety, organisation, and timing were almost equally reported to be problematic by s when speaking in the classroom. Anxiety was found to be one of the highest contributors to EAL Competent Bilinguals' silence; As mentioned earlier, over 50% of the Competent Bilinguals experienced tension and nervousness when asked to speak in English, which shows that anxiety is a key contributor to Competent Bilinguals when breaking their silences at beginner levels. Competent Bilinguals responded that they felt tense when talking, and they felt very nervous when talking in English, respectively. This finding aligns with previous literature that highlights anxiety as the utmost important issue in student silence [7], [8]. The analysis of data in this study revealed that organisation and timing were the other problematic areas reported by these Competent Bilinguals in breaking their silence. Around 50% of them reported that they 'very often', 'often', or 'sometimes' had issues with organising their thoughts or responding in time when speaking English in their pre-intermediate time in the EAL classroom. While the findings of this study report organisation and timing as contributing problematic factors when breaking their silence, previous studies have not acknowledged these factors as equally important.

3.2. Part B – Competent Bilinguals' reports on how they broke their silence – their ah ha! moments

Part B of the survey was designed to obtain opened ended qualitative responses from Competent Bilinguals. They were asked: What was the ah ha! moment for you that triggered you to begin speaking in English? This question was purposefully designed to explore how Competent Bilinguals viewed their breaking of their silences when in lower levels drawing upon their learning experiences. Of the 148 Competent Bilinguals, 25.68%; (38) responded to this question. Of these 38 respondents, most of them experienced silence due to lack of teachers not giving enough chances to practise silence before speaking, as they were impatient and unempathetic. These open-ended questions gathered answers to help explore how they broke their silences and what triggered them to talk. The use of authentic English by teachers in immersion school who adapt their use of language to suit the students' needs at this level enables students to experience their ah ha! moments. These data show that teachers' ability to adapt their use of the target language to facilitate students to make meaning is missing. This finding showed that students when they were learning could not make remember the meaning of a word before being able to pronounce it. They all agreed that this correlation of meaning and sound was lacking in their learning. The data in Table 5.5, in relation to delivery skills. Of respondents to this question (82.19%; 60, 51.94%; 40, and 50.7%; 36) reported that 'very often' or 'often' or sometimes, respectively, they found it easier to talk in their native language. They also muddled their words when talking in English and stumbled over their words when talking in class, leading to a biological barrier due to not training.

The data shows a curriculum failure aiding pedagogically, where traditional textbook do not consider students silent period as this is evident from these findings. Learning a language after you critical period can be arduous [9] as the brain is rewiring its phonetical coordinates meaning it is connecting to sound to muscle just like playing the guitar and knowing which sound the string will make. The memory is also connected to this as if one cannot coordinate sound and muscle then it become hard to register meaning and memorise. This process is called Adult Silent Period (ASP) mentioned in Ekici [4]. There may be a recognition of the need to develop vocabulary but is still useless if the

teacher does not facilitate students to use the language for meaningful purposes. For example, when a lesson content is out of context for students, it is irrelevant to students' everyday needs. The importance of students being able to make meaning is also evident in Competent Bilingual 10's comment that their ah ha! moment was: When I suddenly understood the message and realised, I could make progress in English. It happened because I was enlightened and saw a step of progress. This emphasises the importance of comprehensible meaningful input. Yet very few of the Competent Bilinguals reported that they experienced their ah ha! moment in class. As the comments above suggest the students need to listen to real-life outside talk, but this has to be delivered in such a way as not to appear too formal and unnatural.

3.3. Part C – Competent Bilinguals reporting of the reticent scale

Part C of the survey asked students to think about their time as a beginner learning English in class, "to what extent do you agree that the statements below describe you as a beginner learning English?" Part C questions were adapted from Soo and Goh's [8] survey, which measures the level of reticence across six dimensions: anxiety, knowledge, timing, organisation, skills and memory. Additionally, a frequency scale was used. Thus, the same dimensions were applied in this study to explore the adult Competent Bilinguals' silences and their connections to what helped them in breaking their silences when they were a beginner language learner. Thus, the reticent scale (RS) was calculated from their total scores from their survey responses. The 16 items clustered around the six dimensions required participants to rate: "very often" attracting a value of 5, or "often" a value of 4, "sometimes" a value of 3, "very rarely" a value of 2, and "never" a value of 1. The total score in RS-16 indicated how likely a respondent was to be silent in class. This indicated the higher the silence score, the less willing they were to be at breaking their silence, according to the six dimensions. To group the Competent Bilinguals in high and low silence groups, a median split procedure was applied to their total scores in the scale. Using this method the Competent Bilinguals who scored 39 or above were grouped as the 'high silence group' and the Competent Bilinguals with scores below 39 were categorised as the 'low silence group' (O'Connell, 2010). Table 4 shows the number and percentages of Competent Bilinguals in the high and low silence groups. The next Table 5 displays the descriptive statistics for these data.

Table 4. Frequency of high reticent and low reticent Competent Bilinguals (n = 67)

Reticent score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Above 39 High Group	44	65.67%
Below 39 Low Group	23	34.33%

The Competent Bilinguals, as shown in Table 4, who received a score higher than 39 are seen as highly silent beginner language learners. Those who attained a score lower than 39 are deemed to be less silent. This score calculation showed that approximately 2/3 of Competent Bilinguals (65.67%; 44) rated that they were highly prone to be silent in class compared with only one-third (34.33%; 23) seeing themselves as having low reticence so were more likely to speak and participate when they were at beginner levels. These findings support Soo and Goh's [8] study.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of RS-16 (n= 67)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Median	Mode	Range
RS-16	42.58	14.12	43	40	15-80

The mean, median, mode, and range of the scores were calculated as presented in Table 5, the scores ranged from 15 to 80. The mean score was calculated to be 42.58, the Standard Deviation was 14.12, the median was 43, and the mode was 40. The mean, median, and mode all fell above the calculated midpoint of 39. This confirms that more than three-quarters of the students in the classes regarded themselves as being reticent. The mean score of 35.12 on the scale, with a median of 35.00 and a mode of 34, were all far above the scale midpoint of silent scale in table 5.6 below. This further confirms that a vast majority of the students felt they experienced a great deal of reticence in their preintermediate EAL classrooms. Previous researchers [10], [11] have also repeatedly found that most students do not participate or are passive in classroom discussions. For instance, Caspi *et al.* [10] and Crombie *et al.* [11] respectively reported that about 55% never and 64% rarely of the students participated in class. They found that three-quarters of their students regarded themselves as being reticent in class. This study has also found that Competent Bilinguals reported they had been substantially silent in their pre-intermediate classes. Table 6 below shows Competent Bilinguals' frequency of silences. For example, their silences were in relation to stumbling over words and forgetting them because they were unfamiliar with the vocabulary.

Table 6. Part C Competent Bilinguals' frequency ratings for silent scale (SS)-16 statements

Dimensions and Items	VO&O	S	VR&N
	<i>f %</i>	<i>f %</i>	<i>f %</i>
Anxiety			
1. I used to be nervous when talking. (Q2)	15 (19.74)	25 (32.89)	36 (47.36)
2. I felt tense when talking. (Q12)	13 (17.33)	28 (37.33)	34 (45.33)
Delivery skills			
3. I stumbled over my words. (Q15)	13 (18.31)	23 (32.39)	35 (49.29)
4. It was easier to talk with my friends in our home language instead of trying to use English. (Q16)	46 (63.01)	14 (19.18)	13 (17.80)
5. I muddled my words. (Q7)	16 (20.78)	24 (31.16)	34 (44.15)
Memory			
6. I forget what I wanted to say when talking. (Q3)	14 (19.71)	22 (30.98)	41 (57.74)
7. I lost sight of what I wanted to say when talking. (Q11)	13 (17.33)	20 (26.67)	42 (56)
Organisation			
8. My thoughts were disorganised. (Q14)	11 (14.67)	27 (36)	36 (48)
9. My thoughts were jumbled. (Q8)	13 (17.80)	29 (39.72)	31 (42.46)
Timing			
10. I waited too long to say what I wanted to say. (Q1)	14 (18.18)	34 (44.15)	29 (37.66)
11. I hesitated too long to say what I wanted to say. (Q10)	19 (24.68)	20 (25.97)	38 (49.35)
12. I needed my teacher to speak more slowly before I could try to reply in English. (Q13)	8 (10.81)	29 (39.19)	37 (50)
Knowledge			
13. I was unaware of what to say. (Q9)	9 (12)	23 (30.66)	43 (57.33)
14. I was unfamiliar with what to say. (Q4)	8 (10.39)	26 (33.76)	43 (55.84)
15. I needed to learn more vocabulary before I could try to speak English. (Q5)	38 (50)	18 (23.68)	20 (26.31)
16. I used to take notes in class instead of trying to participate in using English. (Q6)	18 (25.35)	28 (39.44)	31 (43.66)

Note: VO = very often; O = often; S = sometimes; VR = very rarely; N = never

Table 6 recapitulates the results of the advanced English-speaking Competent Bilinguals, the items under 16 in-class difficulties were related to silence. Of these 16 in-class difficulties related to silence, a high percentage of the Competent Bilinguals believed that problems in their delivery of English were obstacles in speaking in EAL classes in the early stage of learning. More than 60% of Competent Bilinguals very often or often preferred to speak in their home language with their friends. They also reported they used to be nervous and tense when talking in English, causing them to feel extremely anxious (20% very often or often plus 30% sometimes). Timing was also an issue with 50% of Competent Bilinguals reporting they very often or often waited and hesitated too long to say what they wanted to say, with 10% very often or often and 20% sometimes needing their teacher to speak more slowly in English. While 50% saw themselves as needing more vocabulary before they could speak English, 25% very often or often used to take notes in class instead of trying to participate in using English. Similarly, between 15% and 20% very often and often had issues with memory and organisation a greater percentage indicated sometimes, 40-50%.

Table 7 shows reporting of Competent Bilinguals' completed responses (respectively) to the six-dimensional reticent scale compared with Soo and Goh's [8] tertiary students. The non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test for independent samples was applied to test for any statistically significant differences between the two groups (two-tailed with alpha level of 0.05). The results showed the Soo and Goh [8] EFL tertiary students majoring in English in second- and third-year university studies to be statistically significantly more reticent than the Competent Bilinguals who had completed their studies and were recalling their experience as beginners (U-value 17; z-score -3.29077; $p < .001$). It would seem that the Competent Bilinguals in Soo and Goh's [8] study reported themselves as far more likely to be anxious and reticent than the Competent Bilinguals group who were already following their various careers, being advanced English-speaking Competent Bilinguals. Moreover, Soo and Goh's [8] group were EFL higher education students who were in the middle of studying an English major in Jordan where they would need to do well to achieve their degree and get a job related to the English major. In contrast, the group in the present study were Competent Bilinguals who had completed their studies and probably felt much more confident in retrospect since they had been using

English for meaningful purposes for some time and lived in an English-speaking country. Thus, in contrast, the students' high reticence in Soo and Goh's [8] study appears to be exacerbated by the pressure to do well in developing their English proficiency as that was their university major, upon which their job prospects depended. This study has strengthened the argument found in Soo and Goh's [8] research as to why adult students are silent.

Table 7. Competent Bilinguals' six-dimensional reticent scale compared with Soo and Goh's [8] tertiary students

Dimensions and items	Competent Bilinguals' percentage positive ratings	
	Soo and Goh (2013) (n1=78), %(f)	Present research (n2 = 67) %(f)
Anxiety		
1.I am nervous when talking	17.9(14)	19.74(15)
2.I feel tense when talking.	25.7(20)	17.33(13)
Delivery skills		
3.I stumble over my words.	30.8(24)	18.31(13)
4.I muddle my words.	29.5(23)	20.78(16)
Memory		
5.I forget what I want to say when talking.	37.2(29)	19.71(14)
6.I lose sight of what I want to say when talking.	48.8(38)	17.33(13)
Organisation		
7.My thoughts are disorganised.	51.3(40)	14.67(11)
8.My thoughts are jumbled.	37.2(29)	17.80(13)
Timing		
9.I waited too long to say what I wanted to say.	47.4(37)	18.18(14)
10.I hesitated too long to say what I wanted to say.	43.6(34)	24.68(19)
Knowledge		
11.I am unaware of what to say.	61.6(48)	12.00(9)
12.I am unfamiliar with what to say.	71.8(56)	10.39(8)

This study, in addition to theirs has found that, when adult students are learning a language, especially in the early stages, they have level-specific needs. The results of this study clearly show that the silent period is a level-specific biological need. If their needs in breaking their silent period is not met by pedagogical implications, then they have problems. This is an issue where the students' needs are not being met due to the teacher's approach. When the Competent Bilinguals replied 'sometimes' in a dimension, it was assumed that they recognised they had issues at some time in breaking their silent period. The selected aspect(s) in that particular dimension on the frequency scale show the issues they experienced. However, if they answered either 'very rarely' or 'never' to the questions, they were counted as indicating they experienced less silence (or not having any issues breaking their silent period) under the particular dimension. The Competent Bilinguals' frequency ratings were calculated across the six dimensions and for the 16 statements. As seen in Table 6, in relation to delivery skills, 60, 40, and 36 Competent Bilinguals' (which is equivalent to 82.19%; 60, 51.94%; 40, and 50.7%; 36 of the surveyed who answered this question) reported that 'very often' or 'often' they found it easier to talk in their native language, they muddled their words when talking in English, and they stumbled over their words when talking in class. The dimensions of anxiety, organisation, and timing were almost equally reported to be problematic by this group when speaking in the classroom. Anxiety was found to be one of the highest contributors to EAL Competent Bilinguals silence; as mentioned earlier, over 50% of the Competent Bilinguals reported they experienced tension and nervousness when asked to speak in English, which shows that anxiety is a key contributor to when breaking their silences at beginner levels. These Competent Bilinguals responded that they felt tense when talking, and they felt very nervous when talking in English, respectively. This finding aligns with previous literature that highlights anxiety as the utmost important issue in student silence [7], [8].

The analysis of data in this study revealed that organisation and timing were the other problematic areas in Competent Bilinguals reporting on them breaking their silence as past pre-intermediate students. Around 50% of them responded that they 'very often', 'often', and 'sometimes' had issues with organising their thoughts or responding in time when talking English in an EAL classroom. While the findings of this study report organisation and timing as contributing problematic factors when breaking their silence, previous studies have not acknowledged these factors as equally important. Soo and Goh [8], for example, did not find a huge difference between agreement and disagreement responses of Competent Bilinguals' answers to their questions in these dimensions. The Competent Bilinguals in Soo and Goh's [8] study were highly proficient; hence they did not have issues with

conveying their intended meanings. The overall lowest percentage of responses were for the dimension of knowledge, even though lack of vocabulary was reported as highly important in their silences. Out of the 76 Competent Bilinguals who responded to this question, approximately three-quarters (73.68%; 56) reported lack of vocabulary as a contributing factor to their silences, which is not surprising when learning an additional language. The following seven figures (Fig. 6- Fig. 11) consider the results of each of the six reticence scale dimensions individually on: anxiety, knowledge, timing, organisation, skills and memory. Fig. 6 shows the Competent Bilinguals.

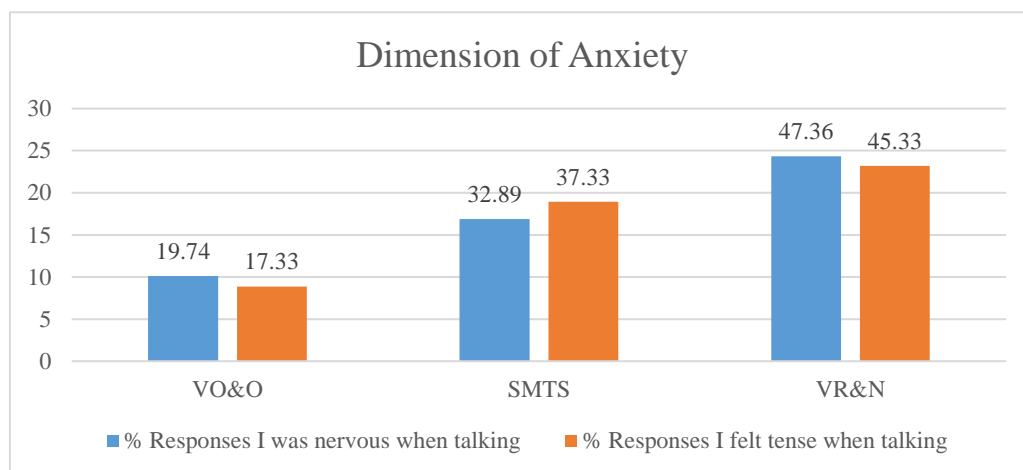


Fig. 6. The Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency they felt anxious when faced with needing to speak in English as a beginner

This cluster consists of two items. The first was *I used to be nervous when I was asked to talk in English* and 75 out of 148 responded to this question. The second was: *I felt tense when I was asked to talk in English* and 71 out of 148 answered the second question. Fig. 6 displays the Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency they felt anxious when faced with needing to speak in English as a beginner. The majority of them reported on their nervousness and tension, creating an understanding of their anxiety levels. As displayed in Fig. 6, from the positive percentage ratings, 52.63% and 54.66%, the majority of the Competent Bilinguals, said that they were 'often', 'very often', and 'sometimes' nervous and tense, respectively, when asked to talk in an EAL classroom. The fact that over 50% of the Competent Bilinguals experienced tension and nervousness when asked to talk in English shows that anxiety is a key contributor to student silences at beginner levels. Anxiety is one of the main signs when Competent Bilinguals are not assisted in breaking their silent period and the results clearly show this. In contrast, the Competent Bilinguals who replied 'never' had completed their studies and so probably felt much more confident in retrospect since they had been using English for meaningful purposes for some time, and in an English-speaking country.

Fig. 7 shows the graph of positive ratings percentages for cluster items under the dimension delivery skills. In this cluster, there are three items exploring the frequency they faced with difficulty when needing to speak in English as a beginner. The Competent Bilinguals' perceptions of their delivery skills were measured by asking them to answer survey questions in relation to the delivery of their speech. They were asked if they had stumbled or muddled when they needed to talk and if, rather than in class. The survey questions under the 'delivery skills' cluster show that Competent Bilinguals had struggled immensely with their delivery skills. The vast majority of Competent Bilinguals, 82.19%; 60 indicated it was easier to talk to friends outside of class. 51.94%; 38 of Competent Bilinguals said that they 'very often' (VO), 'often' (O), and 'sometimes' (S) stumbled their words when trying to speak in English. More than half of the 52.7%; 36 Competent Bilinguals said that they muddled over their words when they were asked to speak.

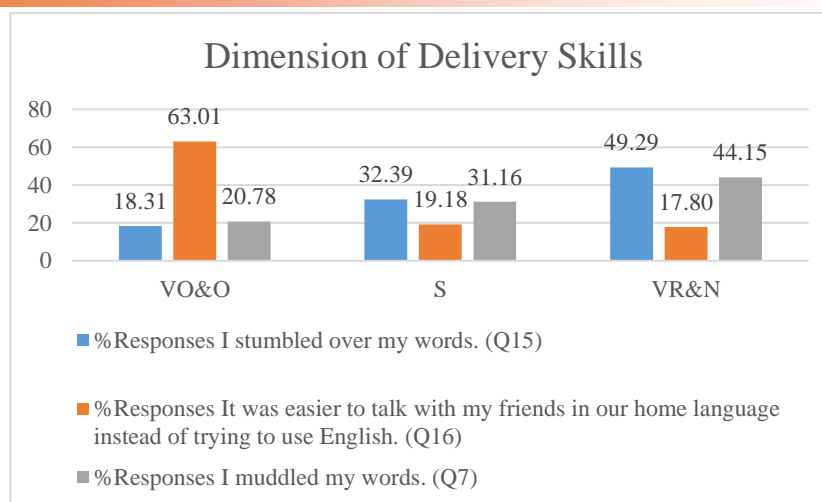


Fig. 7. The Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency they faced with difficulty when needing to speak in English as a beginner

Fig. 8 indicates how often the Competent Bilingual speakers found it difficult to remember what to say when they needed to speak in English as a beginner. In the cluster under the dimension of 'memory', respondents forgot or lost sight of what they wanted to say. The purpose of these questions was to explore if they were having difficulty or delay in breaking their silent period due to memory. The results show that memory was not the issue of their silence. The approach to teaching and learning might have been the issue. Competent Bilinguals (19.71%; 14 and 17.33%; 16); answered that they 'often' and 'very often', (30.98%; 22 and 26.67%; 20) and 'sometimes' forgot and lost sight of what they wanted to say.

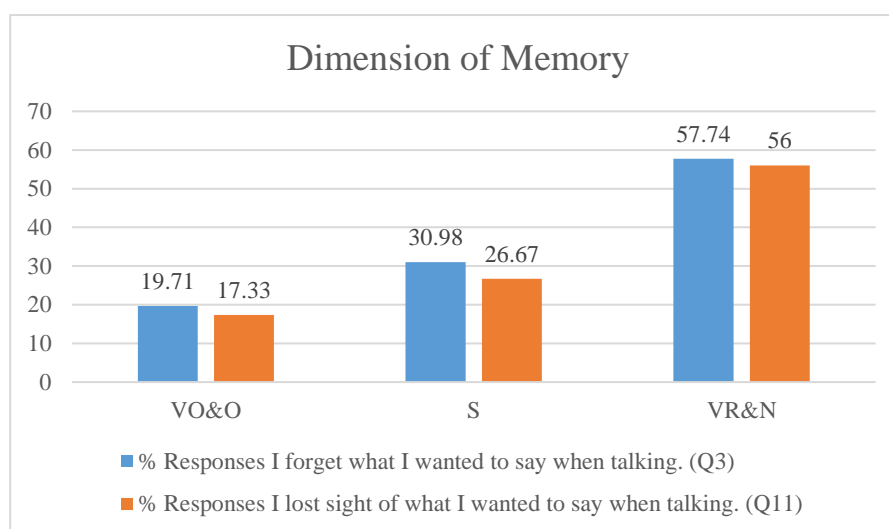


Fig. 8. Frequency of difficulty remembering when needing to speak in English as a beginner

This shows memory also played a role as well, but they lost sight or forgot what they wanted to say because they did not have the opportunity to construct and speak. In general, language learners at this level have very low-level proficiency and need to be assisted when they are answering the questions directed at them. Additionally, their silent behaviour may also be from the lack of memory as they are in lower levels along with other dimensions that contributed to the delay of breaking their silences. Memory in relation to remembering their words is in fact a very high contributor. Fig. 9 illustrates that a minority (17.80; 13 and 14.67%; 11) of respondents answered that their thoughts were 'often' and 'very often' jumbled and disorganised in response to questions X & Y, whereas more respondents (39.72%; 29 and 36%; 27) considered their thoughts were jumbled and disorganised when they were trying to break their silence when they were at beginner level of their English learning journey in class.

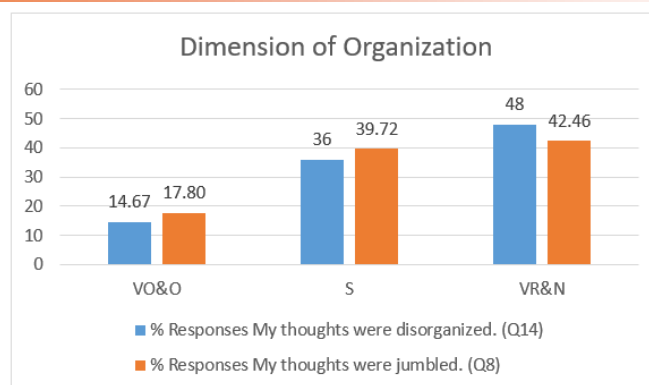


Fig. 9. The Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency of facing difficulty in organisation when needing to speak in English as a beginner

Fig. 10 displays the frequency with which they had timing difficulties when needing to speak in class. The survey questions under this dimension of 'timing' had a cluster of three questions related to hesitation, waiting, or needing the teacher to speak slowly. The majority (62.33%; 48, 50.65%; 39 and 50%;37) of respondents answered that they 'sometimes', 'often', and 'very often' hesitated, waited or needed the teacher to talk more slowly when they wanted to say something, and that they hesitated or waited too long and needed the teacher to speak more slowly when they were beginners, an indication that the teacher talk was not comprehensible when the teacher spoke too fast. Because the Competent Bilinguals were not assisted in breaking their silence as beginners, they found it confusing.

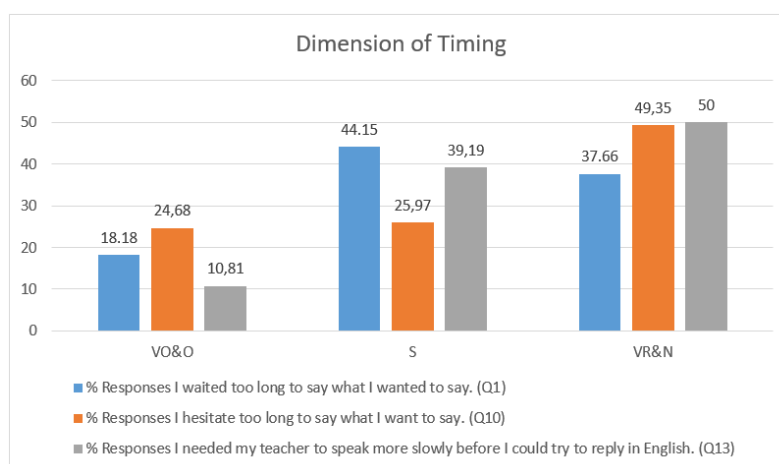


Fig. 10. The Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency with which they faced difficulty with timing as a beginner

Fig. 11 shows how often these respondents lacked the language when needing to speak in English as a beginner. The four questions in the 'knowledgeable cluster' were designed to explore how knowledgeable Competent Bilinguals were in the English language in terms of if they were unaware, unfamiliar, needed more vocabulary, or if they took more notes instead of participating when beginning learners. In response, they were 'often', 'very often', and 'sometimes' unaware, unfamiliar, needed more vocabulary, or took more notes instead of participating, resulting in their silence in the classroom (42.66%; 32, 44.15%; 34, 73.68; 56, and 64.79%, respectively). The high percentage (73.68%) of Competent Bilinguals needing more vocabulary shows that vocabulary learning is an important factor when it comes to breaking their silence as a beginner. A high percentage of respondents (64.79%) reported that they used to take notes in the classroom instead of participating in discussions. The Competent Bilinguals also reported that they had issues of being unaware, and unfamiliar with vocabulary and they had issues in breaking their silence in classroom as a beginner. Thus, it can be concluded that although this competent bilingual group emerged from their EAL learning journey satisfactorily, their views strongly concur that their teachers failed to create supportive communicative language learning environments where they were encouraged to use English in purposeful/meaningful ways.

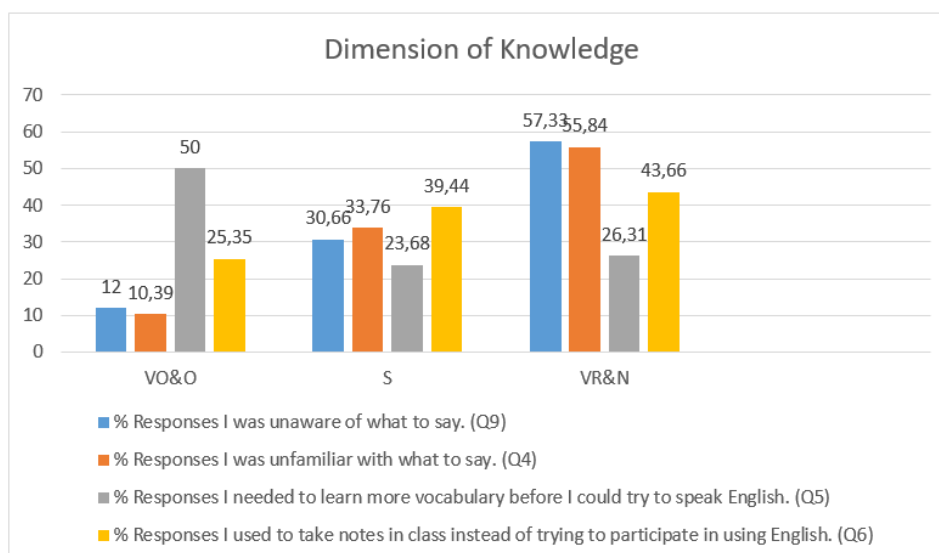


Fig. 11. Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency they lacked knowledge when needing to speak in English as a beginner

3.4. Part D – Competent Bilingual respondents' views on teacher behaviour

In Part D of the Survey on a Likert frequency scale where VO = very often; O = often; S = Sometimes; VR = Very Rarely; N = Never, the Competent Bilinguals group responded to 13 items designed to investigate their teachers' pedagogical approach, as displayed in Table 8 below (see Part D of the survey, Appendix A). They were asked to think about their time as a beginner, learning English in class, and respond (on a Likert scale) to the question: "to what extent do you agree with each statement below that describes the way teachers might behave".

Table 8. Part D Competent Bilinguals' responses to pedagogy scale -13 statements (n= 148)

Dimensions & Items	VO&O	S	VR&N
	f %	f %	f %
Scaffolding/modelling			
1. My teacher rephrased what I said, to show me what to say. (Q1)	19 (26.03)	21 (29.00)	33 (45.21)
2. My teacher added to what I said, to show me what to say. (Q2)	16 (22.86)	23 (32.86)	31 (44.29)
3. When my speaking was wrong my teacher modelled the correct speech. (Q3)	29 (39.73)	22 (30.14)	22 (30.14)
Form- focused/Content feedback			
4. My teacher gave me feedback on my grammatical errors rather than the meaning of my message. (Q13)	28 (40.58)	28 (40.58)	13 (18.82)
5. My teacher gave me feedback on my message but not on the words I should use. (Q4)	13 (20)	24 (36.92)	28 (43.08)
Extended wait-time/learner turn			
6. My teacher gave me plenty of time to think of how to respond in English. (Q6)	31 (44.29)	18 (25.71)	21 (30)
7. My teacher gave me a second turn to speak when I was answering a question. (Q11)	24 (35.82)	26 (38.81)	17 (25.37)
Learner participation			
8. I was able to ask my teacher a question. (Q10)	60 (84.51)	6 (8.45)	5 (7.04)
9. I was able to ask my teachers to clarify when I could not understand their speaking. (Q12)	45 (63.38)	14 (19.72)	12 (16.90)
10. My teacher encouraged me to have a conversation in English. (Q5)	44 (63.77)	10 (14.49)	15 (21.74)
Teacher role/talk/awareness			
11. My teachers asked me to clarify when they could not understand my speaking. (Q7)	20 (28.98)	24 (34.78)	25 (36.23)
12. My teacher interrupted when I was struggling to speak English. (Q8)	9 (12.86)	19 (27.14)	42 (60)
13. My teacher completed what I was struggling to say, for me. (Q9)	16 (20.78)	29 (37.66)	26 (33.77)

Note: VO = very often; O = often; S = sometimes; VR = very rarely; N = never

Table 8 is adapted from Walsh's Framework [12]. Table 8 reports the results of the Pedagogy Scale-13 that was designed to measure the Competent Bilinguals views of their teacher's pedagogical behaviour referring back to their beginner phase. It is based on five dimensions of the pedagogical approach, which are: scaffolding/modelling, form-focused/content feedback topics, extended wait-time/learner turn, learner participation, teacher role/talk/awareness, that were clustered items. These clustered items were created to assess if teachers gave students enough support during their silent period. If the Competent Bilinguals on the frequency scale replied 'sometimes' with the statement(s), they were said to have experienced the selected aspect(s) in that particular dimension. If they responded either 'very rarely' or 'never' with certain statements, they were considered not to have experienced the aspect(s) under the particular dimension. The analysis of data in (Table 8) showed that most of the Competent Bilinguals believed that their teachers encouraged them to speak in English before they were ready to speak, which resulted in anxiety and delayed them in breaking their silences. For the 'learner participation' dimension, 84% (54) out of the Competent Bilinguals who responded to this statement reported that their teachers encouraged Competent Bilinguals to speak in English when they were at beginner level in the classroom without giving them enough explanation of vocabulary.

The analysis of data also highlights that in the dimension of form-focused feedback (Table 8) the majority of Competent Bilinguals experienced that their teacher was more focused on grammar than message (81.15%; 56) and believed that the focus on grammatical issues rather than the message caused tension and anxiety and resulted in the delay of breaking their silent period. Thirty-seven Competent Bilinguals, (56.92%; 37) expressed that their teachers at least sometimes focused on the message but not the words when giving them feedback. And 40.58%; 28 responded that their teachers 'very rarely' or 'never' gave them feedback based "on my message but not on the words I should use", they were trying to convey. The reliance on form-focused behaviour of the teachers in beginner level classes indicates why the majority of the Competent Bilinguals may have reported 'lack of vocabulary' as an obstacle for their talking in the classroom. Similarly, while 49 Competent Bilinguals responded that their teachers gave them extended time and "gave me plenty of time to think of how to respond in English", and 50 reported "a second turn to speak when I was answering a question". Many Competent Bilinguals believed that problems with timing, such as learners taking turns to talk in English, contributed to issues when breaking their silences.

Therefore, it can be assumed that the wait time they experienced might not have been enough for them to be able to express themselves in English. In relation to the Competent Bilinguals' recall, 40 responded noted that at least sometimes teachers "rephrased what I said, to show me what to say" while 27 responded that their teachers 'very rarely' or 'never' rephrased what they said or added to what they said or modelled the correct speech to show them how to say something. For the dimensions of teacher role/talk/awareness, the difference between high and low frequency responses was not huge. Although they were Competent Bilinguals who claimed that they had problems in these dimensions, it was not as serious as the dimensions discussed above. The following five figures (Fig. 12- Fig. 16) consider the results of each of the six pedagogical scale dimensions individually. In doing so, as shown in Table 1, the positive percentage ratings of 'very often' and 'often' are compared with the 'sometimes' rating and the combined 'rarely and never' ratings. The data collected are displayed in graphs under each dimension below. The findings of the dimension anxiety, knowledge, timing, organisation, skills and memory, and the knowledge dimension clearly show that these Competent Bilinguals were silent as a beginner and this was due to lack of teacher understanding of the disconnection between the silent period and pedagogical approach that resulted in teachers not helping them as beginners in breaking their silent period.

Fig. 12 shows the frequency of scaffolding/modelling their teachers undertook when they were at beginner levels of their language learning. To measure the dimension on scaffolding/modelling there was a cluster, of three questions. The Competent Bilinguals were asked if their teacher added or rephrased what they wanted to say. Their responses show that the majority of Competent Bilinguals answered that their teachers 'never' and 'very rarely' added or rephrased Competent Bilinguals verbal contribution which resulted in silence due to confusion. This response shows that there is a need for scaffolding/modelling by teachers at beginner levels. Less than half of the Competent Bilinguals (54.8%; 40 of those who responded to this question) said that their teachers 'very often', 'often', and 'sometimes' rephrased what they said, to show them what to say. This means that 45.21% (33 out of 73) of Competent Bilinguals 'very rarely' or 'never' received rephrasing of what they said by their teachers when they were at beginner levels. Similarly, 44.29%; 31 of the Competent Bilinguals

reported that their teachers did not add to what they said to show them what to say. Finally, just over one-third of the Competent Bilinguals responded that their teachers ‘very rarely’ or ‘never’ modelled the correct speech to them. This table shows a lack of scaffolding/modelling experienced by almost half of the Competent Bilinguals resulting in silent behaviour due to the lack of these aspects in teaching.

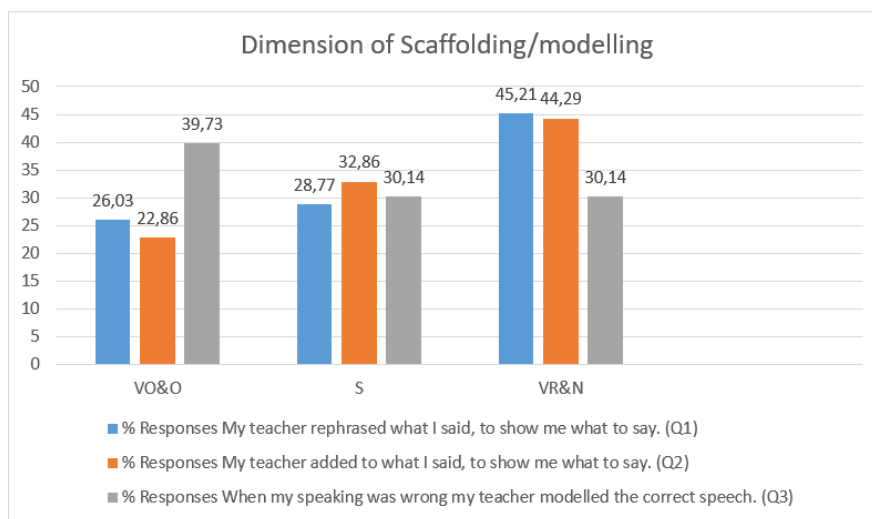


Fig. 12. Competent Bilinguals’ indication of the frequency their teachers used scaffolding/modelling at beginner level classes

The respondents indicated that their teacher provided form-focused support at least sometimes. It was rare for the students not to receive grammar related assistance. Conversely only sometimes or very rarely did the respondents recall that the teacher gave feedback on the content in class. Such findings indicate further reasons for silent behaviour when the meaning of the communication is not provided in highly form-focused situations, see Fig. 13.

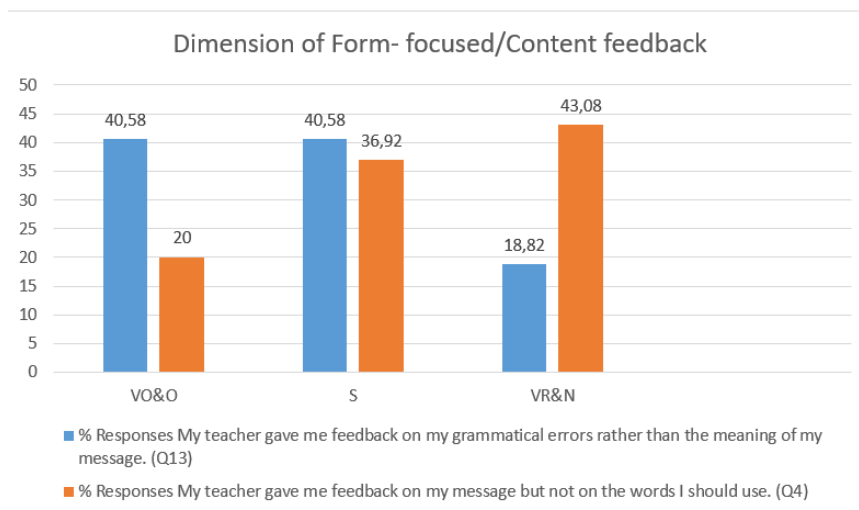


Fig. 13. Competent Bilinguals’ indication of the frequency their teacher provided form-focused/content feedback at beginner level classes

Fig. 14 shows how the respondents indicated teacher used extended wait-time and learner turn when answering questions in their beginner level classes. Findings show that the Competent Bilinguals did have time, 70%; or 49 out of 70 Competent Bilinguals stated that they had plenty of time to think when answering questions in class. A significant percentage of responses, 74.63%; or 50 out of 67 believed that their teacher gave them a second turn when answering question. Competent Bilingual There is a problem with timing because if their teacher gives them too much time without modelling on what to say in a given context, this could provide an impetus for silence.

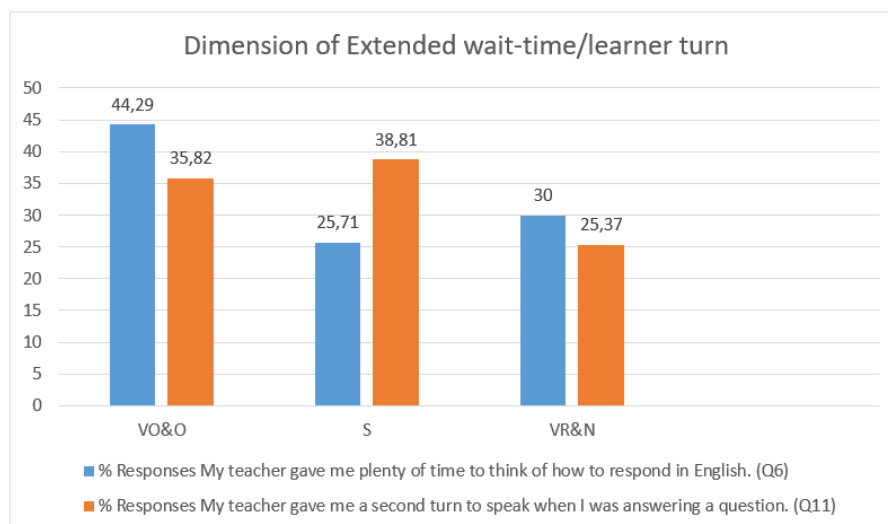


Fig. 14. Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency their teacher used extended wait-time/learner turn at beginner level classes

The dimension of learner participation shown in Fig. 15 was a cluster of three questions, firstly if they were able to ask their teacher a question, then to seek clarification if they did not understand the teacher, and thirdly if they were encouraged to converse in English. The majority (60 out of 71, or 84.51%) reported that they were able to ask their teacher questions in the classroom. 63.39%; 45 (out of 71) were able to ask their teacher if they needed clarification. The high percentage of participants seeking clarification seems to be because they did not understand the message. While analysis of the data presented in this chart shows that the majority of respondents felt comfortable when asking for clarification or questions, a high percentage of them 63.77%; 44 (out of 69) reported they were encouraged to speak in English at beginner level classes. This could be linked to previous findings on anxiety of not understanding the message, as most of the Competent Bilinguals experienced anxiety when asked to respond in English as anxiety is a significant instigator of silence.

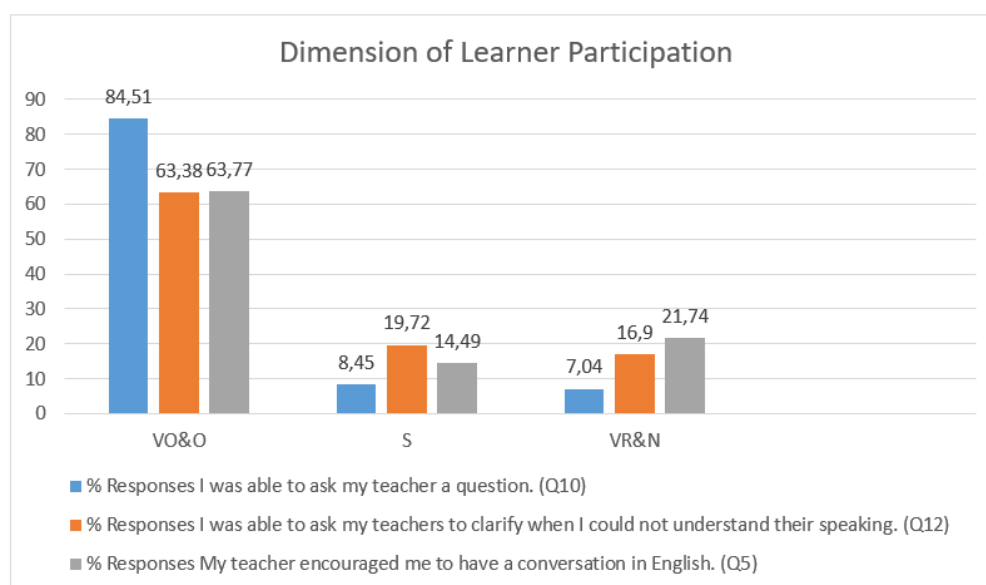


Fig. 15. Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency of learner participation at beginner level classes

The dimension of teacher's role, talk and awareness in Fig. 16 was a cluster of two items, namely if their teacher asked for clarification to understand their speaking or if their teacher interrupted when they were struggling to speak in English. Although there was not a major difference between the frequency of the findings regarding these questions, a significant percentage 60%; 42, who answered this question stated that their teacher 'very rarely' and 'never' interrupted them when they were struggling to speak in English. This finding indicates that if their teacher did not interrupt them when they were struggling or for clarification, they probably felt that they were not supposed to talk, and

this may have made them nervous and silent. Survey responses to the five most important things that the teacher of English can do to help students take the risk and try to speak in English.

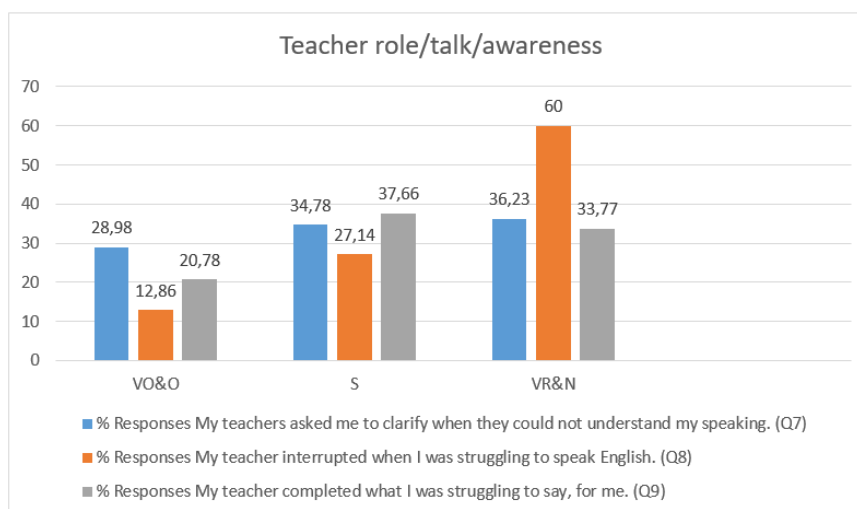


Fig. 16. Competent Bilinguals' indication of the frequency of teacher role/talk/awareness at beginner level classes

The data below is obtained from Competent Bilinguals as they were asked open-ended question at the end of Part D of the survey to collect qualitative responses. The question "What are the five most important things that the teacher of English can do to help students take the risk and try to speak in English" was answered by almost a third of (29.73%; 44) respondents. The data is presented below and please note that the English teacher here refers to an EAL teacher. Firstly, the data that emerged emphasised the importance of practicing speaking to help them with their proficiency silence. There was an urge for teacher modelling as well. They commented on having access to socialising to find more opportunities for modelling to compensate for their missed opportunities to practice in classes that had led to silent behaviour. Most also commented that their teachers did not give them more information on the background of the topic and give them more time to prepare. Many Competent Bilinguals had pleaded for more listening comprehension that may aid modelling and meaning to help them understand and make meaning for comprehension. Their learning experiences showed that they had troubles with meaning making in the classroom. Overall this analysis showed these Competent Bilinguals' silences were in relation to: teachers empathy, modelling, lack of listening, and lack of speaking/practices as well as not allowing time to prepare, contextual issues and lastly the lack of out of context teaching materials and vocabulary. Seven key themes emerged from the colour coded transcripts of a survey: (1) Teacher's empathy; (2) Modelling; (3) Listening; (4) Speaking/practices; (5) Give/time; (6) Context; (7) Vocabulary.

3.5. Survey responses to the five most important things Competent Bilinguals did to help themselves take the risk and try to speak

Lastly, Competent Bilinguals were asked what were the five most important things that English language learners can do to help themselves take the risk and try to speak. Their responses are reported below. In total 35.16% (53) answered these open-ended questions. Competent Bilingual 53 commented that the five most important things that students do to take the risk and try to speak in English are: *Speaking with people on the streets. Watch movies and news, Make English speaker friends.* Again, the respondent once again reinforced the recognition of her need for verbal interactions adapted to their beginner level. They seem like they did not have the opportunities to practice speaking in a natural way so they rather be silent then giving a wrong answer and sought meaningful input outside of class. Similarly Competent Bilingual 10 says *Listen to BBC and VOA special English. Read English novels. Talk with native speakers when possible. Make Pals with native speakers. Watch English movies. Don't be afraid of making mistakes. Don't be concerned too much about own accent Read widely. Make English-speaking friends' self-confidence. Talk with native speakers whenever possible.* Again, as seen from these Competent Bilinguals' comments, the importance of listening and modelling is reinforced by students' recognition of their need for verbal interactions adapted to their beginner level. In this respect, it may recommend that teachers can detect these student language learning needs during proficiency silences at lower-level language learning stages in class. This would

help those students to start speaking and gradually they will gain confidence to speak in front of others, as well. On the other hand, Competent Bilingual 37 drew attention to how students can take the risk and try to speak in English, exaggerating the need to listen regularly: *listening, listening, listening, listening, listening, comprehensible listening listening to others, watching news, listening*. She is alluding that there is not much listening and modelling in classes. Competent Bilingual 36 also commented that L2 learners should *try to imagine [themselves] yourself in different situations and practice a suitable conversation. Watch movies and try to mimic them Talk to yourself. Always remind yourself that you need not be perfect, it reduces your tension and calms you down*. She is just like many others, helped herself in breaking her silent period as it seems as if there was not much support in class because teachers were unaware of students' proficiency silences. Respondent 24 commented that students should *Learn at least 3-5 words in English every day to improve vocabulary. Make mistakes, be confident, and try hard. Note down the any new word and its meaning and try to create a sentence for each of those new words. Ask questions to your teachers to clarify anything you do not understand*. Here, she is emphasising the importance of the pedagogy needing to be tailored to suit the students' needs with meaningful comprehensible input has played in breaking the silent period.

3.6. Competent Bilinguals left last comments and advice

Based on findings from this chapter it has been seen that two-thirds of students were silent in EAL classrooms. Competent Bilinguals were from diverse ages, cultures and professions and their silences were not in relation to a particular demographic. The findings of the dimensions: anxiety, knowledge, timing, organisation, skills and memory, and knowledge, clearly show that Competent Bilinguals were silent as a beginner and this was in part, due to lack of teacher understanding of CLT principles because the participants indicated that they were asked if they received feedback on the messages rather than on their words and grammatical errors. The Competent Bilinguals said that they 'sometimes' received feedback on their grammatical errors rather than the meaning of their message, resulting in silent behaviour. The findings clearly show that they were not receiving a constructivist approach and that CLT and the constructivist approach were not applied and that they received a more traditional teaching approach. This becomes even more clear with student responses to their ah ha! moments as they have left comments about only answering questions in class as Competent Bilinguals said that they only spoke when we answered the questions. The disconnection between the silent period and pedagogical approach seems to be disadvantageous to Competent Bilinguals in breaking their silent period. Competent Bilinguals reported on the five most important things that the teacher of English can do to help students take the risk and try to speak in English. The Competent Bilinguals clearly show that they were lacking help with their speaking practice as teachers appeared to lack empathy and did not speak slowly. Findings in these sections have shown that their teachers were not speaking slowly and did not adapt their use of the target language to the lowest level to enable some meaning making, which resulted in prolonged silences in the Australian EAL classroom. In the previous section, it was further confirmed that Competent Bilinguals needed more facilitated speaking practice from their teachers in order to break their silence.

It has been found that the Bilingual Survey Participants had experienced silence because they likely found their teachers language teaching approach and instructions rather confusing. This was because of their lack of proficiency in English combined with potential pedagogical barriers. These barriers typically related to unknown and unfamiliar lesson content and their inability to ask for help, which also could be embarrassing. Moreover, in the EAL context their teachers neither spoke their L1s nor were able to adjust their use of English to the students' communicative level, even formulaically to support meaning making. These findings differed from studies in the literature review that do not look into silence from a constructivist perspective despite the teaching approach supposedly supporting the communicative approach. The Bilingual Participants said they were treated with an approach that was silencing them because it focused on them trying to explain unfamiliar content rather than addressing a real-life purpose for making meaning. Some Bilingual Participants said that they did not receive speaking practice and spoke only when they were asked a question about unfamiliar vocabulary. Secondly, the Teacher Interviews revealed their confusion about student silences. One teacher interviewed said that the silence was due to 'passive learning' and another teacher said it was cultural. Teacher interviewees explained it was mainly because of the context. Based on findings of this study, there is a lacks of interest being created on content (materials) given in the classroom. The interest of students can be increased with more common themes within their social context of learners to increase their motivate and interest. Furthermore, the word 'context' used by interviewee teachers means that the teacher in the video was unable to adapt her use of language to suit the social needs of the student in the video and this data was later triangulated with Bilingual Participant that the EAL teachers need

to adjust their use of English to a more formulaic level for beginners to allow students to more easily communicate for meaningful purposes. Findings from the video analysis and reapplying the SETT Framework also showed that the teacher in the video did not adapt her language use to meet the level of the students. Moreover, the pedagogy reflected more of an information transmission view of learning that depended on students memorising vocabulary related to pictures. Thus, the teacher in the video mainly asked questions about unfamiliar and irrelevant content (forms of transport) and then explained it when students did not know the answers for unfamiliar words. Students in the video were mainly silent and hesitant to answer as they were unsure, tense and confused.

As seen from both the teacher interviews, and from the teacher in the video analysis, the lesson pedagogical approach was unsuccessful in facilitating the students' use of the English language to make purposeful meaning. Moreover, while evidence of the communicative approach or CLT would be expected the lesson revealed this as a pedagogical barrier to language learning, where the task failed to engage the students in needing to use English at their level, even if formulaic. It seemed that the teacher interviewees did not fully recognise the issues with the video lesson with regards to the conflict between teaching new knowledge of the unfamiliar content but at the same time expecting students to use the vocabulary to communicate. Clearly, the teacher in the video did not think about adapting her use of the English language to facilitate the students' understanding or to foster social communication for meaningful purposes adapted to their level creating a silencing pedagogical barrier. Thus, data shows that teaching speaking should require teachers to ensure students have already acquired the relevant prior knowledge and that the learning experience is relevant and motivating. Ideally, students should be able to appreciate the relevance of the learning experiences to their needs and there are opportunities to practise using the language learned. Whatley and Castel [13], argue that "older adults experience deficits in associative memory. However, age-related differences are reduced when information is consistent with prior knowledge (*i.e.*, schematic support). Prior knowledge may reduce encoding demands, but older adults may allocate cognitive resources to schema-consistent information because it is more meaningful" (p.2). Teachers who teach without understanding students' speaking communicative need to use the language for social meaningful purposes cause confusion, which acts as pedagogical barrier to learning the language and speaking. It is argued here that this barrier reflects Krashen's affective filter, which causes students to be tense. Since the present study is framed on Krashen's SLA theory its findings adds to this concept [14]. Fig. 17 shows that specific knowledge of other places needs to be separated from teaching how to speak.

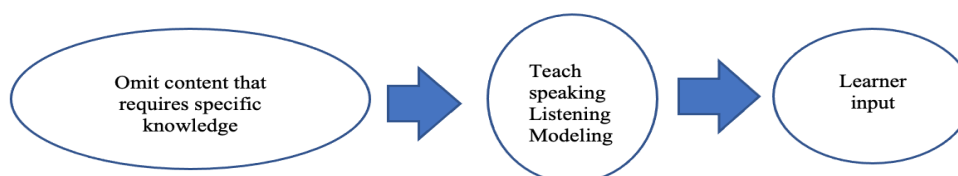


Fig. 17. Pedagogical barriers

The pedagogical barrier of teachers teaching at this level seems to be initially from lack of training and understanding of teaching speaking. Teachers understanding of specific knowledge and teaching speaking to lower levels needs differentiation and awareness. Knowledge on words that need particular schematic knowledge of unfamiliar content needs to be omitted from teaching at this level and there needs to be more levelled speaking activities that foster social communication for meaningful purposes. The Teachers in the interview and the teacher in the video seems not to distinguish these two. The lack of teachers' ability to identify these pedagogical barriers that cause students to be silent, is due to confusion. Teacher interviewees have raised concerns about cognitive overload but they seem to not know if it is overload was because of teachers not adapting their speaking to suit the level or if it was related to asking questions of unfamiliar content or specific knowledge. This explains why Bilingual Participants were not satisfied with their past language learning experiences and nearly all criticised their teachers' teaching approaches by leaving comments about not asking too many questions and encourage more listening practices 'meaning' to understand the context for schematic building. Discussion on what is happening when there is silence in an EAL pre-intermediate classroom is explained in the above reasons. Approximately two-thirds of Bilingual Participants expressed that they were often silent in their early stages of English language learning due to the above reasons discussed. These quantitative findings from their responses' show that the problematic pedagogical approach they received, may have prolonged their silences' and extended their learner proficiency silence (LPS) in an EAL class.

LPS is extended from the Krashen [5] silent period. The results of this study shows that there needs to be an understanding of LPS so that teachers can become familiar with these pedagogical barriers that further silence adult student learning English. LPS is extended from the silent period in this study to overcome the teaching barriers in lower-level teaching of speaking. It seems that the teaching style Bilingual Participants were receiving was silencing them because as mentioned, it focused on form and specific knowledge rather than speaking for meaning in local ways that build up on speaking skills. It seems that the reason for the lack of meaning was because some Bilingual Participants said that they did not receive speaking practice and spoke when they were asked a question about a particular unfamiliar topic. On many occasions their teacher did not have empathy in class and spoke fast, debilitating them from making meaning for speaking. Bilingual Participants had to take the matter into their own hands and watch movies and listened to music to compensate for what they did not have in class so they can build speaking skills and break their silences on their own, as not much opportunity was given to them in class. The silence in the EAL classroom in Australia was due to their confusion of randomly asked questions of unfamiliar meaningless content, and stress of not being able to understand the teacher at times. It can be seen that despite being in their formulaic stages of their learning, the pedagogical approach may not have had meaning and caused silence due to confusion pedagogical barriers in their teachings.

Due to the absence of meaning, Bilingual Participants have raised the importance of activities that foster social communication for meaningful purposes. It seems that they were receiving specific uncommon out of context words that are specific to other places and unfamiliar content that reacquired them to have schematic knowledge to understand. For example, even a native English speaker might not know what the word tuk tuk is if they have not been exposed to Asian cultures. This also may have also affected their memory, as memory and meaning are closely linked [15]. The findings are fairly different to what the literature says about silence as there are not many studies on the effects of meaning and memory during the silent period of language learners. Even though the finding of this study on memory is not that alarming there still needs to be future studies with a larger sample size exploring meaning and memory. There is a huge body of literature about willingness to participate that ties silence to psychological issues rather than approaches that may or may not work during the silent period. This study has found that there needs to be more understanding on what helps language learners when they are in their silent period experiencing LPS. Teachers should make meaning no matter how basic the language used during the silent period teaching, that is, motivating through meaning building, in their L2. There needs to be a more dialogic approach to teaching English at this level.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has examined ways in students use silence as a monitor during their silent period. Findings show that teachers' ability to adapt their use of the target language to facilitate students to make meaning is missing from adult language teaching in lower levels in Australia. The findings also show that students when they were learning could not make remember the meaning of a word because they were unable to pronounce them. The data shows a curriculum failure aiding pedagogically, where traditional textbook do not consider students silent period to monitor their speech as this is evident from these findings. Data collected for this study also shows that learning a language after your critical period can be arduous as the brain is rewiring its phonetical coordinates meaning it is connecting sound to muscle just like playing the guitar and knowing which sound the string will make. The memory is also connected to this as if one cannot produce the required sound and muscle then it becomes hard to register meaning and memorise. This process is called Adult Silent Period (ASP) mentioned in Ekici [4]. All participants for this study agreed that this correlation of meaning and sound was lacking in their learning. If you cannot remember to pronounce a word how can you remember it they said. They also muddled their words when talking in English and stumbled over their words when talking in class, leading to a biological barrier due to not training students for phonetical acclimation which is closely connected to memory and meaning.

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