Role of Guest Lecturer in Research Proposal Writing: Students’ Perception

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Abstract
The present research focuses on the experience of undergraduate students in a Middle Eastern college on attending guest lectures at the initial stage of preparing their dissertation. Here an attempt to apply the constructivist approach (Kirshner et al., 2006; Westwood, 2008) to teaching the subject of English Research Methods (ERM) is made by using a technique of multiple guest lecturer sessions by the department working in different areas of linguistics to familiarize the students with research interests of their tutors. This paper is an attempt to find out students’ attitude to the sessions, their (sessions) benefits and drawbacks. Students’ feedback was collected at the end of each session to identify advantages/disadvantages and extent of helpfulness of the practice through a questionnaire. The data was analysed with the help of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The results of the survey demonstrated the importance of guest speaker presentations for project writing as well as their (guest speakers’) positive impact on students’ motivation. Moreover, they helped to identify both the preferred and dispreferred approaches to conducting the sessions that are related to students’ personal attributes. See the comments

Key words: guest lecture, research methods, social constructivism, students’ perception

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1. Introduction

Students’ perception of in-class activities suggested by the tutor is always important for an educator. It is one of the strongest motivational factors impacting performance of both the students and the lecturer. Nowadays, in the era of emerging new teaching strategies and approaches, the lecturers have a huge variety of tools in their hands to create an engaging and motivating learning environment in the classroom. Most of the skills-based modules have a good scope of implementing innovative approaches and experimenting to improve perception of students. Research methods is the area where the use of new approaches is not that widespread. It happens mostly due to the nature of the course and mode of its delivery. Those who teach the module could feel frustrated about its perception by the students as unfavourable (Pfeffer & Rogalin, 2012). Many tried different ways of making it more attractive. The present paper is an attempt to shed light on students’ perception of one of the approaches to teaching research methodology which is a guest speaker session. Inviting a guest speaker to our classrooms became a widespread practice that adds to the educational experience of the students and exposes them to the research world of a particular discipline. Hence, this research provides an insight into the attitude of students to it and helps to identify student friendly and enriching mode of conducting guest sessions for students in the Gulf region.

2. Literature review

‘Guest speaker event can provide a means to supplement teaching to expose students to recent trends … and practices (Kamoun & Selim, 2007, p. 82). Having an invited talk by an expert in the field in your classroom is one of the ways tutor can improve learners’ perception of a module. Moreover, it gives students a chance to establish a relation between their knowledge and its application in the context of research. There are numerous benefits of a guest lecture. Treated as an effective teaching strategy it is in the first place a way to promote student-to-tutor communication (Clarke & Flaherty, 2002; Costello, 2012) and increase the level of active learning (Barraket, 2005; Fallon, Walsh, & Pendergast, 2013).

Guest sessions can considerably improve learning environment (Murray & Bollinger, 2001). Active learning is a focus of today’s education and teaching research methodology is not an exception. Learning through experience and reflection enhances students’ comprehension of a subject matter and makes it possible to apply the obtained skills and knowledge in the real world. Independent learners are ‘encouraged to directly involve themselves in the experience, and then to reflect on their experiences using analytic skills, in order that they gain a better understanding of the new knowledge and retain the information for a longer time’ (Moon, 2004, p.123). Described as a module usually taught in a traditional way, using the instructivist approach, often regarded to as boring or disengaging (Leston-Bandeira, 2013) English Research Methods (ERM) could equally be a platform for active autonomous learning if the tutor is ready to a meaningful change to the strategies an approaches used in the classroom (Healey, 2014; Manning, et al. 2006; Pfeffer & Rogalin, 2012; Sizemore & Lewandowsky, 2009). This arises from the of constructivist approach to learning suggested by Lev Vygotsky (1962). It is grounded in a difference between active and passive learning with consideration of a variety of students attributes and attitudes to acquiring skills and knowledge.
Followers of Vygotsky suggest to give students freedom in taking individual decisions about their learning strategies (as cited in Gibbs, 1992). One of such opportunities is incorporating guest speaker sessions into the learning process. This type of approach falls under the category of social constructivism as opposed to cognitive subtype. Cognitive constructivism is based on interaction between students and their environment whereas social constructivism is based on learning through interaction with the teacher and other students that results in particular knowledge acquisition (Vygotsky, 1962). According to Barraket (2005) promoting tutor to student communication creates a motivating social environment for learning. Guest speaker session is one of the ways to apply social constructivism approach in teaching students research methodology. It enables students’ familiarisation not just with the faculty research focus (which could be done through a concerned staff paper reading and discussion) but, what is more important, live communication with a researcher and an opportunity to get answers to their questions on the spot. Any social experience provokes an individual reaction and educational environment is not an exception. Perception is considered to be an outcome of social experience (Alebaikan, 2017; Covey, 1989). However, the question is if our students perceive the suggested activity of a guest talk and discussion the way we expect them to. The reasons of particular students’ perception of a specific teaching activity or a course as a whole can be different. Researchers in education suggest three that are considered to be the most influential ones: students’ attributes, their attitude and teaching strategies.

Individual students’ attributes comprise of a variety of characteristics. They range from personal ones like age and gender to social like culture and religion (Sizemore & Lewandowsky, 2009). Having strong attributes related to their personal background considerably impacts students’ perception of different activities. For example, being encouraged to engage into a conversation with a male tutor could cause a negative reaction of a female Muslim student as well as being requested to develop an argument proving her personal opinion in front of a mixed gender classroom. One of the advantages of having multiple guest sessions was the ability to choose speakers of both genders to enable ease students’ participation. Another was definitely inviting department lecturers who are well known to the students that helped to avoid uneasiness of interacting with a stranger.

Students’ attitude is an extremely powerful factor that is usually driven by a number of the above mentioned attributes. The attitude of being either a dependent or an independent learner is often a result of overlapping personal and cultural factors that encourage or discourage active participation in discussions and debates, sharing opinions or providing arguments (Healey, 2014). Guest speaker’s session of suggested format is carefully designed for all the types of students ensuring the benefit of each: independent learners are free to satisfy their inquisitive minds by asking questions following guest’s talk as well as to demonstrate their knowledge answering speakers’ questions while dependent ones can learn simply by paying attention to the on-going activity. Of course the most important benefit of social constructivism-based activity is interaction but interference of a traditional culture, such as that of Oman, needs to be carefully addressed. It is especially important in case of a multicultural classroom where representatives of other backgrounds who do not have any barriers in communication can easily and of course unknowingly benefit others.
Choosing a teaching approach is a matter today’s researchers in education argue about a lot. Their usefulness is measured and considered in application to a variety of disciplines. Instructivists stress the importance of staying in their comfort zone provided by the lecturing mode. Their load is minimized due to the passive role of the students who do not engage in any of the in-class activities that would require additional effort or attention of the tutor (Porcaro, 2010; Westwood, 2008). Moreover, they prefer to follow well structured notes they prepare in advance based on the concepts and content of their choice (Heath, 2014). Constructivists prefer to give freedom of choice to their students expecting them to demonstrate skills and abilities of an independent learner taking their own decisions and responsibilities in and for the whole process of studies (Gibbs, 1992), as well as developing their critical thinking skills (Heath, 2014).

Knowing these the tutor can find a perfect balance to satisfy students’ needs and address their specific demands (cultural, personal and professional) in order to engage students in an activity that would be perceived positively.

3. Research focus and discussion

The idea of a guest lecturer is usually associated with an expert outsider coming to your class to lecture on a specific topic (Alebaikan, 2016). In this particular case it was decided to use internal resources of the department. There were four reasons for doing so. First of all, it was an opportunity for the students to learn more about their lecturers’ research expertise. They (students) see us (tutors) as representatives of a subject we teach them in class. So students’ knowledge regarding tutors’ background is incomplete in terms of the area of research staff deal with. As a result there is lack of awareness of the help lecturers can extend to them. Secondly, at the end of the semester where ERM is taught students have to choose an academic supervisor for their final research project. Often they rely on personal attitude to a particular lecturer which is not always the best ground in the choice of the project supervisor. It is advisable to do that being well aware of the tutor’s expertise to ensure proper cooperation in the course of preparing the dissertation. The third reason is utilizing internal resources that are rich in a variety of aspects. Multicultural staff background can be very enriching for the students. Belonging to different linguistic schools of the world and having extensive knowledge in a number of language disciplines lecturers of the department are there to share their experience of working on a research paper with the novice in the field which BA English students are. Finally, inviting lecturers from within the department is cost saving whereas external experts would require the institution to pay for their services.

3.1 Research tools and respondents

The present research was conducted with a group of twenty students studying the module of ERM which is run once a year in the academic year 2016 – 2017. It should be noted that class attendance in terms of number and composition could vary from session to session.

The aim of the survey was identifying students’ perception of an invited lecturer impact in the context of research proposal writing.
Data were collected via a questionnaire of ten questions where nine were closed questions and one was an open ended question. The closed ended questions had a three scale evaluation where the type of the scale depended on the nature of the question.

The survey was administered immediately after the guest session that ensured comprehensive feedback of the students who attended the class.

### 3.2 Session schedule

Arrangement of the guest lecturer sessions was decided upon keeping several points in mind. The visits were scheduled between weeks 4 and 6. The reason of the decision lay in specific topics that were taught to the students in class. In particular, the focus was on finalising the choice of topic for their research proposal, identifying research questions and locating research sources.

There are two of ERM sessions per week, so guest speakers were invited to the class every other session to ensure that students acquire understanding of introduced concepts of research proposal writing and can relate them to the information shared by the guest speaker.

The number of speakers invited to the class was three. The initiative of identifying a particular lecturer to give a talk belonged to the module tutor in the first case and to the students in the other two cases. The group was given freedom in choosing a department member to share their experience to make participation more encouraging.

Each guest was allotted 30 minutes for a presentation for the students to stay focused throughout the session. Another 30 minutes following the presentation were given to a discussion in the question-and-answer format.

Guest speakers were free to choose any type of supporting materials like PPT slides, handouts or any other kind of visual aids as they are usually helpful in ensuring a better understanding of the material discussed in class.

The guests were briefed about the nature of the module, topics under current discussion as per the curriculum and expectations in terms of focus of their expected talk. They were requested to focus on the choice of the individual research topic, challenges that they faced working on their dissertation and their main achievements.

The host lecturer attended each of the guest sessions to introduce the guest and his work and provide support to both students and the guest if need be.

### 3.3 Mode of guest sessions delivery

Three guests were invited to do a guest talk in ERM class. Two of the guests were male and one was female. The names of the speakers as well as their research focus are not revealed in this paper to preserve their anonymity.

As the format was not discussed with the guest speakers each one of them chose a different approach to conducting the session.
The first session was a presentation supported by the power point slides and handouts. A variety of materials provided by the guest speaker helped students understand the nature of his research and form their queries about the topic. A distinctive feature of this session was direct interaction with the students. The speaker chose the format where the audience was encouraged to ask questions without waiting till the end of the session as well as they had to answer the questions asked by the speaker and share their experience. Moreover, the speaker successfully related real life examples with the linguistic research problems he worked on. The mode of the session encouraged active participation and strong interest in the material of the session.

The second speaker chose the mode of a lecture followed by a question-and-answer discussion. The lecture was not supported by any power point slides or handouts and so the students had to pay full attention to the speaker. Nevertheless, the interaction following the discussion was active and students asked questions eagerly. It might be assumed that as far as the group consisted of female students only they felt more comfortable with a female guest speaker.

The third guest suggested a discussion of one of his research papers chosen by the students. As the results of the survey showed later on the chosen format of the session was less encouraging for the audience than the ones of the previous two sessions. The students found the task of choosing a particular research paper by the lecturer and reading it in preparation for the discussion rather challenging. It is well known that students usually lack motivation to read outside the classroom. In addition the high standard of academic language of the research paper/papers suggested for reading as well as unfamiliar concepts could be discouraging for the students due to their complexity. Initial response was minimal and so the guest had to change his strategy and encouraged participation by asking research related questions to the group. The reason of a mismatch between the expectations of the guest and the students could be in the insufficient briefing of the speaker by the module tutor about the level of the students of the cohort.

Student’s perception of the impact of the guest speaker as the main focus of the current research would help the module tutor to take a decision regarding the need of planning other sessions. Although the cohort of the students taking the module would be different in the next academic year, the feedback provided by the current group could be considered as an average opinion of a typical representative of the group. This would also assist the lecturer in scheduling the sessions, choosing the speakers and providing particular briefing to them to ensure the expectations of both the students and the guest are met and what is more important the sessions are relevant and helpful for the successful completion of the course.

3.4 Survey focus and background
The current research focused on specific points where the opinion of the students was surveyed to identify benefits of the three conducted guest sessions as well as their impact on a personal level.

The students were surveyed in the first place on the relevancy of the provided information. The relevancy was considered especially in terms of its relation to the part of the syllabus content of the module they were studying at that particular time (Weeks 4 - 6). Guest speakers were accordingly requested to focus on the choice of the topic and the difficulties of identifying research
questions they might have faced and possible solutions of the issues. Another point to be included in the session delivery was the placement of the sources for reading and the approach to working with them.

Another point in assessing the guest speaker’s session was its helpfulness. The overall impression of the students on the input of the presented information was of interest here. No particular topic focus was presumed in this particular case. The gathered feedback would be based on the general effect of both, the focused part of the session and the discussion following it.

Ability to engage with the audience as one of the survey items would provide the module tutor an insight into students’ impression on a variety of techniques used by a guest speaker proving their ability to raise the interest and level of involvement of students into the activity.

Choice of an individual research topic was one of the tasks students worked on during the time of the guest speakers’ visits. Due to this the respondents were surveyed on the helpfulness of the session in this as it is always considered to be one of the most difficult tasks to accomplish. Students usually have doubts and consider several topics before making their final choice. Hence, guidance from the department on the approaches to taking this decision is valuable for the class.

Clarity of the presentation was given prominence to in the current research. The delivery of the session in terms of its quality matters for the group as it ensures proper understanding of presented concepts and later on motivates/demotivates participation in the discussion. Comprehension of the ideas of the speaker depends a lot on his way of presenting them, choice of language, speed of speech and other relevant factors.

Usefulness of the presented information was one of the aspects the students assessed the sessions of the guest speakers on. This was related to the topics discussed in class as one of the aims of the sessions was to assist the students with particular tasks. The guests had to plan their session accordingly to ensure reaching the set goal.

Novelty of the information was expected in each of the guest sessions to enable, apart from communication, learning through interaction with the tutor.

Helpfulness of the session supporting materials was selected as one of the survey items as nowadays we as tutors are highly recommended to provide visual aids to our students to enable better understanding of the taught material and sometimes improve their involvement into the related activities. Modern classroom equipped with the Internet access, Power Point Projectors, interactive boards and other technologically innovative tools and devices is encouraging for today’s tutor and provides them with many opportunities.

Another survey focus was students’ perception of the level of motivation of the speaker. The idea behind this was identifying how encouraging the speakers were presenting their research. It is well known that motivational speakers always have a greater effect on the audience and students are not an exception. The more engaging the guest is the more productive is further discussion and higher are the chances of the class to retain presented information in their long term memory.
Specific benefits of the session was the final research point. Here the students were requested to provide their comments on what each of the guest speakers taught them personally through his presentation. Our individual ways of understanding and processing information as well as benefiting from open discussions where you can participate actively or passively are different. That is the reason why every students’ personal opinion is of great value to the tutor.

3.5 Students’ feedback
There were two types of feedback elicited from students: general and specific.

3.5.1 General aspects of the guest sessions. The data discussed below was collected with the help of the questionnaire that was administered end of every guest session. Depending on the type of the asked question (closed or open question) the data was divided into two sections. The answers to the closed type of questions related to evaluation of guest lecture aspects selected by the tutor are presented in Table 1. The response to the open question regarding specific benefits that students identified personally is shown in Table 2.

Table 1 Feedback on selected aspects of guest speakers’ session

| #  | Aspect       | Speaker 1 | Speaker 2 | Speaker 3 |
|----|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|    |              | High  | Medium | Low  | High  | Medium | Low  | High  | Medium | Low  |
| 1  | Relevancy    | 83%   | 17%    | -    | 100%  | -      | -    | 92%   | 8%     | -    |
| 2  | Helpfulness  | 67%   | 33%    | -    | 93%   | 7%     | -    | 71%   | 29%    | -    |
| 3  | Engagement   | 78%   | 22%    | -    | 93%   | 7%     | -    | 78%   | 22%    | -    |
| 4  | Topic choice | 54%   | 56%    | -    | 79%   | 21%    | -    | 71%   | 29%    | -    |
| 5  | Clarity      | 83%   | 14%    | -    | 86%   | 14%    | -    | 78%   | 22%    | -    |
| 6  | Usefulness   | 56%   | 28%    | 16%  | 86%   | 14%    | -    | 85%   | 15%    | -    |
| 7  | Novelty      | 45%   | 55%    | -    | 22%   | 78%    | -    | 42%   | 58%    | -    |
| 8  | Supporting materials | 67% | 33%    | -    | NA    | 28%    | 35%  | 37%   |         |      |
| 9  | Motivation   | 72%   | 28%    | -    | 100%  | -      | -    | 92%   | 8%     | -    |

Table 1 demonstrates that nine elements of students perception of three guest sessions delivered by different members of the concerned department were evaluated on the scale of high, medium and low importance. The overall impression of the results is that students felt appreciative to the speakers for their contribution to their learning. The data shows that most of the options were rated between high and medium importance.

Relevancy of all the three sessions was rated between 83% - 100% that proves the appropriateness of the chosen topic for the current module and the timely scheduling of the invited talks. The feedback on helpfulness of the sessions demonstrated slightly lower results (66% - 92%) that might be due to students’ expectations that were not fully addressed by the guest speakers. 78% - 93% of the group felt highly engaged into the sessions in question while the rest rated their involvement into the activity as medium. The benefit of the session for the choice of an individual research topic ranged between 59% - 78%, 55% - 21% decided that they benefitted from the...
session to a medium extent and ... saw a low benefit in the 1st session. The cohort evaluation of the clarity of the speakers ranged between 77% - 86%. Others found the speakers medium clear due to students learning attributes that sometimes interfere with understanding of presented concepts. The difference between the ratings of the usefulness of the three speeches was quite high: whereas the 2nd and the 3rd speakers scored 85%, the 1st guest got only 55% of students saying that it was of highly useful. Opinions of others split between 28% of medium usefulness and 17% said it was of low use.

It is worth noticing that majority of the cohort considered the novelty of the information presented by all the three speakers as medium (see Table 1). It demonstrates that students have a substantial background in the discipline and are familiar with the concepts addressed by the guest speakers.

Supporting materials were rated the highest by 67% in case with the 1st speaker and the lowest in case of the third one (43%). The reason here might be the interference of students attributes, in particular lack of motivation to read as the session was planned as the speaker’s research paper based discussion that the group had to read before attending the guest’s talk. The second speaker was not rated as the lecturer did not use any supporting materials at all.

Majority of the students (72% - 100%) considered the guests highly motivational which means an overall positive response to the introduction of another practice in teaching. Some of them found the level of motivation medium and no one said that it was low.

All in all the obtained results clearly demonstrate students interest in the activity of communication with guest speakers as well as their appreciation of the experience the department exposed them to in preparation for their final stage of studies which is a research project.

3.5.2 Specific benefits of the guest sessions. The overview of the students’ responses demonstrated the effectiveness of guest speaker sessions by identifying fifteen different benefits that are provided in the Table below and arranged from the most to less often mentioned ones by the twenty two students of ERM group following three guest speaker sessions. Please note that each of the students could mention several benefits of the attended sessions.

Table 2 Feedback on specific benefits of the guest sessions

| #  | Benefits                                             | Frequency of identification |
|----|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1  | Importance of reading                                | 9                           |
| 2  | Importance of time management                        | 7                           |
| 3  | Importance of research questions                     | 6                           |
| 4  | How to approach the process of Literature review writing | 5                           |
| 5  | Importance of researcher’s own interest in the topic  | 4                           |
| 6  | How to choose a sample                               | 2                           |
| 7  | Ethical issues                                       | 2                           |
| 8  | Ways to collect the data                             | 1                           |
| 9  | Ways to start the research                           | 1                           |

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The top benefit of the guest sessions identified by the students was the importance of reading. Difficulty in motivating students to read is faced by the majority of tutors in the Arab World. The class involved into the current survey is not an exception. The outcome of the research clearly demonstrates that joint efforts of the department worked well here because the importance of reading is mentioned by the group among the most important points they learned from the session.

Any research is a time-consuming process. Therefore, each of the invited speakers stressed upon the need to design a personal schedule to ensure timely completion of the tasks every researcher is committed to in the process of working on either a proposal or a dissertation writing. The students appreciated this advice by mentioning it as the second most important benefit of the sessions.

Rated third among fifteen was the benefit related to research questions design. Students learned about the significance of correctly identifying research questions for obtaining desired results in their further work.

Benefit of being personally interested in one’s research topic was identified by the students after attending the sessions. Understanding the relationship between their own preferences and the project they plan to work on in the future gives the students an advantage of making the right choice at the initial stage of proposal writing where they look at the variety of research topic options.

Choosing a research sample was listed by the students among other benefits of the guest sessions they attended. They learnt how to identify the right group of respondents to satisfy the needs of the research and deal with difficulties that they can face working with the sample.

Learning about ethical issues was also given importance by the students. They found the information presented by the guest speakers in this regard novel and enriching, especially those planning to collect their research data from a particular age or gender sample.

A number of other benefits were mentioned once (see Table 2, item 8 - 15) among which are the steps of conducting research, approaches to data collection and the choice of the methods of analysis, need of structuring the tools of analysis around research questions, importance of critical thinking skills and use of academic language and of course overcoming difficulties arising from the research paper writing requirements.

4. Recommendations
The results of the conducted survey make it possible to provide the following recommendations in three different dimensions: recommendations to guest speakers, host lecturers, and students.

4.1 Recommendations to guest speakers
One of the most important recommendations to guest lecturers is understanding the needs and expectations of the host. If those are not considered carefully enough there is a danger of facing a barrier between the guest and the students. It can result in lack of the audience interest to the presentation and what is more – reluctance in participation in the planned discussion.

Guest speakers are also recommended to familiarise themselves with the module summary before delivering the session. Knowledge of the involved content as well as the students’ background in the subject are important points to be considered to ensure interest, participation and engagement of the audience of address.

It is also recommended to plan the structure of the session. The students are usually sensitive to the degree of preparation of a tutor for a particular lecture and guest speaker is not an exception. Negligence or overconfidence in this case can turn against the lecturer and response to the talk might be rather low. To avoid this it is recommended to prepare a thorough plan of the session one plan to conduct as a guest speaker.

It would be a good idea have a backup plan as sometimes our expectations of the audience are either higher or lower than our first plan talk in spite of being introduced to module content by the host lecturer. In both of the cases it can cause a misunderstanding between the students and the guest speaker. Therefore, to be responsive to the needs of the audience guest speaker could consider being ready for an on the spot change if needed.

It is advisable for a guest speaker to support their session with appropriate visual aids. According to the results of the conducted survey students highly appreciate the idea of being introduced to new concepts not only through verbal exposure but also through Power Point slides, handouts or any other kind of teaching aids. Using them helps to illustrate discussed material and improves students’ participation.

Being engaging is very important for a guest speaker. If you succeed in creating an atmosphere of interest student will definitely learn from your session. It is a particularly relevant recommendation for ERM as its complexity adds to lack of motivation in attending the sessions delivered by both host and guest lecturers and in the subject in general.

4.2 Recommendations to host lecturer
Host lecturer is in the first place recommended to discuss their and students’ expectations of the upcoming session with the invited speaker. To ensure that the audience benefits from the event organised on a particular purpose, the guest should be informed about the outcomes of the session in terms of enriching students’ knowledge.

Mode of the session delivery is another point to focus on. Host lecturer should be clear regarding their guest’s plan of how the required information will be presented to the audience. Knowing a particular cohort it is possible to choose the way that would appeal to the students.
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better than any other. The choice would impact the outcome of the session in either positive or a negative way depending on the ability of the host to identify the needs of the students.

Another recommendation to the host lecturer is holding a discussion of the content taught in class the time of the guest session. It is advisable to personally introduce the invited speaker to course structure as the expectations of the students would be primarily getting help on topic they currently working on. Focusing on a matter that is not relevant at this point of time could result in loss of focus of the class.

Guest speaker needs to be briefed about the level of the students. If the sessions are arranged internally, i.e. invited tutors are currently teaching the same cohort or taught them previously, the briefing does not require a lot of details as the department is familiar with the group. Alternatively, if the guest speaker is not part of the faculty, the briefing should be extensive to ensure the success of the session.

4.3 Recommendations to students

It is highly recommended for the students to attend guest speaker/lecturer sessions offered by the department. The sessions have a wide variety of advantages starting from expanding general background in linguistics and learning about staff research areas to obtaining answer to particular questions that are of students’ particular professional interest.

Moreover it is advisable to interact with the guest speaker in any suggested mode as the process of interaction enriches students’ experience in communication with peers and enables immediate acquiring of knowledge.

Finally, students are recommended to ask questions related to the linguistic area of their interest to clarify existing doubts about the choices and approaches to research at its early stage.

5. Conclusion

The present paper contributes to the investigation in the area of using guest lectures as a teaching strategy for undergraduate students in the Gulf region. It demonstrates specific benefits of guest led sessions for the students identified through their feedback. In addition, it helps in choosing the right ways of preparing and conducting those sessions in accordance with the needs of the audience.

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