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| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Grade Inflation in Language and Translation Courses at Saudi Schools and Universities

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| ABSTRACT

This study investigates the status of grade inflation in language and translation courses in Saudi Arabia. Analysis of the pass rates and percentages of students who obtained Grades A+, A, B+ and B in 70 English language skills and translation college courses, in addition to the English course scores of students in grades 1 to 11 at a private school, showed evidence of grade inflation at the school and college levels as revealed by the high pass rates and high percentages of students obtaining Grades A+, A, B+ and B in most courses. Responses to a questionnaire-survey by a sample of schoolteachers and language and translation college instructors showed several factors contributing to grade inflation such as: school and university administrators' tendency to raise students' marks and course grades and exercising pressure over instructors to pass the students. There are misconceptions about educational quality. Administrators correlate high quality with high pass rates, regardless of the learning outcomes. Instructors worry about students and parents' complaints if some students fail. They worry about being investigated and about losing their job. Instructors would like to be liked by the students, be popular and get good ratings on the students' course evaluation forms. Instructors give easy questions and are lenient in grading. Exam results do not reflect individual differences and distinctions. The grading system produces a high pass rate as 60% of the course marks are allocated to attendance, assignments, quizzes, and class work. Exams focus on a small portion of the course/textbook material. Many course topics are not covered by the tests. Tests contain few easy questions that measure rote memorization and recall rather than higher-level thinking skills. Prior to exams, students enrolled in General English courses are given practice tests with similar questions to the final exam (in form and content). Hence, students know what to expect on the final exam. The study gives some recommendations for combating grade inflation at Saudi schools and universities.

| KEYWORDS

Grade inflation, administration pressure, test construction problems, test reliability and validity, student evaluation problems, test-course relationship, grade inflation factors.

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1. Introduction

Grade inflation refers to instructors giving higher grades to students' work than their expectations for student achievement warrant. It implies grading leniency, i.e., the awarding of higher grades to students' work than the students deserve, which yields a higher average grade given to students. It also means awarding progressively higher academic grades for work that would have received lower grades in the past which means that students' grades are perceived to be an inaccurate representation of their academic knowledge (Hodges, 2014; Arsyad Arrafii, 2020).

Grade inflation has been a world-wide educational problem at the school and college levels and a hot research topic for more than a century. As early as 1894, a committee at Harvard University reported that A's and B's were awarded to students "too readily" (Bartlett & Wasley, 2008). Another extensive study by Rojstaczer and Healy (2012) collected historical and contemporary data on A-F letter grades awarded from over 200 four-year American colleges and universities and 135 schools, with a total enrolment of 1.5 million students over the last 70 years. The researchers found that on average, A's represented 43% of all letter grades, an increase of 28% since 1960 and 12% since 1988. D's and F's total constituted less than 10% of all letter grades. Private colleges

and universities in the USA give significantly more A's and B's combined than public universities. Grade A has become the most common grade awarded to students by American colleges. At universities with a moderate student selectivity, faculty grading is as generous as it was in the mid-1980s at highly selective universities. Undergraduate students' GPAs at many selective and highly selective universities are now so saturated at the high end that grades no longer motivate students, nor serve as an evaluation tool for graduate and professional schools and employers. Nevertheless, there is significant variation in how grades are distributed across fields of study across public universities in the U.S.A. For instance, at a business school at a small private college in the northeast of the U.S.A., grade inflation exists and reflects a linear trend over a 20-year period (Hermanowicz & Woodring, 2019; Kezim, Pariseau & Quinn, 2005).

Similar cases of grade inflation exist at the high school level in the U.S.A. In the decades following 1972, Pattison, Grodsky and Muller (2013) found that grades had risen at high schools and dropped at 4-year colleges. They found that the signalling power of grades had attenuated a little. Similar results were revealed by Kostal, Kuncel and Sackett (2016) about the size of grade increases at the student level between the mid-1990s and mid-2000s. The researchers reported that grade inflation has occurred across decades, at a small but a non-negligible rate. Gershenson's (2018) reported that two-thirds of U.S. high school students are ill-prepared for college when they leave high school. Although many get good grades, few earn high marks on the state-wide end-of-course exams. Gershenson added that grade inflation was more severe in schools attended by affluent students than in those attended by lower-income students.

As in the USA, grade inflation is present in schools across Canada and there has always been a gap between teacher-assigned grades and provincial exam results. A significant negative correlation was found between grade inflation and student performance in New Foundland, Labrador and New Brunswick provinces, as measured by Grade 11 mathematics provincial exams (Laurie, 2009).

In the UK and Germany, Bachan (2017) reported a continual increase in the proportion of "good" honour degrees awarded by UK universities since the mid-2000s and found evidence of grade inflation in UK higher education from 2009 onwards.-Data collected by Müller-Benedict and Gaens (2020) from 12 prominent fields of study from 1960 to 2010 revealed a relationship between the numbers of examinations and the level of grades. This relationship differed for fields of study with a strong dependence on a common nationwide job market and those which are not related to a specific job market.

In Saudi Arabia, evidence of grade inflation exists. Al Kaabnh (2018) randomly selected and analyzed 819 students' grade records at Shaqra University during the academic years 2010- 2015. Data analysis showed an increase in the average of students who got high grades (A+, A, B+) and a decrease in the average number of students who got B, C+. The average of students who got C, D+, D grades increased, whereas the average of those who got an F decreased. The researcher concluded that the percentage of students getting high grades is increasing which reflects grade inflation. It is noteworthy to say that Al Kaabnh's study did not specify the courses, the students' college level, nor the students' major covered by his study.

Furthermore, looking at Saudi newspapers at the end of the academic year, one would see a whole page full of names of high school students who have passed grade 12^{th} with a GPA of 100%. In 2013/2014, the Queen (of Saudi Arabia) honored 1520 12^{th} grade female high school students whose GPA was 100% in all subjects. A teaching practicum supervisor at a Saudi university gives all her students an A+ for the course. A professor of a graduate research methodology course at another Saudi university awarded 56% of her students an A+ and A, 30% a B+ and B, and 16% a C+ and C. In most school and university courses in Saudi Arabia, if a student scores 57/100, an instructor has to add 3 marks to help him/her pass the course.

Although grade inflation has been the subject of research for a long time, no clear-cut solutions and cures have been taken, and the problem has not been globally solved. In Saudi Arabia, studies that investigated grade inflation at high school and college levels are very limited. The literature review showed insufficient scientific research on the issue of grade inflation at Saudi schools and universities, in general, and in languages and translation courses, in particular. Therefore, this study aims to investigate grade inflation in language and translation courses at Saudi schools and universities and the factors that compel instructors to give students enrolled in those courses higher marks and grades, i.e., the factors that contribute to grade inflation as perceived by a sample of schoolteachers and college instructors who teach English and/or translation. In addition, the study aims to find out whether there are significant differences in instructor opinions of the factors contributing to grade inflation according to sex (male vs female), where instructors work (high school vs college), academic degree (Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate) and citizenship (Saudi vs non-Saudi). No comparisons will be made between public and private schools nor state and private universities in the degree of grade inflation. The study will provide some suggestions and recommendations for alleviating the problem of grade inflation.

In the present study, grade inflation will be examined in terms of the percentage of students who have passed English language and translation courses and the percentage of students who have been awarded a course grade of A+, A, B+ or B.

The study of grade inflation is significant because prior research has shown several negative effects of grade inflation such as poor outcomes, lack of fairness to students due to giving high grades to less competent students, and poor productivity and creativity in the workplace after graduation. College grades can influence a student's graduation prospects, academic motivation, postgraduate job choice, professional and graduate school selection, and access to loans and scholarships (Rojstaczer & Healy, 2012). It also has a negative impact on the value of grades as a signal of student ability and achievement. Students who receive higher grades than they deserve may develop a false sense of mastery of a subject they have taken and may become accustomed to getting the grade they want rather than the grade they deserve. Many high school graduates with high grades have difficulty coping with college courses when they are admitted to the university (Wongsurawat, 2008; Nikolakakos, Reeves & Shu, 2012; Pattison, Grodsky & Muller, 2013).

At the community college level, grade inflation may ultimately result in lower graduation rates for students who transfer to four-year universities with inadequate preparation for courses in the general education or major curriculum. students who studied intermediate algebra at a community college earned significantly higher grades in that course, on average, than those who took the same course at a four-year university, which means that their performance in subsequent college math courses was substantially poorer (Friedl, Pittenger & Sherman, 2012).

Moreover, grade inflation impacts university credibility, student courses of study, and choices of colleges and majors. The upward shift in grades is not accompanied by a corresponding upward shift in knowledge gains (Caruth & Caruth, 2013). Millet (2018) and Chowdhury (2018) asserted that lenient grading is associated with lower grading reliability.

Furthermore, inflated grades often falsely qualify students for the job market. Employers will find their new employees less qualified than their academic records show. If grades are to accurately reflect the level of knowledge and skill a student has mastered, then it is imperative that students be given the grades they earn and work hard for rather than the grades they want. On March 17, 2009, the Wall Street Journal reported widespread agreement among business leaders that graduates of American universities are not prepared to assume jobs in their companies (Schroeder, 2016; Nikolakakos, Reeves & Shuc, 2012).

2. Methodology

To shed some light on problem of grade inflation in language and translation courses at Saudi schools and universities, the author has collected samples of course grades in English and translation and has surveyed schoolteachers and university professors' opinions of the factors leading to grade inflation.

2.1 Sample of Instructors

A sample of 380 schoolteachers and college instructors participated in the study. The participants were selected from schools and Colleges of Languages and Translation in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia such as King Saud University, Princess Noura University, and Imam University. 29% were schoolteachers and 71% were college instructors; 18% were male and 82% were female; 21% have a B.A. degree, 29% have and M.A. degree and 50% have a doctorate degree; 74% were Saudi and 26% were non-Saudi.

2.2 Sample of Grade Reports

Due to restrictions imposed on revealing students' grades at Saudi schools and universities, the author was able to obtain the English course marks for all male students in grades 1 to 11 (a total of 637 students), from a private school in Riyadh. For each grade level (1 to 11), the percentage of students who scored 90-100, 80-89, 70-79, 60-69, below 60 were computed (See Table 1).

For the college level, the author obtained the marks from the Registration Department at King Saud University (KSU) for all the students enrolled in General English, ESP (English for medical, science, pharmacy, business purposes…etc) and English language skills, linguistics, translation and interpreting courses offered to female students majoring in translation at the College of Languages and Translation (COLT) as follows:

- 5 General English courses, i.e., university requirements that students at colleges of Arts, Education, Business and Agriculture have to take while taking specialized courses in their area of specialization, with a median course enrollment of 152 students in all course sections and a range of 93 to 1765 (See Table 1).
- 9 ESP courses that students in Colleges of Medicine, pharmacy, Applied Medical Sciences, Science, Engineering, Architecture, Computer Science…etc. take in the first semester of college before they start taking their specialized courses in their area of study, with a median course enrollment of 113 students in all the course sections and a range of 35 to 539 (See Table 2).
- 27 language skills/linguistics courses that are taught in level 1-4 of the translation program: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Vocabulary Building, Grammar, Dictionary Skills, Culture, Stylistics, and Text Linguistics courses, with a median course enrollment of 141 students in all the course sections and a range of 80 to 232 (See Table 3).

- 29 translation and interpreting courses that are taught to students in levels 4-10: Introduction to Translation, Problems of Translation, Translation Project, Arabization, Sight Interpreting, 2 Consecutive Interpreting, 2 Liaison Interpreting, Simultaneous Interpreting, Summary Translation, Translation of Natural Sciences, Humanities, Islamic, Military, Administration, Medical, Engineering, Media, Sociology, Political, Education, Security, Computer, Oil, Agriculture, Legal, and Literary texts, with a median course enrollment of 107 students in all the course sections and a range of 75 to 175 (See Table 4).

The course statistics obtained from the Registration Department included the number of students registered in each section and the number of students who were awarded an A+, A, B+, B, C+, C, D+, D, F grades in each section and the pass rates in each course. For language and translation courses with multiple sections, the sections were pooled together. The number of students registered in each course (N), the percentages of students who got Grades A+, A, B+ and B in all course sections, and the percentage of students who failed and passed all course sections were computed (See Tables 2, 3, 4).

2.3 Questionnaire-Surveys

The author used a questionnaire-survey with open-ended questions which asked the schoolteachers and university instructors in the sample about the following:

> *Based on your teaching experience, what is your explanation for the high percentage of students who pass language and translation courses and the high grades awarded in those courses. In other words, why do teachers give high grades/marks and pass most of the students in the courses they teach? Give at least 3 explanations, factors or reasons for grade inflation, lenient grading, easy exams, and high pass rates in English and/or translation courses.*

The subjects were contacted directly on WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter, Facebook Messenger, and LinkedIn. Participants' responses were compiled, and the factors/reasons given were classified into the following categories: (i) Administrative; (ii) educational policy, (iii) socio-cultural; (iv) institutional factors; (v) instructor-related factors; (vi) testing and grading practices; (vii) student-related; and (viii) college admission/graduation competitiveness. Responses are reported qualitatively.

2.4 Reliability and Validity

Two colleagues who have a Ph.D. in business administration helped classify the factors that the participants mentioned in their comments into the administrative; educational policy, socio-cultural; instructor-related factors; and testing and grading practices categories. Classification of the author's and the two colleagues were compared, and percentage of agreement was calculated. There was a 97% agreement. Classification discrepancies were solved by discussion.

3. Results

3.1 Distribution of the English Course Marks for Grades 1-11

Results presented in Table (1) show the distribution of the English course marks of 637 students in Grades 1-11 obtained from a private school in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Results show that 44% of the students scored between 90-100 (Grade A+ and A), 27% scored between 80-89 (Grade B+ and B); 14% scored between 70-79 (C+ and C); 5.7% between 60-69 (D+ and D); 1.6% between 50-59 marks and less than 1% failed the course (See Table 1). The percentage of students who obtained Grades A and B (41%) and pass rate (99%) reflect obvious grade inflation.

Table 1: Distribution of English Marks For Grades 1-11 at a Private School

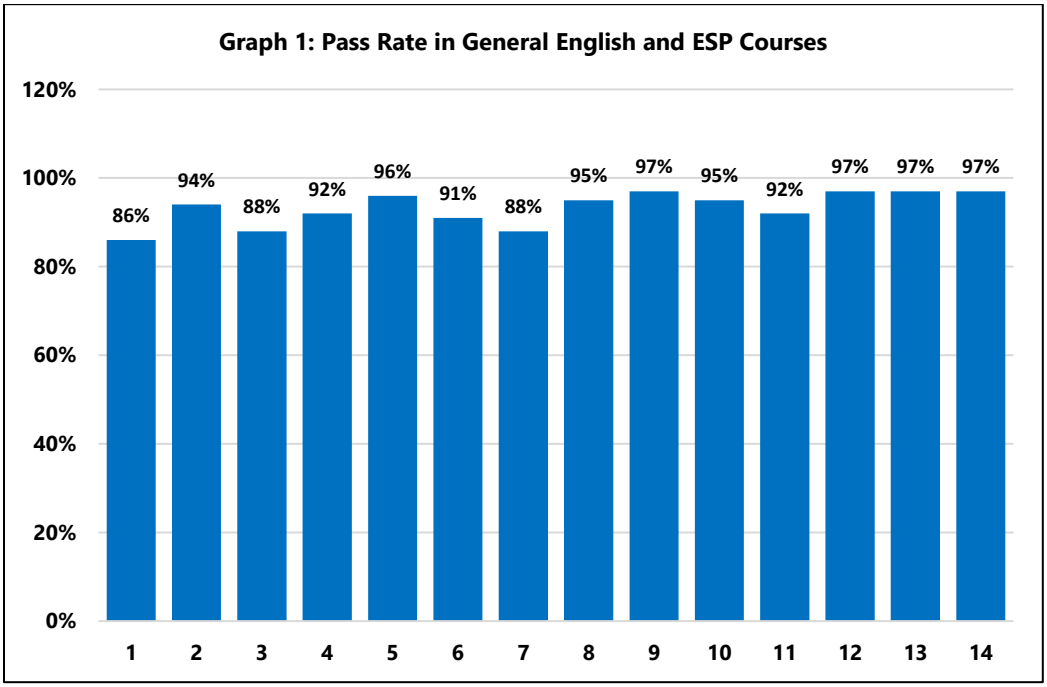
Grade Level	N	English Course Marks						
		below 50	50-59	60-69	70-79	80-89	90-99	100
1	35	1	-	1	2	2	16	13
2	57	-	-	2	4	15	33	3
3	52	-	-	2	-	13	33	4
4	66	1	-	2	5	18	34	6
5	64	-	1	2	12	25	26	6
6	60	-	-	2	12	17	28	2
7	58	1	1	3	15	22	15	1
8	52	-	1	4	10	11	24	2
9	63	2	2	7	10	19	20	3
10	67	1	4	8	10	11	33	-
11	53	-	1	3	11	17	21	-
Total	637	6	10	36	91	170	283	40
% of students		1%	1.6%	5.7%	14%	27%	44%	6%

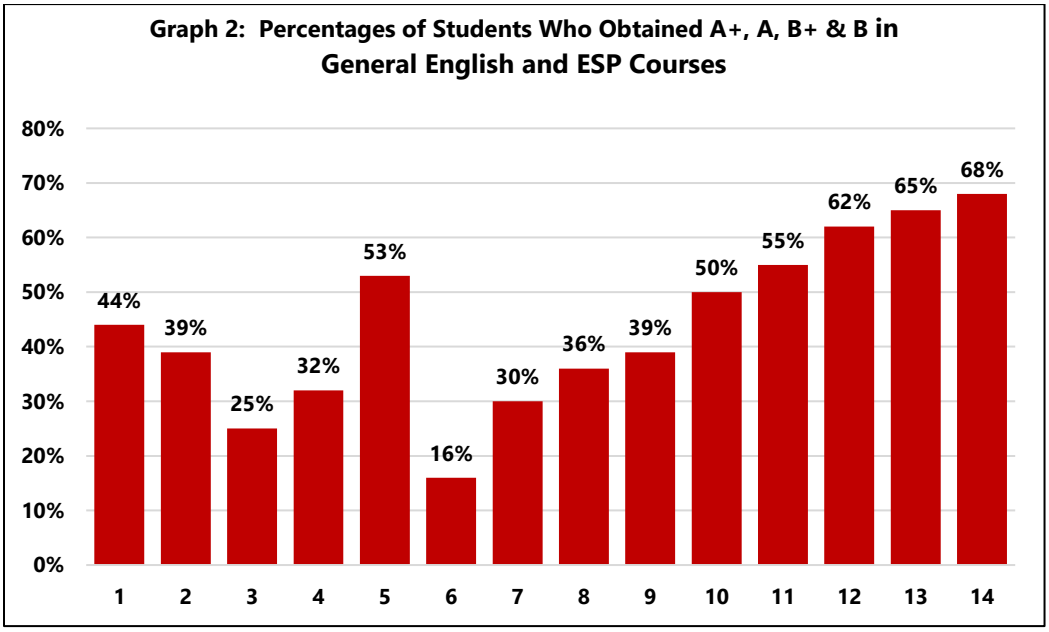
3.2 Distribution of Language Skills and Translation Course Grades at College

Table 2 shows the pass rates and the percentages of students who were awarded an A+, A, B+ or B grades in General English and ESP courses at COLT. In General English courses, the median pass rate is 92%, with a range of 86% to 96%. The percentage of students who obtained an A+, A, B+ or B grade in a typical class is 39%, with a range of 25% to 53% across the different courses. In a typical ESP course, i.e., English for medical, science, business etc., 95% of the students passed the course, with a range of 88% to 97%. In 80% of the courses the pass rate is more than 90%. The percentage of students who obtained an A+, A, B+ or B grade is 55%, with a range between 16% and 68% (See Table 2). This is probably because passing the ESP courses is a requirement for admission to the College of Medicine, Pharmacy, Applied Medical Sciences, Science, Engineering and Computer science, whereas students enrolled in the General English courses are already admitted to the College of Arts, Education and Agriculture and if they fail, they can take the course over.

Table 2: Percentage of Grades A+, A, B+ & B Combined, and Pass Rate in General English and ESP Courses

College Levels	Course Numbers & Course Titles	N	A+, A, B+ & B Combined	C+, C, D+ & D combined	F	Pass Rate
0	101 General English	1765	44%	56%	14%	86%
0	102 General English	162	39%	61%	6%	94%
0	103 General English	93	25%	75%	12%	88%
0	106 General English	121	32%	68%	8%	92%
0	102 General English	152	53%	47%	4%	96%
0	134 ESP	47	16%	84%	9%	91%
0	112 ESP	90	30%	70%	12%	88%
0	114 ESP	100	36%	64%	5%	95%
0	113 ESP	35	39%	61%	3%	97%
0	133 ESP	539	50%	50%	5%	95%
0	131 ESP	536	55%	45%	8%	92%
0	122 ESP	113	62%	38%	3%	97%
0	132 ESP	536	65%	35%	3%	97%
0	121 ESP	342	68%	32%	3%	97%

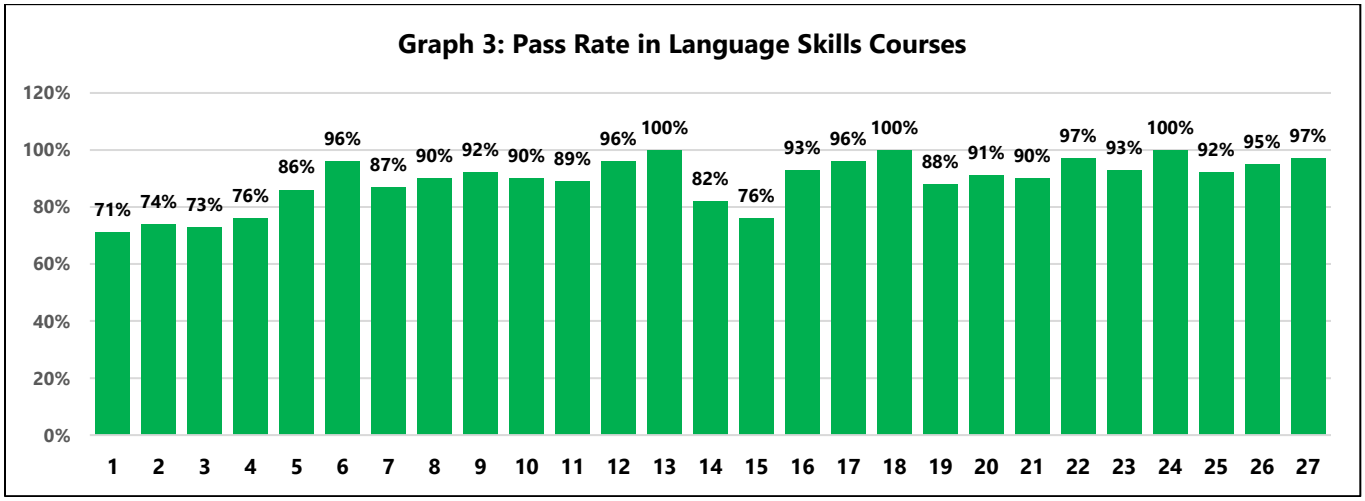


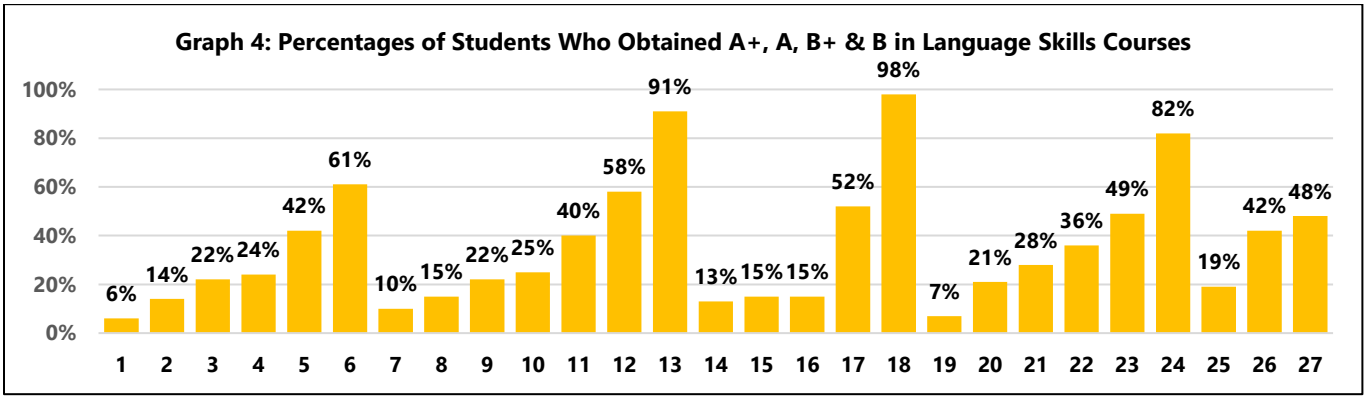


In language skills and linguistics courses that students majoring in translation at COLT take in the first 4 semesters of the translation program, Table 3 shows that the typical pass rate is 90%, with a range of 71% to 100%. The typical percentage of students who were awarded grade A+, A, B+ or B is 24%, with a range of 6% to 98%. The pass rates are a little lower in Level 1 courses and tend to be higher in Level 4 and highest in Level 5 courses. In the Speaking 3 course almost all the students obtained an A+, A, B+ or B grade. In the Dictionary Skills, Speaking3, and Speaking 4 courses all the students passed the courses (See Table 2).

Table 3: Percentages of Students Obtaining Grades A+, A, B+ & B Combined, and Pass Rates in Language Skills Courses

College Levels	Course Numbers and Course Titles	N	A+, A, B+ & B Combined	C+, C, D+ & D combined	F	Pass Rate
1	118 Reading1	192	6%	94%	29%	71%
1	128 Writing1	232	14%	86%	26%	74%
1	127 Vocabulary1	197	22%	78%	27%	73%
1	191 Grammar1	198	24%	76%	24%	76%
1	117 Listening1	159	42%	68%	14%	86%
1	171 Speaking1	126	61%	39%	4%	96%
2	164 Writing2	112	10%	90%	13%	87%
2	143 Reading2	122	15%	85%	10%	90%
2	129 Listening2	113	22%	78%	8%	92%
2	192 Grammar2	131	25%	75%	10%	90%
2	182 Vocabulary2	141	40%	60%	11%	89%
2	174 Speaking2	107	58%	42%	4%	96%
2	193 Dictionary skills	111	91%	9%	0%	100%
3	218 Writing3	148	13%	87%	18%	82%
3	298 Grammar3	174	15%	85%	24%	76%
3	251 Reading3	124	15%	85%	7%	93%
3	241 Listening3	141	52%	48%	4%	96%
3	271 Speaking3	90	98%	2%	0%	100%
4	252 Reading4	153	7%	93%	12%	88%
4	242 Listening4	117	21%	79%	9%	91%
4	220 Writing4	144	28%	72%	10%	90%
4	299 Culture1	80	36%	64%	3%	97%
4	229 Introduction to Translation	118	49%	51%	7%	93%
4	272 Speaking4	105	82%	18%	0%	100%
5	302 Stylistics	143	19%	82%	8%	92%
5	307 Culture2	152	42%	48%	5%	95%
5	308 Text Linguistics	219	48%	52%	3%	97%



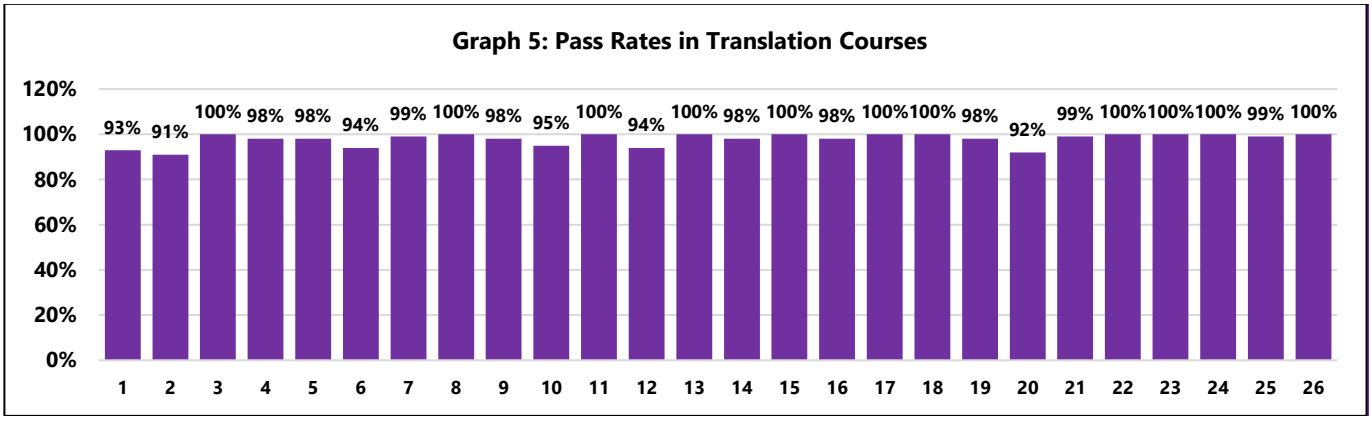


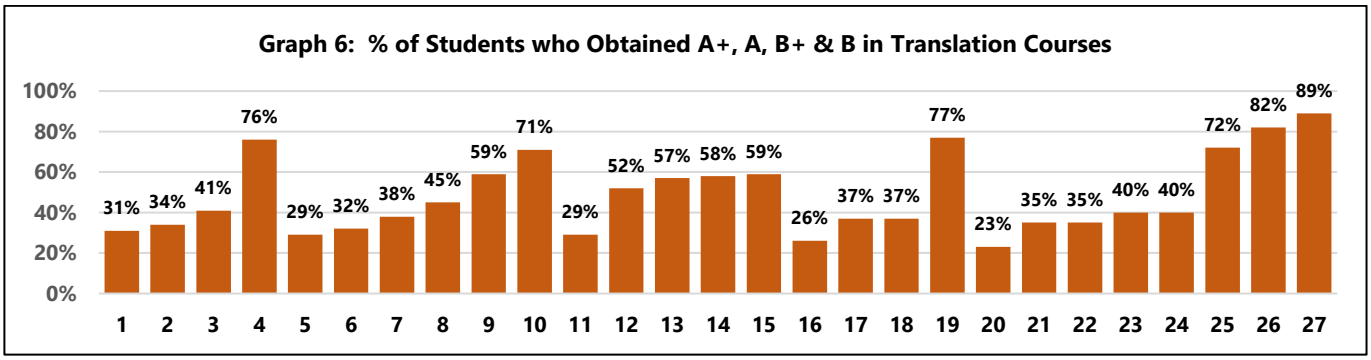
In translation and interpreting courses presented in Table 4, the pass rate in about half the courses is 100%, 98% in a typical course is 98%, and the lowest pass rate is 91%. The percentage of students who obtained an A+, A, B+ or B in a typical class is 40% with a range between 23% and 93%. In about half the courses, more than 50% of the students were awarded an A+, A, B+ or B grade (See Table 4).

The Grade inflation is very clear in the language skills courses in Table 3 and in the translation courses in Table 4. It can be seen that the pass rates and the percentages of students who were awarded A+, A, B+ & B are higher in the translation and interpreting courses than in the language skills courses, probably because of the nature of the questions given on the tests of both types of courses where students are given essay-type questions on translation tests that are marked subjectively.

Table 4: Percentage of Grades A+, A, B+ & B Combined, and Pass Rates in Translation Courses

College Levels	Course Numbers & Course Titles	N	A+, A, B+ & B Combined	C+, C, D+ & D combined	F	Pass Rate
5	330 Consecutive Interpreting 1	128	31%	69%	7%	93%
5	305 Natural Sciences Trans.	173	34%	66%	9%	91%
5	329 Liaison Interpreting 1	122	41%	59%	5%	95%
5	306 Humanities Trans.	175	76%	24%	0%	100%
6	331 Islamic Trans.	121	29%	79%	2%	98%
6	336 Media	102	32%	68%	2%	98%
6	335 Engineering Trans.	113	38%	62%	6%	94%
6	332 Military Trans.	125	45%	55%	1%	99%
6	333 Business Trans	103	59%	41%	0%	100%
6	334 Medical Trans.	110	71%	29%	2%	98%
7	313 Sight Interpreting	129	29%	71%	5%	95%
7	401 Sociology Trans.	115	52%	48%	0%	100%
7	493 Culture 3	110	57%	53%	6%	94%
7	407 Commercial Trans.	95	58%	42%	0%	100%
7	414 Arabization	111	59%	41%	2%	98%
8	406 Security Trans.	75	26%	74%	0%	100%
8	402 Political Trans.	96	37%	67%	2%	98%
8	429 Computer Trans.	89	37%	67%	0%	100%
8	403 Education Trans.	108	77%	23%	0%	100%
9	405 Consecutive Interpreting 2	123	23%	77%	2%	98%
9	446 Legal Trans.	89	35%	65%	8%	92%
9	448 Literary Trans.	91	35%	65%	1%	99%
9	438 Petroleum Trans.	102	40%	60%	0%	100%
9	443 Simultaneous Interpreting	91	40%	60%	0%	100%
9	447 Liaison Interpreting 2	97	72%	28%	0%	100%
9	445 Agriculture Trans.	82	82%	18%	1%	99%
9	440 Summary Trans	92	89%	11%	0%	100%
10	449 Problems Trans.	89	50%	50%	0%	100%
10	499 Translation Project	107	93%	7%	0%	100%





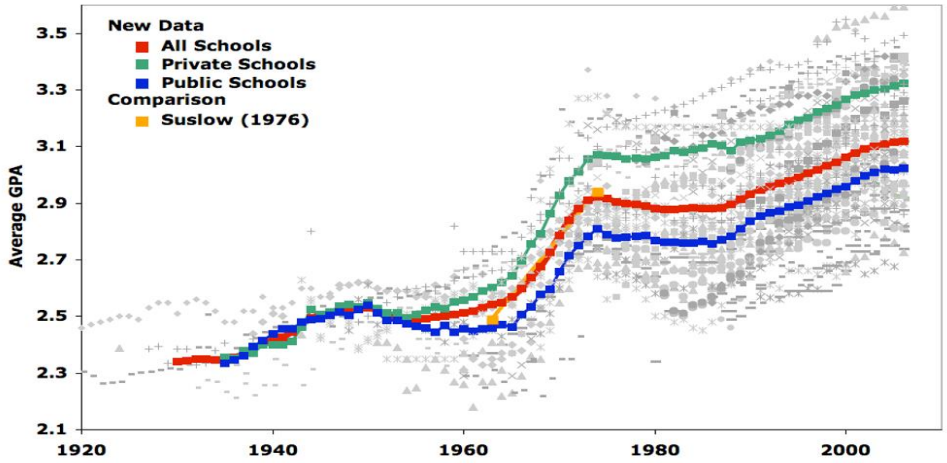
The course grades and pass rates in Tables 1 and 3 are clearly inflated and do not reflect the students' actual English language proficiency. A study by Al-Jarf (2008a) indicated that many high school graduates in Saudi Arabia, especially females, show a great interest in joining colleges of languages and translation and admission to those colleges is highly competitive. Although the lowest GPA for high school graduates admitted to COLT in Fall 2007 was 98.3%, results of the fall 2007 final exams were exceptionally shocking, with only 21.8% passing the reading course. The attrition rate in Fall 2003 was 20% and it went up to 30% in Spring 2004. Few students dropped each week and many re-registered in the following semester adding up to the total number of enrollees. Other studies by Al-Jarf showed numerous weaknesses that students' have in listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, grammar and spelling such as connecting graphemes with phonemes and morphological weaknesses in English, auditory and reading comprehension, reading, writing, vocabulary, oral expression, translation and interpreting (Al-Jarf, 2022c; Al-Jarf, 2021b; Al-Jarf, 2021c; Al-Jarf, 2019a; Al-Jarf, 2019a; Al-Jarf, 2018; Al-Jarf, 2008b; Al-Jarf, 2008d; Al-Jarf, 2007a; Al-Jarf, 2007c; Al-Jarf, 2005a; Al-Jarf, 2005b; Al-Jarf, 2004c; Al-Jarf, 2003; Al-Jarf, 2002a).

Moreover, results in Table 4 are consistent with findings of other studies by Al-Jarf (2021b), Al-Jarf (2003) and Al-Jarf (2002b), who analyzed the final exams of 18 translation courses taught to students in levels 5 to 9 (semester 5 to 9) of the translation program at COLT. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showed no significant differences among the different college levels in the total test length, in the English and Arabic passage length, in the required test speed, in the Flesch reading ease score and in the Flesch-Kincaid grade level score (showing test passage difficulty level). The translation exams given to the students have a low reliability coefficient because the test passages are short, the number of passages on the test is small, the students' score variance and score range are small. In addition, some translation test passages lack face and content validity because some were a dictionary definition, and the exams contained a vocabulary list (words in isolation). Some required translation of single sentences, not long passage. One test contained true/false questions about information given in the course. There is an overlap among subject area tests in passage genre. The passages given tell how poetry should be translated not real literary excerpts. Translation test tasks do not match the tasks required on the translation project and translation assignments after graduation. The students' background knowledge affects the translation of some passages (Intifada passage). The test passages lack variety in topic and length.

The pass rates shown in Graphs 1, 3, and 5 reflect clear grade inflation as the graphs are almost flat rather than curved, which means that the distribution of the pass rates across the courses is not normal. Normal distributions usually have very high and very low pass rates at each end and average ones in the middle of the curve.

By contrast, Graphs 2, 4, and 6 show variations and discrepancies in the percentages of students who were awarded Grades A+, A, B+ & B which seem that they depend on the difficulty level of the course. Looking at the percentages of students who were awarded C+, C, D+ & D indicates that more students have lower achievement and mastery levels. It looks like the aim is to pass the students even if they have a low academic level.

These findings are consistent with findings of prior studies especially Rojstaczer and Healy (2010), who found that the average GPA over the time period 1930 to 2006, as a function of school type (Private, Public and all schools), shown in Graph 7, has been dramatically rising.



Graph 7: Average GPA between 1930-2006 as a function of school type (Source: Rojstaczer & Healy, 2010).

3.3 Factors Affecting grade inflation

Analysis of the instructor responses to the questionnaire-survey showed that the following factors that contribute to grade inflation:

1) ***Administrative factors***

The respondents reported that school and university administrators tend to raise students' marks and course grades. They exercise pressure over instructors to pass the students especially in the case of high failing rates and they tell the instructor that high gailing rates are not acceptable. They generally correlate high pass rates and high grades with the instructors' efficiency and students' satisfaction. School supervisors do not allow teachers to give a student a zero on any question on a test, no matter how poor the answer is. Some college instructors indicated that historically instructors were strict. But when KSU started to seek excellence, it was found that students' grades at KSU were lower than those of their peers at other local universities although our university has better facilities, student achievement and skill mastery. Therefore, their college administration modified the assessment criteria which resulted in grade inflation and current student grades do not really reflect the actual student achievement, knowledge, and skills. The subjects added that the administration backs up students when they complain about an instructor who has failed them. An instructor would be criticised for failing students. If a student complains, her test paper is re-graded and if she needs 1, 2, or 3 marks to pass, the administration would add the marks to her. Expatriate instructors would be fired, or their contract with the school may not be renewed if they fail the students.

These results are similar to results of a study by Sorurbakhsh-Castillo (2018), who found that the majority of teachers at a southeast high school in the USA expressed pressure from the school administration and coaches to inflate grades when students are not meeting the requirements of passing a course on their own merits. Costley (2014) also reported that some administrators implicitly or explicitly require that their teachers give students high grades for various reasons.

2) ***Educational policy***

Some subjects in the current study indicated that teachers and administrators have misconceptions about educational quality. They correlate high quality with high pass rates, regardless of the learning outcomes. Others indicated that quality has been limited to grades and diplomas (certificates), not actual learning. Others referred to the absence of common criteria for writing test questions that all instructors need to abide by.

The educational policies in Saudi Arabia are similar to those reported by prior studies. Barata, Calheiros, Patrício, Graça and Lima' (2015) investigated the impact of the Portuguese national educational policy "Programa Mais Sucesso Escolar" (PMSE) using class

size, class composition, and differentiated instruction to reduce student retention and increase achievement. The researchers found that PMSE significantly reduced retention, but had mixed effects on educational achievement, pointing to evidence of grade inflation on teacher-determined measures of achievement.

3) *Socio-cultural*

Some instructors in the present study indicated that they worry about students and parents' complaints if students fail. They worry about being investigated and about losing their job. Many instructors would like to be liked by the students, be considered nice, popular and get good ratings on the students' course evaluations. They give easy questions and are lenient in grading. Personal connections such as knowing the students, their family, or being from the same tribe as the instructor is another issue that add to grade inflation. Other prior studies such as Caruth and Caruth's (2013) found that among the reasons for higher student grades on the part of professors are fear of student evaluations, ans avoidance of bad relations with students.

4) *Institutional factors*

Some participants in the present study mentioned some institutional factors that lead to grade inflation such as below average teaching skills, lack of experience on the part of the instructor. For example, a professor with a Ph.D., Ma, and BA degree can teach sections of the same language skills course such as sections of the same language skills course (reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary. So when it comes to exams, the material covered by the TA's will be taken into consideration and the difficulty level of the exam questions will be lowered as the administration thinks that more difficult exams will be unfair for students taught by the TA's as they realize that those students have not received the same instructional quality as students' of a professor with a Ph.D.

Other factors mentioned by the participants were shortage in the teaching staff. Some teachers join their classes late, i.e., starting their classes few weeks after the beginning of the semester, large classes, and lack of clearly stated objectives. They explained that when they start teaching few weeks after the beginning of the semester, they cover less material, and give few questions on exams to help students pass. When classes are large, they also try to pass most of the students, so that class sizes the following semester do not increase by additional failing students and instructors are not burdened with grading failing students' exams over and over again.

These results have been confirmed by prior studies. For example, EFL and translation programs at King Saud University have been experiencing significant increases in female freshman student enrolments. Large student enrollments had a negative effect on freshman students' academic achievement in grammar in particular. As the class size increases, the percentage of passing students decreases. In Fall 2000, 66% (total students = 59) of the students passed the grammar course; in Spring 2001, 87% (total students = 68) passed; in Fall 2003, 42.5% (total students = 200) passed; in Spring 2004, 56% (total students =237) passed; in Fall 2005, 29.8% (total students = 275) passed; and in Spring 2005, 35% (total students = 287) passed (Al-Jarf, 2006).

Al-Jarf (2005) and Al-Jarf (2008c) revealed that English-as-a-foreign-language programs at Saudi universities have been experiencing significant increases in student enrolment especially at Women's Departments. The staffing conditions do not accommodate the enrolment demands. ESL programs have been having difficulties in retaining experienced native-speaking teachers and in hiring qualified substitute instructors. Al-Jarf (2008c), Al-Jarf (2004a) and Al-Jarf (2004b) found that the staffing status at translation departments in Saudi Arabia is inadequate in terms of instructor qualifications, areas of specialization, teaching load, course assignment, and preparation future translators and interpreters. There has always been an instructor shortage. The instructor shortage is temporarily solved by merging classes, by raising the teaching load of instructors, by local recruits who have a B.A. degree, and who are sometimes inadequately qualified. 33% of those work at the department on a temporary hourly basis and this percentage goes up each semester. Classes are over-crowded classes (50-75 students per section), female faculty are over-loaded, over-stressed (20-30 hours per week), instructors supervise 6-7 students with a 25,000 word-translation project each. Translation courses and the translation project are sometimes assigned to TA's with a B.A. degree who do not have adequate qualifications, training or experience in translation.

In addition, Barriga, Cooper, Gawelek, Butela and Johnson (2008) declared that institutional factors that affect grade inflation are class size, course level, academic discipline, day, and semester of delivery.

5) *Instructor-related factors*

The subjects pointed out that some instructors are lazy. They want to finish grading quickly. They do not want to give make-up tests if some students fail. Failing students would add up to the class size. Passing students would reduce the class size in the following semesters. Some raise marks to make up for their incompetent teaching and absenteeism (missing classes) and avoid students' complaints. They added that there are variations in instructor competence and teaching experience. Many subjects mentioned the effect of students' end-of-course evaluations of the instructor on grade inflation as well. They think good student evaluations are significant for their promotion, renewal of contract, raises, and view of the department and college administration

of the instructor. Some do not want to be the ones who fail their students. They would rather leave it to other colleagues to fail the students. In general, schoolteachers and instructors look at passing and failing students emotionally. They do not want to break students' hearts and would like to please students and make them happy. They do not look at passing and failing in terms of learning outcomes and as means of assessing which students have and which students have not acquired certain skills and knowledge and whether students would be ready and qualified for the job market.

Finally, many instructors indicated that they like to get high scores on students' end-of- course evaluations of instructors. They asserted that students' evaluations of the instructors are usually affected by the course grade they get. If a student gets a good grade, her evaluation of her instructor will be positive, but if she fails or gets a low grade, her evaluation of her instructor will be negative and unfavourable.

Other studies in the literature concluded that causes of grade inflation are below average teaching skills, lack of experience, lack of clearly stated objectives, merit-based financial aid, student evaluations of instructors, student expectations, student-instructor dynamics (Caruth & Caruth, 2013).

Regarding students' evaluation of instructors, a study by Al-Jarf (2015) revealed that a survey-report about students' evaluations of instructors published in the King Saud University student newspaper Risalatul-Jami'aa showed that 75% of the students participating in the survey do not take the end-of-course teacher evaluation seriously, and do not respond to the items accurately. Some have a friend respond to it on their behalf; some just tick a rating randomly without reading the statements; and others tick the same rating for all the items on the evaluation form, as evaluations are conducted during final exams, and students cannot view their course grades until they complete the teacher evaluation forms. They also believe that their evaluations have no real effect on their instructors and are not taken into consideration in decision-making by the college of university administration such as firing an instructor based on students' evaluations. They consider them *"a routine procedure."* As a result, students' evaluation of their instructors does not reflect instructors' actual performance. Both good and poor instructors receive an overall average rating. The currently used teacher evaluation forms do not really discriminate an "excellent, average and poor" performance. Students in different sections of the same course taught by the same instructor give significantly different ratings of the instructor and ratings correlate with the grades the students get. The more the failures are in an instructor's course, the worse the ratings of that instructor. For the above reasons, students' evaluations of instructors are not valid and reliable.

In the United States System of Education, the growth of student evaluations from 1973 to 1993 has increased from 29% to 86% which in turn has increased the importance of students' evaluations on their professors' retention, tenure, and promotion. However, the effect of student evaluations on their academic development results in complex educational issues. These issues involve teaching critical thinking skills, teaching the student evaluations, types of tests, grade inflation, student interest in the subject matter, and a student's sense of entitlement (Tarun & Krueger, 2016). Stanoyevitch (2008) found a relationship between grades instructors assign and scores they receive on end-of-the semester student evaluations of teaching. Chen, Wang and Yang (2017) indicated that both student's final grades and the course failing rates are predictors of teaching evaluation scores by the students. The researchers found a positive correlation between teaching evaluation scores and students' final grades, and a negative correlation between teaching evaluation scores and course failing rates. These results mean that teachers' evaluations by the students may compel teachers to give higher grades and lower course requirements to please their students and in order to get higher evaluation scores at the end of the course. Using students' evaluation of instructors as a basis for evaluating teaching effectiveness and motivating or demotivating faculty tenure and promotion decisions causes multiple biases related to the instructor, course, and class characteristics and facilitates grade inflation (Radchenko, 2020).

6) *Testing and Grading Practices and Content Coverage*

The course grading system at the university produces a high pass rate as 60% of the course marks are allocated to attendance, assignments, quizzes, and class participation. Exams usually focus on a small portion of the course/textbook. Many course topics are deleted, i.e., not covered by the tests. Questions are easy and direct. Questions do not test higher-level thinking skills. They depend on rote memorization rather than application. Students cannot apply what they have memorized. Instructors using objective questions which the students can answer without studying. They use essay questions which require students to write everything they know; hence the instructors choose the part which he/she thinks is correct. The students are given 5 or 6 essay questions from which they choose 3. Prior to the General English exams, students are given practice tests with similar questions to the final exam (in form and content). Hence, students know what to expect on the final. The students know what kind of questions will be given on the tests. They look at previous exams for previous semesters. Tests for the same course have similar questions. The instructors do not change the question types. They only change the vocabulary items. Some re-use the same tests which students have access to. Low-achieving students are given several make-up tests to raise their grades. Some instructors who teach large classes do not fully read students' responses. They just skim through the answers and give good marks. Some colleges push

the students. Ten marks are added to help students graduate. One to three marks are added to the course total mark to reach 60% (pass mark). Some give the students three tests, and the best two test marks are selected.
In a study of the content covered in reading courses at COLT, Al-Jarf (2021d) found that the typical instructor teaches 50% of the reading passages in Interactions 1 and Interactions 2; 33% of the reading passages in Mosaic 1; and 20% of the reading passages in Mosaic 2. In Addition, the typical instructor teaches 65% of the reading subskills and exercises in Interactions 1; 50% of the reading skills and exercises in Interactions 2; 34% of the reading skills and exercises in Mosaic 1; and 24% of the reading skills and exercises in Mosaic 2. Interviews with a sample of EFL instructors at COLT revealed several factors affecting the amount of reading material covered in the reading textbooks. The instructors cover less reading material and fewer reading subskills as the college level gets higher, reading texts grow longer and more difficult, and reading subskills become more advanced. Instructors pick and choose which chapter, which reading texts, reading subskills and exercises to teach. They tend to ignore exercises that focus on higher level thinking reading skills such as recognizing point of view, critical reading, paraphrasing complicated passages, making inferences, interpreting a graph/table, identifying bias, distinguishing facts and opinions, paraphrasing information, making predictions, outlining and others.

A second factor is instructor absenteeism. Some miss classes for personal reasons. Others go to class late and leave early and this affects the amount of instructional time and reduces the amount of material covered, especially because instructors who miss classes do not usually give extra class sessions to make up for the classes they missed. So, they reduce the amount of material taught and give easy questions on tests to pass the students (Al-Jarf, 2021d).

A third factor is college policies. Although the College Council assigns the textbooks, it does not specify the number of chapters, nor the types of skill and exercises to be covered. The instructors are free to choose and cover any chapters, any texts, any subskills and exercises they like. However, the College Council mandates that interm tests and final exams be unified, i.e., students in all the sections of the same course take the same test. So, the least number of chapters, skills and exercises covered constitute the standard material to be covered on the test. Those who cover more material feel that they are wasting time and effort teaching "extra" material that the students will not be tested on. Therefore, they choose not to cover a lot of material (Al-Jarf, 2021d).

The fourth factor is that instructors cannot cover much material because the students' English proficiency level is low, and the textbooks are too difficult for them. The weak level of some students is a great obstacle in passing and achieving actual benefits from the reading course. The College has no control over the quality of freshman students admitted to the college because the university has open admission policies. Poor high school graduates are admitted to the translation program without taking any admission tests. High school grades are inflated because English language teaching in high school depends on rote memorization unlike the freshman reading course that depends on learning and applying reading skills to new texts (Al-Jarf, 2021d).

Moreover, the instructors indicated that although students enrolled in the Reading III and Reading IV courses took the Reading 1 course when they were in Level 1, they do not seem to have acquired any reading process subskills. Their general proficiency level in English is too poor. Their students' English proficiency level is lower than that of students in level 1. Most students pass the courses without having developed their language skills to an acceptable level. The students suffer academically and cannot make it through level 5 specialized courses such as stylistics, semantics, text linguistics and others. Students' will not be parallel in knowledge and skills acquired. Some students have negative attitudes towards reading and they lack motivation. Some miss classes. Some do not do homework. Some miss the practice test session. Some demand that their instructors cover less material as they find the reading texts and subskills too difficult. They cannot cope with the text length and content difficulty and cannot handle a lot of material (Al-Jarf, 2021d).

The fifth factor is the instructors' testing strategies'. Some instructors do not teach a lot of material and do not cover many subskills in class to make the tests easy for the students and to help them pass the course. They only teach the subskills that will be covered by the test, although the textbook contains many subskills. The first interm test covers the material and subskills taught in the first part of the semester. The second interm test only covers the material and subskills taught in the second part of the semester. The final exam does not cover the subskills tested on first and second interms. The reading final focuses on vocabulary to make the test easy and in order for the test not cover reading skills only. They also make the tests easy for the students by not teaching a lot of material and by excluding difficult subskills to avoid students' complaints to the college and university administration. They do not like and do not want to go through investigations if a student fails and complains (Al-Jarf, 2021d).

Arsyad Arrafii (2020) argued that in Indonesia grade inflation is related to a hodgepodge grading and the top-down implementation of the competency-based assessment policies.

7) ***Student-related factors***

Participants indicated that when college students were in high school, they were used to high grades and passing all courses. The parents also demanded that their children pass with high grades. High school exam questions would be similar to those given in homework-assignments, available in the textbook and answered in class. Exam questions depended on rote-memorization. When they go to the college, they expect the same. They demand few straightforward questions selected from exercises and questions in the textbook and high grades as it was the case in high school.

Some subjects indicated that high school teachers and college instructors are subject to students' nuisance, i.e., students pestering their instructors for better grades. Some students complain if they fail or get a low grade/mark. During the semester, some students put some pressure on their instructors such as asking for a make-up test or an extra assignment to improve their grades. They resort to some connections with high positions who talk to the instructor on behalf of the student and request reviewing the student's exam paper or giving her extra credit. They write negative descriptions and grumble about those *"tough instructors"* on social media and students' forums.

Students-related factors affecting grade inflation in the present study are similar to findings of other studies in the literature. Costley (2014) reported that students expect high grades. With more and more inflated grades in American public schools, college and university students demand more high grades. They are conditioned to receive high grades. The students often feel unsuccessful when they receive a grade lower than an A. Teachers at all levels have heard students beg for A grades.

Iris Franz (2010) concluded that the potential threat of students' nuisance can induce the instructors to inflate grades. Some students do not study hard enough and to pester the instructors for a better grade if the instructor is lenient; the reward from pestering is high; the cost of pestering is low and if they pay high tuition for studying. Her survey data showed that 70%+ of professors think that students' nuisance is "annoying" to the instructors and is "costly in terms of time, effort, and energy." Results showed that the more the student values a high grade, the higher the studying cost will be, and the more likely the student is to pester the instructor.

Instructor's lived experiences when they encounter students who are unhappy with their grades. The inaccurate grade expectations of students linked to students' aggressive behavior, and instructors' attitudes and values of that contributed to grade inflation. The students' aggressive behavior and instructor lived experiences could aggravate and support continued grade inflation (Schroeder, 2016).

8) ***College Admission/Graduation Competitiveness***

Some participants indicated that high school grades are inflated in order to help students join the college they are interested in since some majors require a high school GPA. Those with lower grades cannot go to the college of their choice and even if they are admitted, they may not be able to make it through the major they are interested in. Participants also indicated that college grades are inflated especially to help senior college students graduate with good grades and find a job.

The relationship between college admission competitiveness and grade inflation was mentioned by some studies in the literature such as Germain and Scandura (2005) who indicated that grade inflation may be due to university consumerism which is competing for students. Keeping students happy (and paying) has been more significant than how much the students are learning. Also, Walsh (2010) indicated that high schools work in competitive environments and use grade inflation to attract and retain families and students. School administrators under competitive pressure may ease grade standards.

3.4 Differences in Instructors' Views According to Gender, Degree, Position, Nationality Variables

No significant differences were found between male and female instructors, schoolteachers and college instructors, instructors who hold a Ph.D., MA or BA degree, and Saudi vs. non-Saudi (expatriate) instructors in their opinions regarding the factors affecting grade inflation. This result is inconsistent with findings of a study by Kezim, Pariseau and Quinn (2005) who found that grade inflation was related to faculty status with significant differences seen between the average GPA of students taught by tenured and adjunct faculty and those students taught by nontenured and adjunct faculty. They also found that average grades given by adjunct faculty were higher than those of tenured and nontenured faculty. Thus, the results show that the increased use of adjunct faculty aggravates grade inflation in higher education. In Schutz, Drake, Lessner & Hughes' (2015) study, data analysis from 1,559 full-time and adjunct faculty of a Midwestern community college in the United States revealed that full-time faculty felt they were significantly more influenced by administration pressures than adjunct faculty in their grade assignment, whereas adjunct faculty reported being most often influenced by student concerns such as academic anxieties, personal circumstances, and success after the course. There were also differences between adjunct and full-time instructors at a community college in the USA in the high and low likelihood of grade inflation groups and the factors leading to grade inflation. Instructors in the low likelihood group perceived higher levels of student complaints and nuisance than instructors in the high likelihood group. Faculty status (adjunct

vs full-time) was related to the influence of experience with grading practices, perceptions of student evaluations of teaching, perceptions of student complaints, and perceptions of job security on the likelihood of grade inflation (Heulett, 2013).

4. Recommendations and Conclusion

Academic institutions worldwide, from primary schools to universities, use grades/marks as a fundamental sorting and signalling mechanism for students. Nevertheless, grades awarded to students are not always indicative of learning outcomes and can be subject to inflation. This grade inflation constitutes a major challenge to enhancing learning outcomes of the Saudi Educational system, as many administrators and instructors do not realize the real purpose of the teaching-learning-evaluation processes, the importance of designing reliable and valid tests that measure higher-level thinking skills, that adequately cover the course content, and which discriminate between high and low-achieving students, and those who have mastered the objectives and skills of a course and those who have not. Grading criteria should be carefully and thoughtfully selected, reviewed and categorized as "*inappropriate,*" "*controversial,*" or "*highly recommended,*" and grading methods should accurately measure their students' achievement, and should accurately reflect a particular level of learning (Haladyna, 2019). Standards-based grading must be designed to communicate to the students their current level of mastery in line with well-articulated standards at the school and university levels (Stange, 2018). Use of scoring rubrics make grade inflation less likely as they allow faculty to guide their students into producing higher quality work, assign grades that reflect levels of real accomplishment, enable students to begin to understand the nature of academic work, and make grading a shared communal vision for guiding students into the discipline (Hodges, 2014). Faculty professional development can be used to educate instructors about the process of grading. Institutions need to explicitly define the intended functions of grades before establishing a system for determining grades, provide guidance to instructors so that all individuals involved in the grading process are using these benchmarks of students' performance consistently. Faculty can engage in dialogs about the appropriate functions of grades and more consistent methods for determining grades. Administrators need to exercise caution in interpretating feedback from students' evaluations of teaching and student complaints, especially those used in the supervision of adjunct instructors (Heulett, 2013). Digital rubrics can be an effective and objective tool for evaluating instructors' performance. They are an easy-to-use system for monitoring teaching performance and aligning it with standards and the assessment scores can be automatically adjusted to the teaching assessment scale. They set the standards and help specify the criteria to be used in assessing instructors' performance. (Al-Jarf, 2015). Digital rubrics (iRubrics) can be used for assessing students' skill development/achievement more objectively as they specify the performance criteria and the performance levels (Al-Jarf, 2020a; Al-Jarf, 2011a; Al-Jarf, 2011b).

In addition, teachers should have clear and high expectations of students' achievement and should communicate those expectations to their students. Analysis of administrative data for 8th and 9th grade Algebra I students in North Carolina's public schools between the academic years 2006 and 2016 demonstrated that students of all racial/ethnic groups learn more from teachers with high grading standards. These standards tended to be higher in schools serving more advantaged students. Moreover, the impact of rigorous grading practices improved students' performance in subsequent math courses up to two years later. Not only do students learn more from tougher teachers, but they also do better in math courses up to two years later. The size of these effects depends on replacing average teachers with more competent ones Gershenson (2020). Results of Gershenson's study were confirmed by Al-Jarf (2022f) who found that EFL instructors' qualifications, pedagogical system, educational and professional experience, the integration of online instruction, the type of error correction, instant feedback given to the students, and the formative assessment technique used were significantly more effective than writing/grammar instruction that depended on the textbook alone. These variables proved to be important for enhancing the grammatical knowledge and writing quality of unskilled, low ability EFL students and resulted in a significant improvement in EFL students' grammar and writing post-test scores.

Other factors that promote students' learning require the design of effective learning-centered teaching strategies that increase students' responsibility for learning, engagement with course material, and opportunity for formative assessments prior to summative assessments of course learning outcomes that lead to improved course grades (Mostrom & Blumberg, 2012). The author applied those principles in numerous language and translation courses that she taught to students at COLT such as speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar courses and the results were remarkable. Some of her freshman students could write poetry and short stories in online courses (Al-Jarf, 2007b). The use of blended learning and different type of technologies such as online courses improved EFL students' English language skills (Al-Jarf, 2019b; Al-Jarf, 2013; Al-Jarf, 2010; Al-Jarf, 2007a; Al-Jarf, 2007c; Al-Jarf, 2005b; Al-Jarf, 2004c; Al-Jarf, 2002a). Using a variety of mobile Apps improved students' language skills and learning autonomy (Al-Jarf, 2022d; Al-Jarf, 2022g; Al-Jarf, 2022; Al-Jarf, 2021c; Al-Jarf, 2020c; Al-Jarf, 2012a; Al-Jarf, 2012c). Utilization of blogs and social networks to perform collaborative activities proved to be beneficial for students' learning and practice (Al-Jarf, 2022a; Al-Jarf, 2022b; Al-Jarf, 2021c; 2020b; Al-Jarf, 2017a; Al-Jarf, 2014a; Al-Jarf, 2009a). Providing students with communicative feedback that focuses on the location of errors proved to be more effective than providing the students with the correct forms and correct answers especially in writing (Al-Jarf, 2021a). Watching online videos and TED Talks improves students' listening, speaking and pronunciations skills (Al-Jarf, 2022h; Al-Jarf, 2021f; Al-Jarf, 2012b). Students' English language

skills can be enhanced with online vocabulary, grammar and writing tasks and task-based instruction (Al-Jarf, 2022e; Al-Jarf, 2017b; Al-Jarf, 2014b; Al-Jarf, 2005a).

Finally, comparisons of grade inflation at public and private schools and state and private universities in Saudi Arabia, the relationship between grade inflation and demand for higher education admission and college graduation, the opinions of the labor market about the level of competence and job performance of employees who graduated from language and translation colleges are still open for further investigation by future researchers.

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