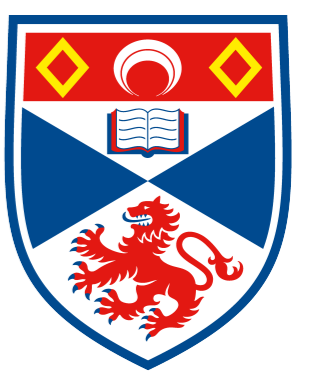


Students' Output Patterns in Tutorials*: How do Students' Language Levels and Teachers' Question-Asking Behaviour Affect the Patterns?

*Tutorials: Small Group Teaching



University of St Andrews

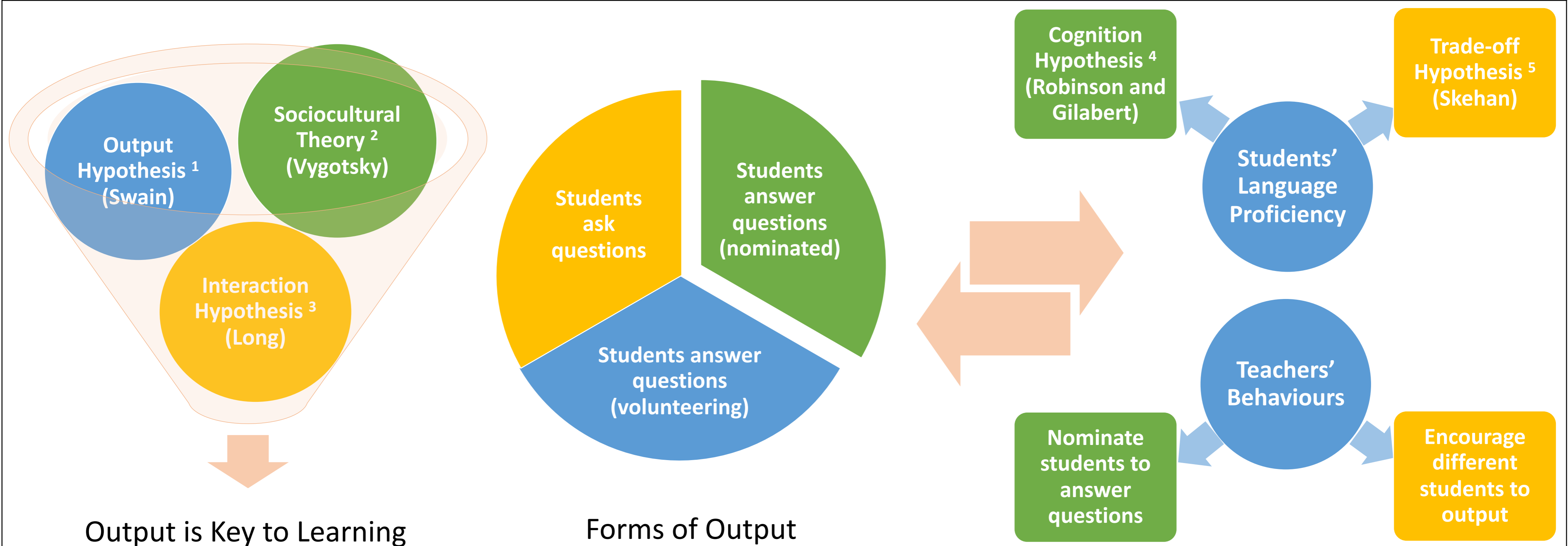
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Abstract

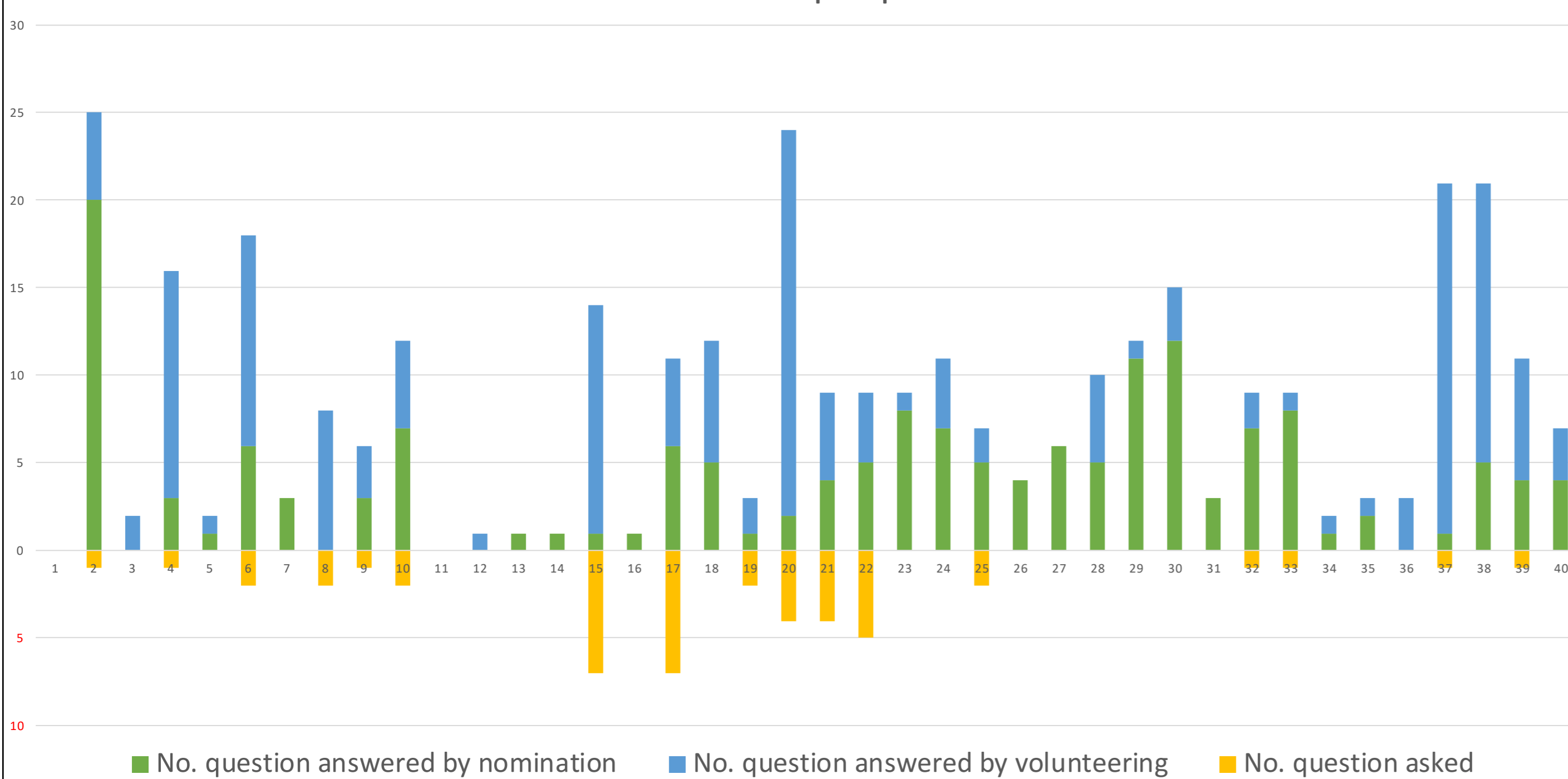
This exploratory action research aims to investigate students' patterns of oral output (interaction) in English for Academic Purpose (EAP) settings. Forty students from different disciplines and with different English language proficiency were observed in five tutorials in November 2019, and these students were asked to complete a questionnaire about possible factors that may affect their contributions. Results show that students' output pattern is complex and influenced by their English language skills, and teachers are not generally promoting equal outputs among students.

Theoretical Background



Results

Individual student's output pattern in tutorial



- ✓ Students who like to answer the questions by volunteering are **not** students who like to ask the questions.
- ✓ Students who do not answer the questions by volunteering are **not** students who are nominated to answer questions.
- ✓ Students who ask and answer questions are **not** students with higher English language proficiency
- ✓ However, students who ask questions have all achieved English language proficiency level of CEFR B2+.
- ✓ Teachers are **not** always nominating students who do not actively interact to answer questions.

Discussion

1. Students have their own output patterns → language proficiency is not the only factor affecting their behaviours.
2. English language proficiency has impact on students' willingness to ask questions → can be caused by the higher cognition load when asking questions (more critical thinking required).
3. Teachers do not seek equal amount of outputs from students → students may not be paid equal attention.

Further Research

1. Longitudinal studies can be conducted to investigate the possible changes in students' willingness to output and their output patterns with the improvement of their English language skills.
2. Comparative studies can be conducted to investigate how the changes in teachers' behaviours can change the willingness of students to output.

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