

## **Investigating Strategies for Mitigating and Avoiding Expert Blind Spot Development in Teaching English Attributive Adjectives**

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The paper investigated strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot in teaching English attributive adjectival phrases at Khwevha High School in Limpopo Province, South Africa. Quantitative and qualitative research approaches were adopted to corroborate the findings. A questionnaire was used to collect data from 35 selected Grade 10 respondents using a simple random sampling technique. Qualitatively, semi-structured interviews were conducted on two purposely sampled schoolteachers from Dzindi Circuit, based on the researcher's preference for obtaining an in-depth understating of the topic. Initially, learners were incompetent in using adjectives but after employing 'points of entry', offering 'explanations', presenting 'structures' and checking 'comprehension' strategies, learners improved considerably. The paper underscores using the identified strategies to mitigate and avoid the advancement of the expert blind spot in teaching English attributive adjectives.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching at various institutions of learning is one crucial profession for sharing knowledge with learners because it enables them to be employable after having completed the required course. Moreover, it allows learners to be accepted by the community of academics if they can demonstrate informed knowledge acquired. As academics often have different perceptions of similar idiosyncratic

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interpretations of a particular content knowledge, the sharing of knowledge, therefore, depends upon the individual teacher's educational expertise. At schools, colleges and universities, adequately trained teachers in the rudiments of the English language cannot be ignored because their proficiency is indispensable in teaching and learning. In contrast, the expert blind spot usually develops when teachers inadvertently overlook the necessary steps for enhancing a particular competence (Collier, 2021). Consequently, learners suffer from the teachers' ignorance of expert blind spot development.

Expert blind spot involves a situation where both experienced and inexperienced teachers intuitively ignore a certain knowledge content to be imparted to learners regardless of their expertise in the knowledge area. Nathan, Koedinger and Alibali (n.d:3) view an expert blind spot as "an inability to perceive the difficulties that novices experience when approaching a new domain of knowledge". It is a propensity of forgetting how much one knows, and how difficult content appears to be to novices. Further, (Collier, 2021) claims that when teachers impart content knowledge to their learners, they take it for granted that new learners understand what is being offered to them whereas it is possible the development of expert blind spot.

The knowledge of experts is structured as a big, intertwined structure than the neat and straightforward frameworks created by learners in their notebooks. This knowledge is highly systematised, contextualised and prearranged around a particular theoretical structure and forms that guide how challenges are identified and alleviated to bring comprehension of the subject matter. However, it is often difficult for an expert to present knowledge content as envisaged by the learners timeously. Cusimano and Lombrozo (2023) assert that although facts and connections are abundantly available, the experts may unconsciously forget to present certain necessary steps and progressions for avoiding forgetfulness in learners' needs when teaching them content knowledge regarding the use of English attributive adjectival phrases.

To understand English attributive adjectival phrases, it is necessary to understand the meaning of adjectives. Adjectives are part of word classes that modify nouns or pronouns by describing, identifying or quantifying words and are used as the head of a noun phrase or complement of a determiner (Rebrus, & Szigetvári, 2022). Ibrahim (2021) claims that they are grammatical classifications of the group of words referring to the main set of items that specify the attributes of nouns. Also, they describe the corporeal appearance of a person or object and express emotions about the person's character (NDA, 2022). English attributive adjectival phrases pose challenges to both teachers and learners in teaching and learning although teachers attempt to mitigate the unprecedented development of expert blind spot (Ajaj, 2022). In English attributive adjectives appear attributively or predicatively in phrases, clauses or sentences (Nordquist, 2020). Dictionary.com (2021) claims that attributive adjectives are positioned directly adjacent to the noun or pronoun they modify while predicative attributive adjectives do not. Conversely, when adjectives are disconnected from the noun, they modify using linking verbs, and they become predicative adjectives.

Lee and Michaleis (2023) posit that English attributive adjectives precede nouns permanently as in the phrase 'late father' to show the characteristic of the father who is passed on. On the other hand, the phrase 'father is late' denotes being neither 'on' time nor 'in' time. In this situation, the adjective 'late' becomes an adverb in the phrase 'father is late'. Attributive adjectives can follow nouns without complementation as in 'Something quite enjoyable' and appear between a determiner and a noun phrase head. Additionally, the attributives of 'only adjectives' occur predominantly in an attributive position although they do not necessarily display the noun referent directly as in a 'New friend'. A new friend, in this context, indicates the one who has been a friend lately. Nonetheless, it does not necessarily mean that the said 'friend' is new in terms of age. Therefore, the adjective 'New' does not characterise the person and it is attributive only.

Some English adjectives are positioned attributively when they act like complete adverbs of degree as in 'She is a mere lecturer' and the others are used

exclusively as the reference of the head noun that has already been characterised using rank or position as in ‘just a lecturer’ showing only the attributes of a lecturer. Other attributive adjectives are used only in a position related to their adverbs as in ‘former nurse’ (Nordquist, 2020), another attributive adjectives follow the model of French and occur postpositively as in ‘time immemorial’ or ‘When You Catch an Adjective, Kill It’ (Yagoda, 2007 cited in Nordquist, 2020); and the other occurs with an ‘attributive- only meaning’ followed by the corresponding adverb emerging from nouns (NDA, 2022) as in ‘A new *departmental* officer’.

Further, attributive adjectives are identified by the reference of the noun itself to show what the noun means as in ‘A traditional doctor’ but not occurring after the copula *be* in ‘\*A doctor traditional’. Sometimes, attributive adjectives qualify the noun time reference as in ‘My *future* husband’, qualify the noun geographical reference in ‘A *northern* hemisphere’, characterise the head noun as in ‘A *total* sport’, show the individuality of the head noun as in ‘The *sole* director’, have the character of a noun coming before another noun as in ‘house furniture’. Moreover, they are identified using correspondence to a prepositional phrase with the nouns as counterparts as in ‘furniture for the house’.

Most common errors are committed in English attributive adjectival phrases include using the wrong adjective as in ‘\*I have bicycle one’ instead of ‘I have one bicycle’ (Scontras, 2023), overusing adjectives, placing adjectives in the wrong order as in the adjectival phrase ‘\*a box brown small’ instead of ‘a small brown box’ as the order of listing is done from most important to least one (NDA, 2022). Dyer, Futrell, Liu & Scontras (2021) postulate that adjectives contributing greater information gain appear earlier than those with less information gain. Some errors involve using multiple adjectives unnecessarily, stringing numerous adjectives to form new words; and using words that are not real English attributive adjectives.

Some most common errors are committed in the phrase ‘*busy* sleeping’ and ‘*busy* dying’ where the word ending ‘-ing’ is attached to the verbs ‘sleep’ and ‘die’ to signal the continuity of the actions, namely, ‘sleeping’ and ‘dying’. These actions are used as descriptive verbs to adjectives depending on the context in which they

are applied to attributively govern their quality (Kapoor, 2023). The use of these attributive adjectives emerges from 'language transfer as stated by Lado (1957) which states that learners tend to transfer knowledge content from their first language (L1) to their second language (L2).

Numerous studies have been conducted to show the use of English attributive adjectival phrases. For example, Ahmed Al-Hassaani and Nasser Hassan Ja'ashan (2017) investigated an English attributive position at the sentence level on English Grammar Course 1(E131) of the undergraduate pre-service teacher-trainees of the Bachelor Programme, College of Education, Saber, English Department, University of Aden. The study revealed they had experienced difficulties when positioning attributive adjectives. Hallman (2020) studied prototypically attributive versus predicative adjectives and discovered that prototypically attributive adjectives were often ignored although they aligned with nouns than verbs syntactically, semantically and pragmatically. Similarly, Ibrahim (2021) studied 30 learners from the English Multicultural Center for Training and Human Development regarding the use of attributive English adjectival phrases. The investigation found that learners faced challenges in arranging words correctly in sentences.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The paper was underpinned by Nathan and Petrosino's (2003) theory of expert blind spot hypothesis which holds that teachers with advanced knowledge content of scholarly disciplines use authoritative philosophies, formalisms, and analytic methods for guiding learners' conceptual development and instruction. However, teachers are not guided by "knowledge of the learning needs and developmental profiles of novices" (Nathan & Petrosino, 2003: 906). Further, this theory assumes that a piece of well-developed content knowledge is based on the structure of the subject matter than the expertise of teachers and their learners as there is no acute difference between them. Nevertheless, both teachers and learners exhibit different knowledge backgrounds, motivations and qualifications, view classroom environment necessities, and plan and organise their content differently.

Nonetheless, it is concerning that expert blind spot (Jansen, Vögelin, Machts, Keller, Köller & Möller, 2021), and problem-solving skills develop regardless of a common cognitive architectural phenomenon. Although teachers' knowledge includes blending content and pedagogy to understand a particular topic, not all teachers have sound pedagogical knowledge regardless of the subject matter expertise they possess. Teachers face challenges when exchanging ideas with novices in their classes. Therefore, Collier (2021) claims that they do not just know more than novices but are advantaged by the content knowledge they have.

Although many academic works have been attached to acclimatisation knowledge, little attention has been given to strategies for mitigating and avoiding the development of expert blind spot in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases. Therefore, the researcher chose the current topic because teachers and learners have equally a minimal understanding of the use of English attributive adjectival phrases due to an expert blind spot development which is miserable for both scholarship and practice (Maunganidze, 2020). In this essence, Lambert (2018:358) argues this development is “arguably an abrogation of responsibility” as teachers inadvertently omit the following strategies for teaching a particular knowledge content:

### **Strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot development**

The amalgamation of the strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot development as elucidated by GeorgiaTech Center for Teaching and Learning (n.d.) are 1) Provide ‘points of entry’ where the teacher defines specialized terms, give examples, link prior knowledge with the new content, go step-by-step to emphasise context and relevance material. 2) 'Offer explanations' through emphasising context, highlighting the importance of the subject matter and ideas, identifying steps for presenting a particular subject matter, explaining how the steps fit together, encouraging learners to construct explanations, and moving slowly and systematically through the subject matter. 3) 'Provide structure' by outlining early in a recitation session, highlighting and summarising main points, giving homework

at the end of a session, explaining where the current subject matter fits into the whole content and explicitly identifying necessary steps procedurally.

Lastly, strategy number 4) involves 'Making slow and regular check for comprehension' using pausing and questioning methods to obtain their level of understanding of the subject matter, give them enough time to answer the posed questions, begin with simpler questions to more complex ones, let learners fill in missing information, giving them direct a solution and let them make connections between ideas around a particular subject matter. Other strategies include encouraging learners to learn something new about what is being taught (Csteachingtips, n.p.), thinking like a novice learner who can assimilate everything (Sharkey, 2020), allowing learners to show their area of expertise as teachers do not know everything (Colmenare, 2021) and building positive responsiveness with learners timeously.

The objectives of this paper were to identify strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot in teaching English attributive adjectival phrases to Grade 10 learners at Khwevha High School in Limpopo Province, South Africa, and to establish an extent to which this spot affects the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases. This paper attempted to answer research questions: 1) What are the strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot development in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases? and 2) To what extent does the 'expert blind sport' affect the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases?

## **METHOD**

The current paper used both quantitative and qualitative research methods because the researcher wanted to corroborate the findings (Reid & Sanders, 2023). Also, where the findings from each method were not enough, the researcher collated and combined the findings from another method to enhance the credibility, reliability and validity of this paper. Hermeneutic Interpretive Phenomenological (HIP) and Thematic analysis approaches were followed.

## **Research design**

Quantitatively, a descriptive research design was used because it provides numerical descriptions identifying how the thing being studied appears including its size, location, and frequency. It seeks to describe the status of an identified variable and to provide systematic information about a phenomenon regarding the use of attributive adjectival phrases. (Ibrahim, Soepriadi, Limbong, Sujarwo & Sasabone, 2023). Also, the researcher studies and describes the distribution of one or more variables, regardless of any causal or other hypotheses (Haque, Jaashan & Hasan, 2023). Qualitatively, the exploratory research design was used by the researcher as it could identify unexplored patterns, analyse large data sets, and hide relationships without relying on the previous assumptions. The inductive approach to data analysis was utilised as it allowed flexible methods for checking data without preconceptions.

## **Sampling and sampling criteria**

Quantitatively, 35 respondents were selected using probability sampling (Tutz, 2023) to give all members of the sample an equal chance of participating in the investigation. A simple random sampling technique was used to select them (Peng, Roth, & Perry, 2023) over others because they fitted the researcher's profile. Qualitatively, two teachers were purposefully selected from Grade 11 English First Additional (FAL) language teachers in Dzindi Circuit based on the researcher's preference, accessibility and 5 years of teaching the subject.

## **Data collection**

Quantitatively, data were collected from the respondents using an open-ended questionnaire to obtain the reliability of data that could mitigate and avoid the development of expert blind spot development in teaching English attributive adjectival phrases. Qualitatively, data were collected from semi-structured interviews. A notebook and tape recorder were used in recording transcripts and codes from the respondents to develop patterns and themes.

## **Data analysis**

A Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22.0 was used to analyse data collected from the respondents because it is accessible, fast, user-friendly, logical and easy to follow (Hennebry-Leung & Xiao, 2023) as well as its increased productivity, effectiveness and reliable results (Khojasteh, Karimian, Farahmandi, Nasiri & Salehi, 2023). Teachers' semi-structured interview transcripts were organized, examined, and arranged for interpretation using a thematic analysis technique. Because it is a versatile and comprehensive instrument to facilitate various tactics, the Atlas ti Version 22 program was utilized (Gulsia & Yadav, 2023). For identifying new codes and developing concepts to go with each data segment, the researcher employed an open coding system.

Codes were opened line-by-line and inserted next to the data using free-form, unplanned methods. Labels were focused on actions and kept brief, clear, and exact. Code definitions were made with the comment function. Prefixes, symbols, and colors were used to construct an organized coding system that allowed for the grouping of related codes, the identification of themes, the facilitation of the coding procedure, and the analysis of the gathered data. The level of abstraction subsequently increased until networks were created to graphically illustrate the connections between the various coding. To promote transparency and make it easier to monitor and manage the analytical processes utilized in the narrative writing, every step used in a memo was documented.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Quantitative data**

After employing a HIP methodology to determine the strength, weaknesses opportunities and threats of the strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot development in teaching English attributive adjectival phrases, it was revealed that providing 'points of entry', 'offering explanations', 'providing structure' and 'making a slow and regular check for comprehension' is indispensable (GeorgiaTech Center for Teaching & Learning, n.d.). Quantitatively, valid and

credible results (Abuhamda, Bsharat & Ismail, 2021) were obtained based on numbers and percentages. The SPSS version 22.0 ensured increased productivity, effectiveness, and reliable results (Khojasteh et al, 2023) emerging from the easy and speedy interpretation of the findings. The post-positivist arguments for dealing with cause-and-effect reasoning, knowledge, variable reduction and theory tests of data using questionnaires were obtained. After numerically counting predetermined data quantification (Abuhamda et al, 2021), the authenticity of the results, and the reality of integrity establishment assisted teachers in offering informed knowledge to learners. The reliability and trustworthiness of the identified strategies were necessitated by the respondents' seriousness in answering the questionnaire.

Strategies for mitigating and avoiding the effects of export blind spot development “steered the way of creating a socially constructed environment” (Forbes, 2021:59). The researcher collected data grounded on (1) questionnaire provision, (2) choices made by respondents from pre-defined responses and (3) response from questionnaire providing backbone structure for answering the research questions (Pawar, 2021). Answers obtained from multiple-choice questions that were typed sequentially and printed to extract data using an open-ended question helped with getting interpretable responses. The frequency of occurrence assisted the researcher with data authorisation and internal reliability (Leithwood, Harris & Hopkins, 2020) of findings.

As learners were requested to indicate their understanding of the differences between the two items by either selecting the best sentence constructions concerning the correct use of English adjectival phrases in context, the next table was utilised:

**Table 1.** Use of English attributive adjectival phrase

Questions	Respondents' responses	
	Correct responses	Incorrect responses
1) My late father was buried last night/My father was buried because he was late.	75.2%	24.8%
2) Small white car /*Car white small.	96%	4.3%
3) I have two sisters/*I have sisters two.	91.9%	8.1%
4) *The child was busy sleeping/The child was asleep.	82%	18%
5) The tall, black and serious criminal/The serious, tall and black criminal.	77%	23%

In question 1, 'My late father was buried last night /'My father was buried because he was late', the majority (75.2%) of respondents became competent in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases after the identified strategies were utilised. The finding is incongruent with Lambert (2018) who suggests that teachers inadvertently omit steps and leave out requisite information needed to effectively develop mastery. They knew that the two provided choices 'Father was buried because he was late' and 'Father was buried last night' are dissimilar although they both possess the adjective 'late'. The respondents chose the sentence 'Father was buried last night' which is grammatically correct. Grammatically, this sentence suggests that the speaker's father was no more, hence the reason for burial 'last night.' Also, an attributive adjective 'late' was positioned correctly to the front of the noun 'father' to indicate that the burial rite was conducted. Additionally, one might suggest that the speaker had another father who outlived the one who was buried. The finding is in line with Dyer et al. (2021) who suggest that some adjectives pose challenges to the learners.

Although the respondents' achievements indicate the indispensability of the strategies for mitigating and avoiding the development of an expert blind spot in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases, it is concerning that many (24.8%) respondents revealed poor competence in the use of the attributive adjectival phrase as they opted for the less meaningful sentence 'My father was buried because he was late'. In this case, this sentence suggests something

impossible and unreasonable because how on an earth can a person be buried only due to failure to reach a certain *rendezvous* neither in time nor on time. This sentence suggests the impairment of rational thinking leading to unpardonable grammatical errors. The finding supports Hallman's (2020) suggestion that prototypically attributive adjectives are ignored in sentences although they align with nouns syntactically, semantically and pragmatically.

In question 2 '\*Car white small'/'Small white car', most (96%) respondents were competent in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases because they were able to recognise adjectival word order, namely 'small white car' in the second sentence. The finding is congruent with NDA's (2022) suggestion that the order of listing is done from most important to least one. Nevertheless, it is incongruent with Ibrahim (2021) who suggests that learners faced challenges in arranging words accordingly. Conversely, some (4%) of them were incompetent in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases because they could not realise that the sentence '\*Car white small' violates English grammar rules. These rules compel us to follow the correct order of attributive adjectives in sentences.

The respondents might have been confused by the language transfer rule as suggested by Lado in 1957. This rule states that learners transfer the knowledge of their L1 to L2 when learning the English language rules due to the difference existing between the two languages. For example, Tshivenda, one of South Africa's 13 official languages, accepts the attributive adjectival phrase *Goloi tshena thukhu* (\*Car white small') or *Goloi thukhu tshena* ('Car small white') instead of 'Small white car' which is an unacceptable order in the English language. Further, in Tshivenda, phrases or sentences do not start with adjectives or nouns whereas in English adjectives they do.

Question 3 'I have two sisters/\*I have sister two' in Table 1 demonstrates that most (91.9%) respondents were knowledgeable in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases because they selected the grammatical sentence 'I have two sisters'. They knew that this sentence is meaningless, and it is not in line with the English grammar rules. The finding is in line with (Scontras, 2023) who suggests

that most common errors are committed in the use of English attributive adjectives. Nevertheless, the minority (8.1%) were incompetent in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases because they selected the meaningless and ungrammatical sentence ‘\*I have sister two’. The respondents might have been confused by the rule regarding the use of English attributive adjectives.

The rule states that attributive adjectives can be placed before the noun it modifies. In this case, the adjective ‘two’ was supposed to have been placed before the noun ‘sisters’ but the participant put it at the end of the ungrammatical sentence. The finding supports Lee and Michaleis (2023) who suggest that attributive adjectives precede nouns permanently. The respondents might have been influenced by the language transfer rule. This rule states that L2 learners tend to transfer knowledge from L1 to L2. In this situation, the Tshivenda language rejects the grammatically correct sentence ‘I have two sisters’ and accepts ‘*Ndi na khaladzi mbili*’ (‘\*I have sister two’) which is unacceptable in English attributive adjective word order.

Question 4 ‘\*The child was busy sleeping/The child was asleep’ shows that the majority (82% of the respondents were knowledgeable in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases because they could distinguish between the two sentences, namely, ‘\*The child was busy sleeping’ and ‘The child was asleep’. They had no idea around the use of an adjective ‘busy’ which can be used as an adverb or adjective. They knew that inserting the suffix ‘-ing’ to the adjective ‘busy’, in this context, did not mean that the sentence is in progressive form. The result is congruent with Kapoor’s (2023) suggestion that the adjective ‘busy’ fronts a noun and governs its attributive quality or state. Nevertheless, 18% of the respondents revealed poor competence in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases since they selected the answer ‘\*The child was busy sleeping’ without knowing that the ‘-ing’ ending suggests a continuous action of falling asleep. However, it is generally believed that people fall asleep once. Hence, the ungrammaticality of the sentence in this regard.

Question 5 indicates that the majority (77%) of the respondents were experienced in the use of the English attributive adjectival phrases because they selected the correct sentence 'The serious, tall and black criminal'. They were aware of the order of English attributive adjectival phrases starting from the one that has a greater information gain than the one that has not. The finding is in line with Dyer et al. (2021) who suggest that attributive adjectives contributing greater information gain appear earlier than adjectives with less information gain. Nevertheless, it is concerning that 23% of the respondents were challenged in the use of English attributive adjectives because they were unable to select a well-organised sentence. Instead, they chose 'The tall, black and serious criminal' which does not comply with the rule of information gain. These respondents might have been confused by the language transfer rule. The finding supports Lado's (1957) suggestion that learners transfer their ideas from L1 to L2 when learning their target language. Further, it is in line with Ahmed Al-Hassaani's et al. (2017) who suggest that L2 learners are challenged using English attributive adjectival phrases.

Having observed the respondents' responses to the given questionnaire, it has become evident that strategies for mitigating and avoiding the effects of expert blind spot development are indispensable in teaching and learning. All the given multiple-choice questions revealed learners' remarkable competence although there were some areas where the learners did not perform as anticipated. Nevertheless, under normal circumstances, such performance is an eye-opener to teachers of English as a subject that the development of expert blind spot cannot be alleviated completely but dealt with minimally. Hence, the need to identify suitable strategies for mitigating and avoiding the development of expert blind spot in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases.

### **Qualitative data**

Qualitatively, data collected using semi-structured interviews from two selected Grade 11 teachers at Khwevha Secondary School were analysed to establish suitable strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases. Interview results guarantee the

feasibility of strategies for mitigating the development of the spot. Four transcripts from semi-structured interviews explored the effectiveness of the identified strategies for encountering error development. They assisted in determining teachers' reasons for using those strategies to enhance English proficiency in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases. Transcription, analysis and evaluation of teachers' perceptions of using the identified strategies were applied.

Themes emerging from the semi-structured interviews assisted in the arrangement of ideas from data analysis. The guidelines from the University of Venda's ethical standards for research writing including the absence of remuneration, the purpose of the research, the learners' safety and non-disclosure of their identity were followed. To ensure compliance with guidelines, respondents were denoted as Teacher A and Teacher B. The following themes were examined to obtain teachers' perceptions on the strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot development in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases.

### **Expert blind spot usually occurs in teaching and learning**

Although some teachers are adequately trained in the rudiments of a particular course module or subject, chances of an expert blind spot are inevitable in teaching and learning. This is one area that brings challenges to teachers if they do not always guard against the development of expert blind spot. In this regard, learners suffer the consequences of teachers' ignorance regardless of the qualifications they might have. In this situation, Teacher A made the following comment:

“When I teach my learners, I attempt to be sure that new learners are taken on board in the learning of English attributive adjectival phrases. Nonetheless, it is not always easy to detect the development of an expert blind spot in the subject that I teach”

From teacher A's comment, it is evident that the inevitability of an expert blind spot is possible and always calls for teachers to try to be vigilant for its development.

### **Teaching English attributive adjectival phrases is difficult for English FAL teachers**

The teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases is difficult for English FAL learners because of numerous areas that require specific strategies for teaching them. The blame is always apportioned to improper teaching of English grammar as an area where common errors occur all the time. Most of these errors are committed in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases due to teachers' ignorance of the expert blind spot development. Based on this discussion, Teacher B elucidated that

“English attributive adjectival phrases pose challenges to me. I did not have an idea concerning strategies for teaching them before this insightful awareness. Henceforth, I will endeavour to use the identified strategies to make a rightful mitigation”

Looking at Teacher B's comments, the teaching of English attributive adjectives to Grade 11 English FAL learners calls for suitable strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot development in teaching and learning.

### **Learners commit errors in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases**

Errors developing when learners are confronted with a task requiring elucidation of their knowledge regarding the use of English attributive adjectival phrases are unavoidable without the use of proper strategies for dealing with them. These errors include using the wrong adjective, overusing adjectives, placing adjectives in the wrong order, using multiple adjectives unnecessarily, stringing numerous adjectives, using words that are not real attributive adjectives, and abusing words requiring clear attention including 'late' and 'busy'. In this theme, both teacher A and Teacher B stated their perceptions in the following way:

“Common errors in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases annoy us. Learners are unable to use them accordingly. We always prepare our subject matter in advance so that we can teach our learners easily. Nonetheless, after a particular task is given to them, we still find some errors committed”

This comment makes us aware of the errors committed by Grade 11 English FAL learners and that if appropriate strategies for alleviating them are not put in place, the expert blind spot may develop timeously.

### **Innovative strategic interventions mitigate and avoid expert blind spot development**

Expert blind spot development is often a challenge in teaching and learning English attributive adjectival phrases. Various strategies for addressing the issues of the expert blind spot are available. However, not all the strategies are worthwhile for mitigating and avoiding the development of expert blind spot. Hence, the need to use innovative strategic interventions for addressing challenges caused by the presence of expert blind spot in teaching and learning. Both Teacher A and Teacher B confirmed that

“When teaching English attributive adjectival phrases, learners’ response is not always positive. We read more English language books to obtain strategies for counteracting the development of expert blind spot”

It is, therefore, obvious that without innovative strategic interventions for dealing with the development of an expert blind spot, it can be difficult for learners to understand the use of English attributive adjectival phrases.

The results from teachers’ semi-structured interviews show that strategies for mitigating and avoiding the development of expert blind spot are indispensable in the use of English attributive adjectival phrases. During the semi-structured interviews, the researcher found that expert blind spot disorganised learners’ mastery of the use of English attributive adjectival phrases. The results support Colmenare (2021) who suggests that building responsiveness with learners assists in mitigating expert blind spot development. The findings were in line with Cusimano and Lombrozo’s (2023) suggestion that the experts may unconsciously forget to present certain necessary steps and progressions.

On the other hand, for the few incompetent individuals, the finding is congruent with Ajaj (2022) who suggests that the use of English attributive adjectival phrases poses challenges in teaching and learning. Also, it supports

Lado's (1957) suggestion that language transfer occurs during the learning of an L2 language because they tend to transfer knowledge from their mother tongue to the target language. Therefore, it supports Maunganidze (2020) who suggests that the development of expert blind spot is morose for both scholarship and practice. Nevertheless, the finding is congruent with (Sharkey, 2020) who argues that allowing learners to show their area of expertise is a rewarding strategy in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases. Also, it is in line with Colmenare's (2021) claim that strategies for teaching English attributive adjectival phrases build positive responsiveness and mitigates expert blind spot development.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

This paper attempted to investigate strategies for mitigating and avoiding expert blind spot development in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases to Grade 11 English FAL learners at Khwevha High School in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The paper presented both questionnaire and semi-structured interview results concerning strategies for mitigating and avoiding the development of expert blind spot in the teaching of English attributive adjectival phrases. This paper serves as an eye-opener to alleviate errors that are committed by learners in this regard. Evidence-based results from this paper accentuate and sanction other authors' suggestions regarding the importance of strategies for mitigating and avoiding the development of this 'spot' in teaching and learning. The findings reveal that although teachers can be affected by the development of an expert blind spot when teaching attributive adjectival phrases to their Grade 11 English FAL learners, there is always room for improvement if they use the identified strategies such as 'points of entry', offering 'explanations', presenting 'structures' and checking 'comprehension' strategies as evidenced by both quantitative and qualitative research findings.

Results from the questionnaire endorsed the use of identified strategies to avoid the development of an expert blind spot in teaching and learning. Also, qualitative findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with Teachers A and B brought similar deliberations in this regard as they felt that the identified

strategies are indispensable in teaching English attributive adjectival phrases as learners are tactfully engaged in the classroom environment. The current paper brought the implications that the findings of this study can serve as informative paraphernalia or insights by which both teachers and their learners derive mutual benefit. Lastly, Data obtained from this paper can bring awareness not only to English language teachers but also to teachers of other subjects as well, since the expert blind spot knows no border and is likely to develop in teaching and learning. Moreover, future researchers can get a considerable niche for conducting further research on the current topic.

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