

## **Conflict Resolution Strategy Training through Third Party Intervention: Investigating its Impact on Enhancing Faculty of Education English Majors' Social Perspective Taking Skills**

By

**Hanaa Muhammad Abdel-Aleem**

Assistant lecturer at the curriculum and Instruction Department  
Faculty of Education- Fayoum University

**Prof. Mohammed Farouk Abd Elsami**

Professor of Curriculum & EFL Instruction  
Vice President of Education and Student  
Affairs- Fayoum University

**Dr. Abeer El-Sayed Abo Zaid**

Lecturer of Curriculum & EFL Instruction  
Faculty of Education - Fayoum  
University

### **Abstract**

The current study was conducted to investigate the effect of a training program based on third party intervention strategies for resolving conflicts on developing English majors' social perspective taking skills. The participants of the study included (47) of third year English section students at Faculty of Education, Fayoum University who were trained in third party intervention strategies for resolving conflict. The participants' social perspective taking skills were pre- and post-tested using a perspective taking scale that was designed and administered by the researcher. Findings showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the participants in the pre and post administrations of the social perspective taking scale in favor of the post administration, which proves the effectiveness of the training program in this regard. In the light of the results, the study presented some recommendations. The most important of which are designing training sessions, taking into consideration, the students being trained in terms of their age, life experiences, the nature of conflict and the duration of the training. In addition, a number of topics were suggested for further research.

**Keywords:** conflict resolution, third party intervention, social perspective taking

## المستخلص

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى معرفة أثر برنامج تدريبي قائم على استراتيجيات وساطة طرف ثالث لحسم الصراع في تنمية مهارات تبني وجهات النظر لدى طلاب شعبة اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية. وقد ضمت عينة الدراسة (47) من طلاب الفرقة الثالثة قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية جامعة الفيوم، الذين تم تدريبهم على إستراتيجيات وساطة طرف ثالث لحسم الصراع. كما تم اختبار مهارات تبني وجهات النظر لدى الطلاب المشاركين قبل وبعد تقديم البرنامج التدريبي باستخدام مقياس تبني وجهات النظر الذي أعدته الباحثة. وأظهرت النتائج وجود فرق ذو دلالة إحصائية بين متوسطي درجات الطلاب عينة الدراسة في التطبيقين القبلي والبعدي لمقياس تبني وجهات النظر لصالح التطبيق البعدي، مما يثبت فعالية البرنامج التدريبي في هذا الصدد. وفي ضوء النتائج قدمت الدراسة بعض التوصيات. وأهمها تقديم دورات تدريبية مع الأخذ في الاعتبار الطلاب الذين يتم تدريبهم من حيث أعمارهم وخبراتهم الحياتية وطبيعة الصراع ومدة التدريب. وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم اقتراح عدد من الموضوعات لمزيد من البحث.

الكلمات المفتاحية: حسم الصراع، وساطة طرف ثالث، تبني وجهات النظر

## Introduction

Humans are social creatures, and to succeed in social life, they must establish good relationships with each other. To build strong relationships, people must first understand one another, and perspective-taking skills are essential to this process. The psychological concept of perspective-taking encompasses a range of abilities that students will utilize to explore their worlds, comprehend and relate to their families and peers, and enhance their academic performances.

Perspective-taking refers to a collection of abilities centered on appreciating and comprehending the perspectives of others. In other words, the ability to see things from another person's perspective is known as perspective taking. In addition, understanding other people's thoughts, perceptions, and feelings is made possible by the fundamental ability of perspective taking. The skills necessary for a person to distinguish his or her point of view from that of another and to correctly judge others' points of view based on the information at hand are a part of perspective taking (Moll & Meltzoff, 2011).

Social perspective taking is an important ability since it relates to multiple developmental domains and serves as a foundation for the growth of a number of competencies in areas including empathy, pro-social conduct, and interpersonal problem solving (Carey & Cassels, 2013).

Perspective-taking may develop "naturally" to some people as a result of social experience; as kids become older, they get more adept at anticipating what will annoy their parents and friends as well as what would make them happy (Cuneen, 2019). However, age, gender, formal education, and socioeconomic position were significantly correlated with students' capacity for perspective taking according to previous studies (Emen & Aslan, 2019). In addition, as individuals become older, society expects more and more use of their perspective-taking abilities. They are also expected to become better at comprehending and appreciating various points of view, which enables them to be more thoughtful of other people in social circumstances (Cuneen, 2019).

In the modern world, perspective-taking abilities are equally crucial for academic success, and some of these abilities can be developed through specific classroom exercises. Perspective-taking skills prove to be fundamental to successful classroom performance as classrooms increasingly place an emphasis on skills relevant to oral language and listening, communication and discussion, as well as argumentation and debate. Success in the classroom requires social competence as well as a corresponding motivation to use that competence for good (Kim & Selman, 2018).

The significance attributed to perspective taking regarding the pro-social skills is a main cause that has made researchers investigate its relationship to aggression, conflict, and negotiation. Therefore, perspective-taking has been investigated by different disciplines according to their own epistemological and ontological frameworks that have resulted in fragmented concepts and findings which, arguably, do not do its holistic nature justice (Mankopf, 2002).

Perspective taking is an area of interest to a number of researchers and eminent writers and has been regarded as a vital developmental skill for many decades. It has two notions that have been distinguished in the literature. One of them is visual-spatial perspective taking which engages

the ability to recognize that the other person's physical position is in fact a crucial determinant in how to observe visual phenomena. The other notion is the conceptual perspective taking which means the ability of people to figure out knowledge established on information which another person has exposed to (Inzunza et al., 2019).

There are debates about what perspective-taking is, including whether it is a cognitive module, automatic orientation, heuristic strategy, or interactional process. In addition, argumentations exist regarding how it should be assessed or measured, including the depth of conceptual knowledge, developmental trajectory, and empathy, and what prevents it from succeeding, including language barriers, conflicting norms, implicit biases, and cognitive dissonance (Heasman & Gillespie, 2020).

Mankopf (2002) stated that as students experience disputes they become more knowledgeable regarding perspectives, which forcibly make them confronted with existing viewpoints other than their own. Then, their enhanced awareness of the multiple viewpoints allows for improved skills of interpersonal negotiation as they progress as youth through the adolescence challenges. Finally, the growth in perspective taking is mainly related to the socialization experience and thus there may be a possibility for its improvement through systematic intervention.

The conflict between peers can serve as an incentive for growth through awakening students to the existence of multiple viewpoints or perspectives. However, it is not automatic to reach a positive gain from such situation or experience. Which means that without taking advantage of learned strategies (e.g. mediation techniques) students may utilize avoidance or win-lose (overpowering one party) mechanisms by themselves (Mankopf, 2002).

Although it is a common and natural element of people's daily social interactions, perspective-taking is a challenging phenomenon to define, conceptualize, and improve (Heasman & Gillespie, 2020). In addition, Supple (2015) has stated that a very little research regarding whether involvement and participation in specific college activities can contribute to developing social perspective taking despite the fact that as students go to college, there will be more complexity in their social environments.

Thus, this complexity makes it reasonable to expect that this change requires stimulating and encouraging students' consideration of the others' perspectives, which are different from their own. Consequently, this study is intended to shed light on how involvement in a conflict resolution program could impact college EFL students' social perspective taking.

### **Statement of the Problem**

An essential component of most higher-order learning outcomes and a key primary outcome of higher education is the capacity to comprehend and incorporate the perspectives of others into one's own. However, there is still a need for more focus and intentionality in actively nurturing this crucial outcome as no specific co-curricular interventions were demonstrated to be significantly connected to social perspective taking (Johnson et al., 2017). Therefore, the current study attempted to address the gap by investigating the effect of conflict resolution strategy training through third party intervention on enhancing Faculty of Education English Majors' social perspective taking. Based on this, the following study question was drawn:

- What is the effect of conflict resolution strategy training through third party intervention on enhancing Faculty of Education English Majors' Social Perspective Taking Skills?

### **Study Purpose**

The aim of the study was to find out the effect of conflict resolution strategy training through third party intervention on enhancing Faculty of Education English Majors' social perspective taking skills.

### **Study Significance**

This study may provide further identification for what aspects of the college environment can contribute to students' social perspective taking, a construct that has been shown by research to serve as a prerequisite for moral reasoning. Once college students know more about the experiences and types of activities that contribute to developing their social perspective taking, they will ideally become able to create a more encouraging atmosphere that aids in the maturation of their students' moral awareness and judgment. In addition, the importance of the current study may lie in providing a scale with an acceptable level of validity and reliability that can be used to measure the students' perspective taking as well as using

this measure to evaluate the effectiveness of university programs in enhancing students' social perspective taking. Moreover, it provides instructors with a program that might help them use conflict resolution strategies circles to develop their students' social perspective taking skills and to enhance their ability to resolve conflicts.

## **Definition of Terms**

### **Conflict resolution**

- Conflict resolution is defined as a situation where the clashing parties attempt to reach agreement that considers and solves their central contradictions, acknowledge the continued existence of each other as parties, and desist all rough activity against each other (Wallenstein, 2002).
- Wani (2011) refers to conflict resolution as a range of processes that aim at alleviating or eliminating sources of conflict. Conflict resolution is an umbrella term for a whole range of methods and approaches for dealing with conflict: from negotiation to diplomacy, from mediation to arbitration, from facilitation to adjudication, from conciliation to conflict prevention, from conflict management to conflict transformation, from restorative justice to peacekeeping.
- Gitimu (2014) as well defined conflict resolution simply as any process that is established to resolve disputes without violence.
- In the current study, conflict resolution can be defined as 'putting an end to the struggle between the opposing forces in a story through strategies that depend on intervention of a third party such as meditation, arbitration, and litigation.

### **Third party intervention**

- it can be considered as any activity or action taken by one actor or more who is/are not a direct party to the dispute, that is designed to remove or at least reduce one or more of the bargaining relationship problems and, therefore, to facilitate putting an end to the crisis itself (Corbetta, 2014).

- It can also be defined as an involvement of a person or team into two parties' on-going dispute to resolve it. Generally, the intervention of a third party helps the disputing parties to analyze the consequence of their actions and to manage their conflict in a mutually beneficial way (Kaufman & Duncan, 2013).
- For the purpose of this study, third party intervention is referred to as seeking the help of a third party in order to resolve a conflict through varying degrees of power exercised by the intervener over the conflict process and outcome.

### **Perspective taking**

- It is a term that refers to as the individual's ability to understand motivations and internal states of others (Berkout, 2014). It is also defined as the cognitive ability to view a situation from the other person's point of view (Kidder, 2017). In other words, perspective taking is described as one's ability to place themselves in another's shoes and understand their point of view (Mankopf, 2002).
- For the purpose of the current study, social perspective taking can be defined as the individual's capacity to discern the thoughts and feelings of others.

## **Review of Literature**

### **1. Perspective taking**

Perspective-taking is so essential to people's perception of reality, which it becomes apparent when one tries to conceive a social environment without it. Humans are unable to share stories, laugh at jokes, compete in team sports, or form dynamic groups without the ability to take into account that each member of the group has specific and possibly unique roles and responsibilities and that each member of the group is, at least to some extent, aware of these roles (Heasman & Gillespie, 2020).

Understanding someone else's point of view entails considering their thoughts, goals and beliefs on the spur of the moment. While coordinating one's own activities with those of others, it is crucial to be able to recognize how different perspectives are comparable. Similar coordination issues occur during a variety of social activities, such as cooperative and



competitive economic games. Hence, cognitive and social psychologists, anthropologists, computer scientists, linguists, and economics have all intensively researched perspective taking. It takes coordination of thinking and action on many different levels to participate in a discussion (Pashler, 2013). Perspective taking is defined as understanding another person's thoughts, motives, and feelings (Sang & Nelson, 2017).

### **1.1. Importance of Perspective Taking**

Perspective taking has a vital function in a largely social environment of humans. That's why scholars from different disciplines, such as applied behavioral analysis, sociobiology, and applied clinical psychology, have studied it. In addition, it has been hypothesized that affective perspective taking is what shapes reciprocity and pro-social behavior. Moreover, comprehending perspective taking may result in generally conceptualizing human social interactions more accurately (Berkout, 2014).

It has been shown by research that perspective taking contributes in reducing stereotyping and bias; fostering the social bonds formation, and hence, increasing cooperation. In addition, it represents an essential part of social competence that results in a better management of relationship and improved collaboration (Kidder, 2017).

The capability of people to take on the others' perspectives and to de-center provides a bridge between moral and cognitive development. In other words, there is a relation between the high levels of moral development and the skill of perspective-taking skill, which has been supported in the developmental literature. In addition, there are often correlations between levels of perspective taking and other pro-social development measures. It is also found to be critically lacked in people who are characterized by behavioral and social deficits (Mankopf, 2002).

Social perspective-taking is hence the main mechanism by which moral reasoning and cognitive growth are connected. As a result, it is crucial for educators to comprehend how the college environment affects students' ability to adopt a social perspective. And given that theorists like Mead (1934) and Piaget (1932/1965) thought that the theoretical view on perspective-taking describes it as an essential social ability required for the development of regular social bonds, it makes sense to look at



organizations based on social interaction and social attachment in order to better understand social perspective taking (Supple, 2015).

Because comprehending one's own ideas and feelings necessitates being able to see one's own position from the perspective of an outsider, perspective-taking highlights broader metacognitive skills. Hence, social contact without perspective-taking would reduce people to a stimulus-response relationship where consensus could never be reached intentionally through thought or emotion but only coincidentally through behavioral alignment. Perspective-taking is a natural and frequent part of daily living; however, research on this topic has shown that it is a highly challenging phenomenon to define, describe, and measure (Heasman & Gillespie, 2020).

From a fundamental standpoint, perspective-taking broadens the realm of possibility because so much of what will, might, or ought to occur depends on other people. The world that people regularly travel through, make predictions about, and, in some ways, influence is a social one as well as a physical one. In addition to increasing the likelihood that one's plans will be successful, having a robust mental model of what important others—i.e., those who are consequential for oneself—think also opens up the possibility of creating new ideas. The social realm offers opportunities for persuasion, disagreement, teaching, joking, misleading, and other behaviors. Second, it may be argued that perspective-taking is important to humankind's unique ability to vividly picture potential outcomes (Sklad et al., 2021)

Perspective taking has been theorized, by scholars, to underlie an engagement of an individual in pro-social behaviors. In other words, Children who had low cognitive perspective taking have been proved to be less likely to show spontaneous pro-social. Perspective taking may also operate to improve people's interpersonal relationships (Knafo et al., 2011).

## **1.2.Perspective taking dimensions**

Perspective taking includes a cognitive aspect i.e. mentalizing; and an affective aspect which refers to an ability to share the internal experience of others. In other words, affective perspective taking is responsible for

sharing others' distress, hence, mediating responding, and showing concern for others (Berkout, 2014).

Perspective taking has been revealed to be a crucial developmental capacity that involves perceptual and conceptual dimensions (Mankopf, 2002). In addition, cognitive, emotional, and perceptual aspects are described as three sub-dimensions that make up perspective taking. The capacity for making appropriate judgments about what another person perceives from his or her point of view is known as perceptual perspective. According to Hinnant and O'Brien (2007), cognitive perspective taking is the ability to accurately infer another person's thoughts in a certain situation.

The capacity to predict how someone will feel when they are in a particular emotional scenario is referred to as emotional perspective taking. In order for a person to fully understand the views, ideas, and feelings of others, social contacts are crucial. Students learn during these interactions that others can perceive, think, and feel in ways that are different from their own (Aslan, 2017).

### **1.3.Perspective taking & conflict resolution**

It has been argued that perspective taking can improve the ability of a negotiator to reach a creative solution which pursues the needs of both parties (Kidder, 2017). It can also improve relational negotiation (Ingerson et al., 2015). In other words, students feel more positive about their negotiating partners when they experimentally learn about their relationships (Gehlbach et al., 2015). In addition it assists in avoiding impasses in negotiations (Trötschel et al., 2011). However, whether training in conflict resolution impacts the development of social perspective taking is an area of research that was not investigated and needs to be considered.

Conflict resolution is defined as a complex communication skill which requires individuals to be aware of others, how the self is distinct from others, and one's thoughts and feelings, in addition to a skill in listening and a capability to respond to the others' thoughts and feelings. Authors

in the conflict resolution field frequently stress that solutions reached through this process have to be mutually acceptable to the parties involved, which in turn requires students to be engaged in reciprocal perspective taking (Mankopf, 2002). However, it seems that there is no direct intervention implemented to enhance social perspective taking through conflict resolution training.

Mediation represents a structured strategy of conflict resolution which seeks to provide students with a psychologically safe context in which they confront their differing perspectives. In this process, mediators lead disputing students through a format that promotes problem solving and active listening. The solutions yielded ensure common advantage for each of the involved parties. In addition, resolving the conflict by means of aggression, deference to authority or status is eliminated. Consequently, these characteristics attributed to the mediation process may provide students with the necessary conditions that lead to their social growth (Mankopf, 2002).

People need to comprehend the perspective of the connected person in order to keep up conversation and avoid disagreements. Because language is the foundation of mind, using language is essential for such knowledge. The development of linguistic structure prompts students to go into greater detail regarding cognition. Also, this enables them to analyze and judge their own and other people's thoughts (Emen& Aslan, 2019). Consequently, conducting training in an EFL context may help students to better discern the thoughts and feelings of others.

## **2. Conflict Resolution**

Conflicts need to be skillfully resolved, otherwise they will, in many cases, result in violence (Gitimu, 2014); hence, conflict resolution is considered as an essential aspect of people's daily life, and the way whereby they approach conflict situations is considered as a person's characteristic mode of managing. Conflict resolution is defined as a process by which the conflicting parties engaged in a dispute, disagreement or even a debate reach an agreement or a solution conflict (Waithaka et al., 2015).

Resolving conflicts means comprehending the conflict root causes, reasons, and dynamics as well as applying this comprehension in processing peace making or peace building (Iqbal & Idris, 2018). Conflict

resolution is referred to as “any process that is established to resolve disputes without violence” because violence can be a direct result of the conflict when it cannot be solved effectively in the appropriate time (Ayas et al., 2010; McAuslan, 2015; Pujiati & Sonhaji, 2018; Midhio & Madjid, 2015).

Resolution of conflict means finding the needs of the involved parties and taking an action with no violence and preventing one party to dominate the other. Conflict resolution is also described as a dynamic and interactive process, which requires comprehending and making use of science. Conflict resolution is a recent concern that includes negotiable interests and requires the same analytical processes (Midhio & Madjid, 2015). It is also defined as a situation in which the conflicting parties reach an agreement that enables them to accept continued existence of each other, cease all the violent actions against each other and solve the central incompatibilities (Wani, 2011).

Choosing different ways of resolving conflicts depends on comprehending what conflict is and understanding how it escalates. In addition, learning new skills helps people to improve their ability to convert disputes into possibilities to growth and resolution (McAuslan, 2015). There are some conflict resolution strategies that are basically stressed in relation, interpersonal conflicts. The first of these strategies is with cooperation, behaving aggressively or avoiding the other party (Ayas et al., 2010).

The main goal of using conflict resolution strategies is to reach a solution to the conflict which enables the parties involved in the conflict to avoid violence and get what they want. That is, Understanding strategies of conflict resolution helps with using proper conflict management, which is needed for people, organizations, or institutions (Midhio & Madjid, 2015).

### **2.1. Third party intervention**

Conflict resolution is a term that represents an umbrella for a whole range of approaches and methods for dealing with conflicts: from mediation to arbitration; from negotiation to diplomacy, from facilitation to adjudication, from managing conflict to preventing conflict, from conciliation to conflict prevent and from restorative justice to peace (Wani, 2011).

Rioux (2003) stated that once conflict break out, they can be handled or managed in several ways such as bilateral negotiation, third party intervention or even through violence. In other words, conflict resolution has three approaches.. These approaches include numerous methods, strategies, models, and techniques. These approaches are joint decision-making, third party intervention, and unilateral decision-making.

It has been stated by Fisher (2001) that a typical response to persistent or destructive social conflicts is the intervention of third party. This response has a long history, comes in different forms and has a number of functions. At all social interaction levels and in all societies, disputants have access to some external actors when they become unable to manage disputes or even their differences.

The techniques that depend on a third party intervention for resolving a conflict or settling a dispute are known as “alternative dispute resolution.” These techniques include mediation, conciliation, arbitration and ombudsperson (Naismith et al., 2016).

Third parties function in many different sectors and at many levels between and within societies. Some of the third parties’ roles require interveners to function at the highest decision making levels. Other ones rely on the impact given in society at the middle range. Moreover, the rest of roles typically operate at the level of community or grassroots (Keethaponcalan, 2017).

Deciding on which type of intervention by a third party is needed to achieve the most effective contribution depends on considering both the characteristics of the conflict context and at which stage the conflict is (Knoop, 2014).

The forms of third party intervention (i.e. mediation, arbitration, or litigation) would usually be considered within the peacemaking domain. However, these forms vary in the degree of power and legitimacy, which the third party intervener brings to the discussions (Fisher, 2001).

Alternative conflict resolution has a range of possibilities, which have described in the light of the depth of involvement required from the third party. These alternatives start with a third party who plays a primarily non-

intrusive role in conflicts and ends with arbitration process in which third party renders a binding decision on the parties (Adegbonmire, 2016).

The degree of power exercised by the intervener over the conflict process and outcome is what primarily distinguishes the forms of third party intervention. That is, on such power spectrum, the litigation form comes at the highest and because through this form the disputes or conflicts become subject to legal ratings. Then, comes the arbitration form in with a middle influence range, through which binding decision are made. After that, at the low end of this continuum of power, the third party or intervener may play just a diagnostic and facilitative role for helping the disputants with understanding their dispute more clearly and attempting to reach agreements or preserve or restructure their relationship (Knoop, 2014).

#### *A. Mediation/ conciliation*

According to Fisher (2001), mediation is a form of third party intervention. Although it is considered the most common form, it is usually supported by other methods. It is designed to assist the conflicting parties to negotiate a settlement on significant or substantive issues. Rioux (2003) also defined mediation (or conciliation) is a process in which a third party actively participates in the process of dispute settlement. A single third party generally conducts this process, whereas in conciliation a conciliatory commission may represent the third party.

It is a confidential and voluntary way of handling conflict. It is defined as the process by which the conflicting parties come tighter, isolate disputed issues, develop options, alternatives, and get a consensual settlement that helps them accommodate and satisfy their needs (Wani, 2011).

Okere (2015) referred to mediation as the intervention of an acceptable third party in a negotiation to resolve a conflict. A mediator has to no or limited authoritative power of decision-making, but voluntary helps the involved parties to reach a mutually acceptable settlement or solution to the dispute.

Mediation or conciliation is a form of third party intervention that does not result in a binding decision or judgment imposed on the conflicting parties.

In both of them, the power to settle a dispute remains with the conflicting parties and a mediator leads the process (RICS Guidance Note, 2012). However, mediation goes a step beyond the conciliation process. That is, the mediator plays an active role in facilitating the parties' negotiation and making it effective. Despite of the variety of the involvement degree, the mediator establishes the discussion order, consist in identifying a common ground between the disputants and discard unproductive and irrelevant discussions. The mediator's goal is to keep the disputants focused on real issues and help them to overcome their fixed positions, compromise and develop creative solutions (Keethaponcalan, 2017).

### *B. Arbitration*

Arbitration is referred to as a legalistic form of resolving conflict in which the disputants choose a third party to make a judgment on the case. The arbitrator reaches a formal binding judgment, which distinguishes the arbitration process from mediation and conciliation (Rioux, 2003; Shimabukuro & Staman, 2017).

Arbitration is a form of seeking assistance of a third party to resolve conflicts. The arbitrator listens to the evidence of both parties and then renders a binding decision. That is, it represents an agreement of the involved parties to settle their dispute by a tribunal of their choice (Okere, 2015).

Arbitration represents an intrusive form of third party intervention by a third party. Arbitration does not depend on attempting to facilitate settlement by the arbitrator, but rather depend on retaining to resolve the conflict once and for all. Although the arbitration process can be as adversarial as the litigation process, it is less costly and moves faster to a binding judgment or discoing (Borcia, 2012).

According to Sikander (2011), in the arbitration process, the conflicting parties agree to allow a third party, whether one individual or more, to make a decision about their conflict. A private process is procedurally similar to trial despite of being usually completed in a less formal manner and more quickly than the trial. Since there is no jury, the parties, for instance, are not obliged to strictly follow the rules of evidence during



arbitration hearing. In addition, conducting an arbitration hearing may be in a conference room instead of being held in a courtroom.

### *C. Litigation/adjudication*

Adjudication is the process in which conflicts are resolved when litigants use the courts (Wani, 2011). It is a process of resolving conflict in which the third party determines the final outcome and impose a binding decision on the conflicting parties or disputants (Ajayi & Buhari, 2014). The conflicting parties will resort and have a right to refer their conflict to an appropriate court in the case of the absence of any other means or procedure. Deciding on, for a particular dispute, which court will be referred to depend on the nature, value and complexity of the dispute (RICS Guidance Note, 2012).

There are certain features and advantages of litigation that should not be overlooked. These advantages include having mechanisms that facilitate handling a large number of involved parties in complex situations. On the other hand, the high costs and lengthy delay in arriving at a conclusion are some of the drawbacks of litigation. The enormous disadvantages of litigation have led people to search for alternatives for resolving the construction disputes (Adegbonmire, 2016).

### **3. Studies conducted on conflict resolution & perspective taking**

Research on conflict resolution has focused more on improving the relationships, preventing conflict and lessening the intensity of existing conflicts as well as exploring ways that lead to resolutions and handling styles (Gitimu, 2014). For instance, McAuslan (2015) attempted to explore the National School program development, which provides creative solutions to conflict in order to find out whether this type of education would be effective in changing children's views and behaviors in resolving conflict. In addition, Evans (2019) investigated what impact a conflict resolution program has on discipline outcomes and the conflict management styles of students at the middle and high Inner-City School. Other studies included the study of Waithaka et al. (2015), Frison (2000), Turnuklu et al. (2009) and Stevahn et al. (2004) who investigated the impact of different training programs on students' conflict handling styles and conflict resolution.

A number of research works have focused on exploring conflict resolution practices and management styles as well as qualitatively assessing aspects related to conflict resolution. For instance, Metellus (2017) conducted a case study to explore opinions on the practices of conflict resolution from the three main stakeholder groups in college settings; Bazezew and Neka's study (2017) assessed their students' interpersonal conflicts and conflict management styles; the study of Pujiati and Sonhaji (2018) aimed at describing and explaining the need for conflict management in managing private universities; the purpose of Bunker's study (2002) was providing a comprehensive description through conducting a case study that investigated effective school wide programs of conflict resolution; and Cislak (2014) studied the strategies employed in social conflicts and their role in the agency and communion perception through two experiments.

Reviewing literature on perspective taking including the study of Aslan (2017), Emen and Aslan (2019), Gehlbach et al. (2015), Johnson et al. (2017), Kim and Selman (2018), and Supple (2015) show that the focus in this area is on exploring the construct and management of perspective taking on one hand, and on attempting to examine the impact of interventions, other than the strategies of conflict resolution, on enhancing this capability, except for the study of Kidder (2019) that sought to enhance students' skills of perspective taking through negotiation, and the study of Mankopf (2002) that aimed at investigating how being a peer mediator could impact the perspective taking of adolescents.

Through the literature reviewed, it is obvious that more research is needed to investigate the impact of conflict resolution strategy training through third party intervention on enhancing Faculty of Education English Majors' social perspective taking skills due to a number of reasons:

- The importance of social perspective taking skills for students as it has been discussed in both the introduction and review of literature.
- The gap in studying the impact of conflict resolution training on developing social perspective taking that needs to bridge.
- It is clear that there is rarely research exists in the EFL context in general and the Egyptian context in particular.

## Materials & Method

## Participants

The participants of the study were 47 of third-year English section at the Faculty of Education. All the students who participated in the experiment were volunteers; the researcher announced for the experiment and told students to write down a list of the names of who would like to participate. The researcher introduced the study purpose briefly to all the participants, and then they were asked to sign their names if they were happy to participate in the study.

## Instruments

The present study made use of the following instruments:

### 1. A Training Program

The aim of the program was to develop English Majors' social perspective taking using a number of conflict resolution strategies based on third party intervention. The program was made up of three main parts. First, **a Framework that** was designed with the purpose of giving a clear picture about the items included in the program as a whole. **Second, a teacher's guide book that** included a detailed description of what the teacher had to do in each teaching session. Third, **Students' Book which** included the content and activities introduced to the study participants. In addition, it included different types of practice and lesson evaluation and it ended with unit evaluation. The strategies included require a third party, either one person or more, for helping the conflicting parties to reach a resolution.

### 2. A Social perspective taking Scale

The scale aimed at identifying social perspective taking levels of the third year English majors before and after the implementation of the training program. After reviewing a number of studies on students' perspective taking, the researcher designed the scale, taking into consideration the following points: using items that are positively and negatively worded, using clear items, using simple and direct items as well as addressing different dimensions of perspective taking. The scale consisted of 15 items that belong to two main dimensions. These dimensions are: cognitive, perceptual and emotional.

## 2.1. Scale Validity

After reviewing the related literature, the researcher built the scale. It consisted of two dimensions (namely cognitive, perceptual and emotional). Then, some statements for every dimension were formulated based on their operational definitions. The first version of the scale consisted of 20 items, but, based on the jury members' suggestions, 5 items were removed and the rest were 15 items. Therefore, the final version of the scale included 15 items.

*Content validity:* To ensure validity of the scale, it was submitted to specialized jury members in the field of curriculum and instruction (TEFL). The jury members were asked to judge it regarding the following: relatedness of the dimensions to the general term (social perspective taking), relatedness of sub-items to each general dimension, clarity and wording of the statements and the suitability of the scale as a whole for assessing English majors' social perspective taking.

*Construct validity:* Construct validity refers to whether a scale or test measures the construct adequately. For estimating the construct validity of the scale, the researcher conducted factor analysis using the Varimax method for this purpose. Factor loadings, which were greater than 0.40, were considered important, so six items were removed. Regarding the dimensions of the scale, factor loadings exceeded the loading cut-off (0.40), indicating practically significant levels.

## 2.2. Scale Reliability

To establish the reliability of the scale, the Cronbach Alpha method was used. The reliability values of the scale dimensions ranged from (0.82) to (0.91). These reliability values were all significant at (0.01) level. The reliability level of the scale as a whole was (0.92), which is an acceptable level of reliability. Table (1) shows the reliability values of the three dimensions of the scale and of the scale as a whole.

Table 1

*The Reliability Values of the Three Dimensions and of the Scale as a Whole*

Dimension	Reliability level	Sig. level
Cognitive	0.90	0.01
Emotional	0.82	0.01
Perceptual	0.91	0.01
<b>Social perspective taking scale as a whole</b>	0.92	0.01

### 2.3. Scoring

The final version of the scale consisted of 15 items, for each item, participants were given a mark out of '5' according to their response:

1= "never true of me", 2= "usually not true of me", 3= "sometimes true of me", 4= "usually true of me" and 5= "always true of me"

Therefore, the total mark of the scale was 75. The scale included some negative items, which were scored through giving participants a reversed mark.

### Administration

After establishing the validity of the scale, it was pre-administered to the control and treatment groups on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October 2022, a week prior to the experiment to identify students' social perspective taking level.. Then, after implementing the training program, the scale was post-administered to the two groups on 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2022, 4 days after the experiment to identify whether there was a change in their social perspective taking. Students' answers were marked; data were collected, tabulated, and statistically analyzed in order to record any progress in students' social perspective taking.

## Findings and Discussion

The current study aimed to examine the effect of conflict resolution through third party intervention strategy training on developing faculty of education English majors' social perspective taking skills. For this

purpose, quantitative analysis of data was used for finding out whether there was any effect.

### *Statistical Analysis*

To analyze the data collected through administering the tools before and after introducing the training program, the current study made use of descriptive statistics (such as means and standard deviation), inferential statistics (such as t-test correlations) and the statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, v.22). SPSS was used to calculate the t-test value that points out the difference between mean scores of the study participants in the pre and post administration of the creative reading test and the social perspective taking scale.

- The effect size was calculated using Cohen formula:  $2 \times t \div \sqrt{df}$ :  
Where,
- d = Cohen's d Value
- t = t - test Value
- df = Degrees of Freedom.

*The study hypothesis stated that*

*There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the study group students in the pre and post administrations of social perspective taking scale.*

For testing this hypothesis, the researcher calculated (t) value to find out the difference between means of scores of the study group in the pre and post administrations of the test. Table (2) shows the t-value and its significance in the pre and post administrations of the social perspective taking scale.

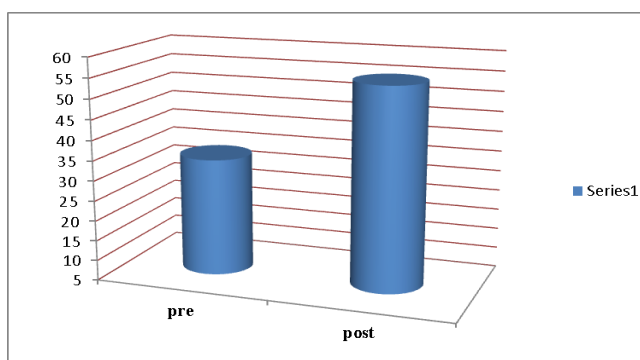
Table 2

*Results Obtained By the Study Group in the Pre and Post Administrations of the Social Perspective Taking Scale*

Att.	N.	Mean	Standard deviation.	d.f.	Tabulated t. value		Calculated t. value	Sig	d.
					0.05	0.01			
Pre	47	34.20	9.36	46	2.01	2.68	6.82	0.01	2.01
Post	47	55.07	3.72						

Table (2) shows that the mean score of the study group in the post administration of the *social perspective taking scale* was (55.07), which is higher than that obtained by the pre one (34.20). The calculated t-value was (6.82), which is higher than the values given in statistical tables at 0.05 significance level (2.01) and at 0.01 level (2.68) at (46) degree of freedom. So, there was a significant difference at 0.01 level, in favor of the post administration. The effect size was (2.01), which affirms the positive effect of the study program in enhancing the participants' *social perspective taking*. That is, the study hypothesis was accepted. The enhancement occurring in students' *social perspective taking* is illustrated in figure (1).

Figure 1  
The Results of Testing the study Hypothesis



## Discussion

The goal of the current study was to investigate the effect of a third party intervention strategy



training program on developing students' perspective taking ability. Based on both theoretical knowledge and the outcomes of previous investigations, the conclusions regarding the study issues were described in this part. The results of the study showed a substantial effect of the study program. That is, the relatively high mean score of the treatment group was probably due to the effect of teaching students according to the training program. Utilizing these strategies might have contributed to arousing students' interests, activating their background knowledge, opening up perspectives for reasoning and analysis skills, introducing solutions and suggesting alternatives to the events of the reading text. Therefore, training in the conflict resolution strategies for the treatment group students has probably enhanced the quality and quantity of thinking.

The results showed that students with stronger perspective-taking abilities are better at comprehending others' perspectives, cognition, and emotions. According to Vygotsky, language shapes mind in addition to being a tool for communication. As their language skills advance, kids interact with others more frequently, which helps them develop cognitive abilities and a better understanding of how others see, think, and feel. According to the cognitive perspective-taking dimension and in light of the theory of mind, the relationship between perspective-taking abilities and language development is typically examined in the associated literature

The findings of previous studies conducted in the area of social perspective taking, although with variables other than the strategies of conflict resolution, showed an impact of direct interventions on developing participants' perspective taking. The study of Kim and Selman (2018), for instance, showed this result after investigating the relation between academic performance and engagement on one hand and perspective taking on the other hand.

The results of Kidder' study (2017) also go in line with the current research result as it revealed a positive impact of negotiation teaching on enhancing the students' skills of perspective taking. Kidder introduced collaboration, integrative negotiation, and problem solving techniques that resulted in increasing students' capacities of perspective taking. In addition, Mankopf's study (2002) revealed that emphasizes this result,

there was a significant effect of conflict resolution and peer mediation training on enhancing adolescent's connectedness and perspective taking. Supple (2015) also studied the impact of Sorority /Fraternity affiliation on college social perspective taking and indicated a significant effect, which supports the current study results.

When reviewing literature on perspective taking, it is found that there are few studies on social perspective taking. However, there are fewer studies found to investigate the effect of conflict resolution strategies on developing social perspective taking. Therefore, the current study aimed at examining the effect of a training program based on Third Party Intervention Strategies on developing English majors' social perspective taking skills. The results of the current study shed light on the importance of conducting training in conflict resolution strategies utilizing innovative teaching techniques in general and these employed strategies in particular.

### **Study Implications**

In light of the current study results, the researcher offered some recommendations for EFL course designers, instructors and students which they can make use of in order to develop and enhance the current EFL learning setting, as the following:

- Integrating the conflict resolution strategies (on which the program is based) into English literary courses as they facilitate developing students' perspective taking.
- Giving the skills of social perspective taking extra time and attention in the classrooms.
- Training EFL teachers trained in implementing conflict resolution strategies for developing the skills of perspective taking among their students.
- Students should learn to resolve their interpersonal conflicts. Thus, they should be trained in using the strategies of conflict resolution to help them.
- Designing training sessions, taking into consideration, the students being trained in terms of their age, their life experiences, the nature of conflict and the duration of the training.
- Integrating enjoyable teaching and learning activities in the course design in order to meet the ultimate goal of perspective taking.

- Using different types of practice (e.g. modeling, guided and free practice) is recommended to help students to benefit from what they study, fully comprehend it, and apply what they have learned effectively.
- Recommending the teachers' role to be changed to become a monitor, facilitator, and consultant instead of being the main source of information.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

In light of the results, the researcher suggests the following further studies:

- Other research can provide training in other conflict resolution strategies at earlier stages, as this would give insights about the type and amount of progress in the students' social perspective taking as they move from one year to another.
- A qualitative study for investigating the skills of social perspective taking employed by the EFL students is also needed.
- The current study was conducted using a cross-sectional approach; thus, further research on the connection between young children's perspective-taking abilities and language development should make use of longitudinal investigations.
- A training program based on negotiation strategies can be introduced to English majors to find out their impact on enhancing their social perspective taking.
- The relationship between creative reading and perspective taking of young children needs also to be investigated.
- More research to investigate how students develop perspective taking skills is needed.
- A study investigating the effect of third party intervention strategies on students' self-esteem and motivation needs to be conducted.
- More research is needed for developing the skills perspective taking through providing effective strategies, because this area of research is still under research in spite of its importance.
- More studies are needed to examine the effect of third party intervention strategy training on developing other skills, e.g. active listening.

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