EXPLORING TEACHER ROLES IN RELATION TO CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES IN AN ACTIVITY-DOMINATED ENGLISH CLASS: THE LEARNERS' PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract:
The present study aims to investigate teacher roles in relation to classroom activities. For this purpose, Survey questionnaires were administered to 49 university students in their English course. The questionnaire consisted of two 5-Likert scales. One scale, the STRI, examined teacher roles and the second one, CAI, investigated the number of classroom activities used in class as well as their frequencies. Statistical results showed that both scales were very reliable and valid with Cronbach Alpha values reaching .913 and .822 respectively. So are the three main constructs of both teacher roles (namely, cognitive role, affective role and managerial role) and classroom activities (i.e., one-way language exercises, meaning-focused interactive activities and real-life tasks). Descriptive statistics indicated that the English class was mainly dominated by interactive activities. Further analyses revealed that, in this activity-dominated English course, the teacher had exerted different impacts in the three domains: cognitive role had the highest mean, affective role had the medium mean and managerial role had the lowest mean. More importantly, results of correlational analyses disclosed that teacher role was positively correlated with classroom activities, so did most of their main constructs. More specific features were identified, and implications were discussed in the study.

Keywords: teacher roles, classroom activities, cognitive role, affective role, managerial role

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1. Introduction

Teachers constitute one of the major factors that contribute to school success and students' learning. They are also the essential elements that help to create an environment conducive to learning (Fareh, 2018). Researchers often agree that learning in class should be learner-centered rather than teacher-centered (Ellis, 2009; Andon & Eckerth, 2009). Then what roles does a teacher play in class and how? Efficient teachers do play a number of roles even though they are not pivotal. While it is true that a class should be learner-centered, it is, in the meantime, also teacher-driven (Branden, 2009) and ultimately teacher-constructed. Actually, classroom practices are believed to be multidimensional and dynamic if theoretical principles in relation to educational practices and classroom realities are thought to be neither fixed nor static (Jackson & Burch, 2017). In other words, classroom practices often require the combination and implementation of multiple theories. When multiple theories interplay and interact in classrooms and when there is the gap between theory and practice, pedagogical spaces arise and teachers fit in (Branden, 2009). It is teachers who discover, choose, adapt, evaluate, decide and most importantly implement what to do and how to do in class and ultimately construct the context for learners to learn. Learning can only be done by learners (Li, 2002) while teachers play the role in constructing the settings for learning, directing, guiding, scaffolding, managing, facilitating learning (Newman, 2017; Huang, 2019, 2017a; Collins & Muoz, 2016). Teachers are not central in class, but they play significant roles in a successful class where learning is more effective. Researchers state that there is the interplay among teachers, students and learning activities in class (Jackson & Burch, 2017). Therefore, the present study aims to look into learners' perceptions of the roles of their teacher in relation to classroom activities and attempts to find out their possible relationship.

2. Literature review

In the literature of teacher roles, very few definitions are provided. Huang (2019) defined teacher roles as "*all the teaching-related activities and behaviors that teachers do or are expected to do during teaching-learning process across different instructional contexts*". According to Fareh (2018), teacher roles are the duties, functions and responsibilities that teachers assume in the teaching-learning process. Keiler (2018) produced a most simple definition – "*What teachers do in classrooms*". The definitions reveal that teacher roles are more concerned about teachers' actual behaviors in practices. Therefore, the researcher holds that research of teacher roles is largely behavior-based and practice-oriented. The present study then mainly seeks to produce practical significance for language classes.

Review of previous studies have shown more classifications of teacher roles than definitions. Table 1 lists the assorted classifications of teacher roles that have been generalized by researchers in the field. While the list is not exhausted yet, studies in the literature have generated miscellaneous terms and classifications of teacher roles. Among

them, cognitive role, affective role, and managerial role are thought to be fundamental and central to classroom instructions across various instructional contexts (Huang, 2019).

Table 1: Teacher roles observed in the relevant fields

Subject areas	Studies	Teacher roles
English	Huang, 2020; 2019; 2017b	Cognitive role, affective role, managerial role
	Yang & Tao, 2018	Knower, interlocutor
	Huang, 2017a	Metaphorical roles of encyclopedia, searching machine, reference book, skeleton key; friends, bartender, magician, TV host; assistant, tour guide, lamp, GPS, navigator etc.
	Lai et al, 2015	Guiding, encouraging, recommendation, providing controlled resources
	Zhan & Yang, 2015	Knowledge provider, authority
	Lee, 2011	Establish rapport, learning communities, affective support, be patient, be clear
	Mak, 2011	Transmitting knowledge, managing communicative activities, introducing activities, directing students' work
	Wan et al, 2011	Metaphorical roles of provider, nurturer, devotee, instructor, culture transmitter, authority, interest arouser, co-worker etc.
	Ellis, 2009	The role of skilled communicator, the more "teacherly" role
	Branden, 2009	Motivator, organizer, conversational partner & supporter, knowledgeable interlocutor
	Swan, 2005	Manager, facilitator
	Jacobs & Farrell, 2003	Co-learners, co-constructors of knowledge, facilitator, fellow learner, fellow participants etc.
	Guerrero & Villamil, 2002	co-operative leader, provider of knowledge, challenger/agent of change, nurturer, innovator, provider of tools, artist, repairer, gym instructor
Other subject areas	Maulana et al, 2017	Classroom management, creating learning climate, providing clear instruction, activate learning, adaptive teaching, and teaching learning strategies
	Guasch et al, 2010	Designing & planning, social, instructive, technological, management
	Alvarez et al, 2009	Planning and design role, social role, instructive role
	Compton, 2009	Humanizing the learning environment, facilitating interaction, organizing and presenting information, providing feedback
	Bawane & Spector, 2009	Professional, pedagogical, social, evaluator, administrator, technologist, advisor, researcher
	Varvel, 2007	Administrative, personal, technological, instructional design, pedagogical, assessment, social roles
	Coppola et al, 2002	Cognitive, affective, managerial roles

According to Coppola et al. (2002), cognitive role relates to the processes pertaining to learning, information storage, memory, thinking and problem solving etc. Affective role refers to teachers' influences on the relationship between students, teachers and the classroom atmosphere. Finally, managerial role centers on course management that comprises tasks such as course planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Some studies have been conducted to investigate the three main teacher roles across various instructional settings as well as different subject matters (Huang, 2017b, 2019, 2020). Previous studies indicate that the three main roles have exerted unequal influences in different instructional contexts. For example, in online learning contexts, managerial role had the greatest impact compared to cognitive role and affective role (Huang, 2019). In contrast, cognitive role in face-to-face instructions proved to be the greatest significant in class (Huang, 2019, 2020). One common finding of these studies lies in that affective roles, among the three, seemed to had the least influences in class in different instructional settings (either face-to-face instructions or online learnings) and across different subject matters (from English courses to computer science course) (Huang, 2019, 2020). The researcher holds that the different weightings of the three teacher roles in classroom instructions might be attributed to multiple factors ranging from instructional contexts, subject areas, classroom pedagogies to even personal traits of teachers.

In fact, the teaching behaviors and performances have been studied from various perspectives including stimulation of interest, clarity of expression, enthusiasm for the subject matter and teaching, genuine respect for students, concern for student learning, and conscientiousness etc. (Yang & Tao, 2018). Even though teacher roles have been scrutinized in numerous dimensions (Keiler, 2018; Huang, 2019: Kilinc et al., 2017; Admiral et al., 2017; Stapleton & Shao, 2017), studies that explore teacher roles in relation to variables such as classroom activities are rather scarce. Furthermore, most of the relevant research is qualitative and produces theoretical generalizations rather than revealing possible trend or pattern. Very few studies in the field have employed quantitative methods to look into teacher roles (Huang, 2019, 2020; Stapleton & Shao, 2017). As a result, the present study intends to employ the STRI, a 27-item and 5-Likert scale, to measure and examine teacher roles of the English course (Huang, 2017b).

In terms of classroom activities, they constitute a major part of classroom practices and classroom pedagogy. In the present study, classroom activities are adopted in a broad sense and may comprise assorted learning behaviors such as form-focused language exercises, meaning-focused activities and real-life tasks as well. In the field of English language teaching (ELT) and second language acquisition (SLA), the terms "*task*", "*activity*" and "*exercise*" are distinctly distinguished from one another. The definitions of "task" have undergone an ongoing process of development and refinement (Long, 1985; Skehan, 1998; Ellis, 2009). For the sake of simplicity, Bygate et al. (2001) offered an all-purpose explanation -- "*an activity which requires learners to use language, with an emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective*". Then exercises are regarded as form-focused language learning activities and mechanical language drills ((Heift & Rimrott, 2012). Based on these explanations, activities seem to be often used to explain the other two terms. Indeed,

researchers do employ "activity" in a broader sense as it covers more diverse learning behaviors than only strictly defined tasks or exercises as in task-based language teaching (TBLT) (Andon & Eckerth, 2009). In similar vein, classroom activities here in the present research are also employed in a general sense and encompass tasks, exercises and drills etc.

Review of relevant literature of classroom activities indicate that studies in the field mainly center on tasks in the context of TBLT as an attempt to examine task-based education. Numerous studies have been conducted to explore the strengths and drawbacks of tasks often in contrast to the effects of language exercises and drills (Heift & Rimrott, 2012). In addition, researchers are also very concerned about the relationship between the performance of task types and output accuracy & fluency, between task implementation conditions and output accuracy & fluency, between performance of task types and specific interactional patterns etc. (Stapleton & Shao, 2017). Most of these studies have focused on whether to support or question a diverse range of task-related principles and their subtle variations as well. Nevertheless, classroom practices are complex and dynamic and may go well beyond the scope prescribed by theorists (Jackson & Burch, 2017). They are far less under control of prescribed principles or authoritative theorists but more often subject to the manipulation and modification of classroom teachers in authentic instructions. Therefore, the present study intends to extend the research focus on merely tasks or exercises to the broader breadth of various activities in authentic classrooms.

Among the prolific studies, a few researchers have addressed the particular issue of relationship between teacher roles and activities. For instance, Yang & Tao (2018) found that teachers were rated very differently by students in classrooms with similar activities, indicating that merely involving students in interaction was not enough to engage students in class. Teachers need to do more. Similarly, Branden (2009) also holds that teachers and learners often reinterpret tasks offered by syllabus developers in ways that suit their own purposes. Like other studies in the field, these two studies both employed qualitative method such as discourse analysis either based on systemic functional linguistics or on two particular examples of classroom instruction of tasks. In terms of research methods, very few studies have applied quantitative measurement to probe into the use of classroom activities, let alone their relationship with teacher roles (Stapleton & Shao, 2017). As a result, in addition to the STRI that measures teacher roles, the present study has employed a second instrument of 5-Likert scale to examine classroom activities in the English course. Therefore, the research questions to be addressed in the present study are as followed:

1) What are the teacher roles performed in the English course?
2) What are the classroom activities actually enacted in the English course?
3) What is the relationship between teacher roles and classroom activities in the English course?

3. Methods

3.1 Study context

The study was conducted in an English course for English Education majors at university. The English course was called the *Advanced Communicative English* for English majors who were learning English as foreign language. The participants had 4 periods of the English course every week and each period lasted 40 minutes. The course lasted 32 weeks in total for one academic year.

The English course was one of the compulsory subjects for all English Education sophomores at the university and there were only four classes of 105 English Education sophomores. The course was delivered by two English teachers to students face to face in traditional physical classrooms. One teacher gave instructions to two classes of students. All the four classes used the same course book and had the same course schedule and evaluation. Even though English is the foreign language to both the teachers and students, the course was instructed fully in English and students were supposed to speak English all through the classes.

3.2 Participants

Two out of the four classes took the survey. Participants of the present study thus included two classes of 51 English Education sophomores. One class had 24 students and the other class had 27 students. The participants were of the same major and were similar at their ages. They all took the Advanced Communicative English course delivered by the same teacher.

This sample size of 51 participants in the present study was comparatively small. Ideally speaking, quantitative surveys are supposed to be based on large sample size (Babbie, 2010). However, researchers do not reach a consensus on the exact number of sample (Wu, p. 60, 2012). For example, Airasian & Gay (2003) hold that survey sample size must take up 10% of the total population or up to 20% if the total population is less than 500. Neuman (2003) thinks that it is better to account for 30% especially with a population of a small number.

In this way, the sample size of the present study, small as it is, meets the criteria in that the total population itself was quite small and there were only 4 classes of English Education sophomores, a total of 105 students. The sample size of 51 participants in the present study accounts for 48.6% of the total population, which justifies the smaller sample size for the quantitative research.

3.3 Instruments

The present study used one questionnaire that consisted of two scales to quantitatively measure both teacher roles and the number of classroom activities as well as their frequencies. The questionnaire comprised three parts: Part I explained the purpose of the research and elicited participants' background information. Part II measured teacher roles with the STRI, which is a 27-item and 5-Likert scale. Participants were required to

tick one choice from the 5 Likerts ranging from "*strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree*" to "*strongly agree*". The STRI was developed by Huang (2017b) based on the three main conceptual constructs of teacher roles classified by Coppola et al (2002). The three main constructs of teacher roles are cognitive role (items 1-10), affective role (items 11-20) and managerial role (items 21-27). The entire scale along with its three main constructs have been proved highly reliable and valid in previous studies (Huang, 2017b, 2019, 2020). Then Part III examined the number of classroom activities that had been used in the English course as well as their frequencies. It listed 23 language classroom activities and asked the participants to identify the frequency of their use in class also on a 5-Likert scale ranging from *never, occasionally, sometimes, often* to *always*.

In terms of the instrument that examined classroom activities used in the English class as well as their frequencies, the present research applied another 5-Likert scale -- Classroom Activities Inventory (CAI). CAI lists 23 items of classroom activities, which derived largely from both previous literature and classroom reality. Relevant literature has discussed some activities and exercises under the framework of various principles and approaches. For example, fill-in-the-blank, translation, essay, sentence-building (Helft & Rimrott, 2012) and dialogue, role-play, debate, discussion exchanging information etc. (Jackson & Burch, 2017; Pyun, 2013; Andon & Eckerth, 2009), to name just a few. Although researchers fail to agree on what approach or principle one particular activity theoretically fits (Ellis, 2009), classroom teachers have adopted assorted teaching and learning activities in an attempt to engage students and enhance teaching effects. Consequently, activities and exercises like matching, true or false, multiple choice questions, oral presentation, interview, competition, brainstorming, note-taking, retelling, summarizing and dubbing etc. that have been practiced in classroom teaching were all included in CAI. Finally, 23 classroom activities were included. The 23 classroom activities incorporated three dimensions, i.e., one-way language exercises (items 1-10), meaning-focused interactive activities (items 11-16) and real-life tasks (items 17-23). Reliability tests showed that the Cronbach's Alpha value of the overall scale was .822 and those of the three groups were .676 of one-way language exercises, .737 of meaning-focused interactive activities and .775 of real-life tasks. Hence, the scale of classroom activities was also reliable and valid.

3.4 Data collection and analyses

First the researcher gained consents from the participants. The survey was conducted near the end of the second semester when participants were supposed to finish the whole academic year of learning the English Course. 51 print copies of the questionnaires were administered to participants in class after the researcher explained to them the academic purpose of the research. To release any possible worries, participants were assured that all the questionnaires could be anonymous, and all data would go confidential unless for academic purpose. Those who wouldn't take the survey could leave their questionnaires blank. After the questionnaires were finished and collected, 2 questionnaires were found invalid and then excluded for later analyses. Finally, a total of 49 valid questionnaires

were collected. Data was later input in computer for statistical analyses including reliability tests, t-tests, descriptive statistics and correlational analyses etc.

4. Results

4.1 Teacher roles
a. Reliability tests
First of all, a series of statistical analyses were run to measure and examine teacher roles. Results of reliability tests indicated that the STRI was pretty reliable and valid in this study. The Cronbach's Alpha value of the overall scale was .913 (p = .000 < .050) and those values of the cognitive role, affective role and managerial role were .863, .803, .764 (p = .000 < .050) respectively. Altogether the four Cronbach's Alpha values all went above .700, indicating the STRI, both the overall scale and its three main domains, was highly reliable and valid (Wu, 2012).

b. t-tests
To further reveal any possible pattern of teacher roles in the English course, t-tests were conducted to reveal and compare the differences of the teacher roles. Results of t-tests showed that the mean of the overall scale of teacher role was 4.1897. Among the three main constructs, cognitive role had the highest mean of 4.4224, followed by affective role with a medium mean of 4.1306. Managerial role had the lowest mean of 3.9417. Table 2 reported all the means of teacher roles.

Table 2: Means of teacher roles

	The overall scale	**Cognitive role**	**Affective role**	**Managerial role**
Means	4.1897	4.4224	4.1306	3.9417

Further paired t-tests were run to examine whether or not the differences among the three teacher roles were significant. Table 3 listed the results. In particular, mean difference between cognitive and affective roles had p value of .000 <.050 (t = 7.188, df = 48, η^2 = .734>.140); and mean difference between affective and managerial roles had p value of .008 < .050 (t = 2.752, df = 48, η^2 = .614 >. 140). Since the two p values were both smaller than .050, the differences were statistically significant. In addition, the two values of eta squared were much larger than .140 and both reached a high level, suggesting practical significance as well (Lakens, 2013; Wu, 2012).

c. Classroom activities
Regarding classroom activities, statistical analyses including reliability test, descriptive statistics and t-tests were conducted to examine the reliability of the scale and reveal possible features of classroom activities in the English Course. First of all, results of reliability tests suggested that both the overall scale of classroom activities and its three main components were fairly reliable and valid. The Cronbach's Alpha values of the

overall scale was .822 and those values of one-way language exercises, meaning-focused interactive activities and real-life tasks were .676, .737 and .775 respectively. With all the Cronbach's Alpha values went above .600, the scale of classroom activities proved to be fairly reliable and valid in terms of both the overall instrument and its three main components (Wu, 2012).

Table 3: Results of comparing means of the three teacher roles

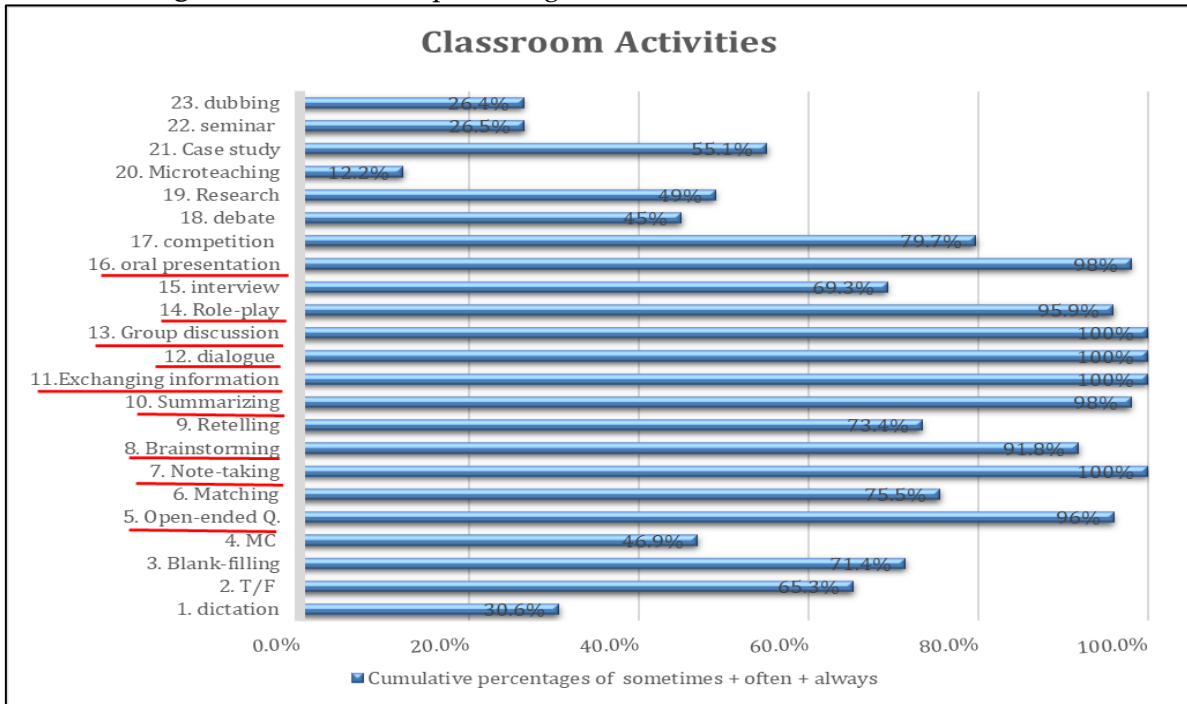|		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. 2-tailed	η^2
		Mean Differences	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
					Lower	Upper				
Pair 1	Cognitive - affective	.29184	.28419	.04060	.21021	.37347	7.188	48	**.000**	.734
Pair 2	Affective - managerial	.18892	.48052	.06865	.05090	.32694	2.752	48	**.008**	.514

Then descriptive statistical analyses were run to explore the use of classroom activities in the English course. The percentages of each choice of the 5 scales were calculated. Nonetheless, it is impossible to display all the data here. Thus, the cumulative percentages of the three choices from "sometimes", "often" to "always" were taken to measure how frequently the listed classroom activities had been employed in class. Figure 1 showed the cumulative percentages of classroom activities practicsed in class.

According to Figure 1, obviously the teacher had implemented a wide range of activities in class as all the 23 classroom activities were chosen by students. Among them, some activities had been more *frequently* practiced in class. In particular, four activities, namely, note-taking, exchanging information, dialogue, group discussion, all had 100% of cumulative percentages, suggesting they were implemented in class highly frequently. Similar to these four activities, role-play, oral presentation, open-ended questions, summarizing all had cumulative percentages above 95% and were also constantly enacted in class. The diversity and frequency of classroom activities utilized in class helped to uncover the rich pedagogical spaces where classroom teacher had exerted much impact.

Aside from descriptive statistical analyses, the researcher also performed t-tests to pinpoint more patterns of classroom activities. Results of t-tests showed that the mean of the overall scale of classroom activities was 3.2822, indicating that all 23 activities were practiced *sometimes* or more or less in class and that the teacher had exploited numerous activities and exercises to engage the students. This finding of the overall mean proved consistent with that of descriptive statistics. As to the means of the three main components, meaning-focused interactive activities had the highest mean of 4.3095, which implied the average choices of the rating scale of "*often*". Then one-way language exercises had the medium mean of 3.0041, indicating the average choices of the rating scale of "*sometimes*". At last, real-life tasks had the lowest mean of 2.3528, meaning the

average choices of around the rating scale of "*occasionally*". The results revealed that meaning-focused interactive activities were, on average, "often" practiced in class while one-way language exercises were not neglected either. Instead, what was seldom utilized was real-life tasks.

Figure 1: Cumulative percentages of classroom activities used in class

In order to further validate the differences among the three groups of activities, paired t-tests were run. The results were reported in Table 4. Particularly, the mean difference between interactive activities and language exercises had p value of .000 < .050 (t = 21.363 df = 48, η^2 = .487 > .140); and the mean difference between language exercises and real-life tasks had p value of .000 < .050 (t = 19.898, df = 48, η^2 = .338 > .140). Since the two p values were both smaller than .050, the differences were statistically significant. Furthermore, the two values of eta squared were much larger than .140 and thus both reached a high level, indicating practical significance as well (Lakens, 2013; Wu, 2012).

Table 4: Results of comparing means of the three groups of classroom activities

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	η^2
		Mean differences	**Std. Deviation**	**Std. Error Mean**	**95% Confidence Interval of the Difference**					
					Lower	**Upper**				
Pair 1	IA – LE	1.30544	.42776	.06111	1.18258	1.42831	21.363	48	**.000**	.487
Pair 2	IA – RLT	1.95675	.68869	.09838	1.75894	2.15457	19.889	48	**.000**	.338

Note: IA = meaning-focused interactive activities, LE = one-way language exercises, RLT = real-life tasks

d. Correlational analyses of teacher roles and classroom activities

Finally, correlational analyses were performed to unveil the relationship among different teacher roles as well as the relationship between teacher roles and classroom activities. Table 5 listed the correlational coefficients of teacher roles. Results in the first column showed that the correlational coefficients between the three main domains and the overall scale. The three coefficients ranged from .772 to .922 and were all significant (p=.000<.050). Additionally, the R^2 value .835 of cognitive role and the overall scale indicated 83.5% of the total variability of the overall teacher role attributable to cognitive role. Likewise, the other two R^2 values in the first column also suggested high proportion (85%) of the total variability attributable to affective role or moderate proportion (59.6%) to managerial role. In short, both R values and R^2 values in the first column of Table 5 suggested fairly high correlations between the three main roles and the overall scale (Wu, 2012). Then among the rest three coefficients in column 2 and 3 of Table 5, the correlation coefficient between cognitive role and affective role (r = .814**, p = .000 < .050, R^2 = .663) was the highest among the three, revealing much stronger relationship strength between these two domains than the others.

Table 5: Correlational coefficients of teacher roles

	Overall scale	Cognitive role	Affective role	Managerial role
Overall scale	1.00			
Cognitive role	R = .914** R^2 = .835	1.00		
Affective role	R = .922** R^2 = .850	R = .814** R^2 = .663	1.00	
Managerial role	R = .772** R^2 = .596	R = .547** R^2 = .299	R = .549** R^2 = .310	1.00

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 reported the results of correlational analyses of teacher roles and classroom activities. As indicated in Table 6, teacher roles were positively correlated with classroom activities (r = .566**, p = .000 < .050, R^2 = .320). The coefficient R value of .566** showed that the relationship strength was moderate and the R^2 value of .320 between teacher roles and classroom activities indicated 32% of the total variability of classroom activities attributable to teacher roles (Wu, 2012). Statistically it implies that the teacher did play a role in area of classroom activities in the English course. More data in Table 6 revealed that most of the correlation coefficients between the three main teacher roles and the three groups of classroom activities were positively significant either at the 0.01 level or 0.05 level. The findings suggested that the three dimensions of teacher roles, i.e., cognitive role, affective role and managerial role, were also largely positively correlated with the three groups of classroom activities. However, two exceptions were found in correlations between affective role and real-life tasks (r = .234, p = .105 > .050, R^2 = .055) as well as managerial role and real-life tasks (r = .267, p = .064 > .050, R^2 = .071) where no significant

correlations existed between them. The results indicated that neither affective role nor managerial role was significantly related to real-life tasks in the English course.

Table 6: Correlations between teacher roles and classroom activities

	Classroom activities	LE	IA	RFT
Teacher roles	R = .566** R^2 = 0.320 p = .000	R = .521** R^2 = 0.271 p = .000	R = .469** R^2 = 0.220 p = .001	R = .314* R^2 = 0.099 p = .028
Cognitive role	R = .520** R^2 = 0.270 p = .000	R = .423** R^2 = 0.179 p = .002	R = .427** R^2 = 0.182 p = .002	R = .327* R^2 = 0.107 p = .022
Affective role	R =.478** R^2 = 0.229 p = .001	R =.434** R^2 = 0.188 p = .002	R = .475** R^2 = 0.226 p = .001	R = .234 R^2 = 0.055 p = .105
Managerial role	R = .492** R^2 = 0.242 p = .000	R = .527** R^2 = 0.278 p = .000	R = .309* R^2 = 0.096 p = .031	R = .267 R^2 = 0.071 p = .064

Note: LE = one-way language exercises, IA = meaning-focused interactive activities, RLT = real-life tasks
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Overall, the present study, through a series of statistical analyses, managed to measure and examine teacher roles and classroom activities as well as their relationship in an English course. Results showed that students were quite positive with the roles of their teachers and that the impacts of the three main teacher roles were significantly different from one another. Among them, cognitive role had the greatest impact, affective role exerted medium impact and managerial role had the least influences. In terms of classroom activities, all the 23 listed activities and exercises had been implemented by the teacher and meaning-focused interactive activities had been practiced significantly more frequently than one-way language exercises and real-life tasks. This diversity of classroom activities and their frequency differences served to reveal that the teacher had employed a wide range of activities in class that probably fitted different principles and approaches. Finally, findings of correlational analyses proved that teacher roles were significantly positively linked with classroom activities, indicating the significant role that the teacher had played in area of classroom activities in the English course.

5. Discussion

5.1 Teacher roles
Results of the present study are discussed in relation to previous literature in the field. First of all, the three main dimensions of teacher roles, i.e., cognitive role, affective role and managerial role, proved highly reliable and valid in the present context of English course. This is consistent with the findings of previous studies where researchers found that these three main teacher roles were fundamental and central across various

instructional contexts and different subject areas as well (Huang, 2017b, 2019, 2020; Coppola et al, 2002). However, the weights of the three main roles varied according to different settings and relevant studies have generated rather inconsistent findings in this regard. For instances, some studies, including the present study, have found that cognitive role was the most significant among the three dimensions (Guzer & Caner, 2014; Huang, 2019; Coppola et al., 2002). On the other hand, other research uncovered that managerial role surpassed cognitive role and became the most impactful of the three in one online learning mode of English course. In contrast, cognitive role was moderately rated around the third-point scale of "*neither disagree nor agree*", revealing very moderate performance of the teacher regarding cognitive role (Huang, 2019).

The researcher holds that such disparities might result partly from different designs of the instructional contexts where teachers are supposed to adopt different duties and roles (Badia et al., 2017; Dikkers, 2015). Although teachers, as providers of content knowledge in physical classrooms (Zhan & Yang, 2015), cannot be compared to the limitless learning resources online, cognitive roles of teachers were still brought into full play as teachers could assist learners with deeper level of cognitive processes of learning (Donnelly, 2013). This was substantiated by the findings of the present study. Item 6 (m=4.61) about teacher's helping students to analyze learning content had the highest mean of the overall 27-item scale, indicating that the teacher had analyzed the learning content pretty effectively and had been favored by most students. Actually, the top ten items with higher means from 4.31 to 4.57 all fell into the domain of cognitive role except item 13 of affective role (m = 4.57). In other words, most learners agreed that their teacher had facilitated their learning especially in light of deeper level of cognitive learning processes including explaining the materials, clarifying the focuses, overcome misunderstandings, commenting learners' performance, giving advice and directions.

Following greater recognition of cognitive role, another interesting finding of the present study lies in the raised weight of the teacher's affective role, which contradicts the results of previous research. Previous studies unveiled one commonality that affective roles had the lowest means among the three domains of teacher role irrespective of instructional contexts and subject areas. They appeared to be the least influential no matter in face-to-face instructions or in online learning mode and in English courses or in science course (Huang, 2019, 2020). In contrast, the mean of affective role in this study (4.1306) rose to the medium and became the second impactful domain of the three roles. Actually, eight out of ten items of affective role had means above 4 (from 4.08 to 4.31) except items 11 and 19, suggesting the eight items were rated around scale 4 of "agree" and students, on average, were quite positive with the affective role of their teacher. In particular, students agreed that the teacher had encouraged them to exchange ideas in English (item 13, m = 4.57) and to exchange their feelings in English in class (item 12, m=4.14). With much effort to construct friendly classroom atmosphere and build closer learning community (item 14, m = 4.22), the teacher had also made English learning more interesting (item 18, m = 4.08) and had made students more confident of learning English (item 17, m = 4.10).

Above all, students seem to have higher evaluation and appreciation of their teacher if they find learning more desirable in class (Dewaele et al., 2017). This finding was further validated by higher correlational coefficients of cognitive role and affective role in this study. Despite that correlation is not causation, the results highlight the possible reciprocal effects between cognitive role and affective role. One possible explanation for this is that students come to school for learning. Once teaching appeals to students and can actually facilitate learning, the teacher-student relationship will in turn be strengthened in a positive way. This finding corresponds to the proposition that students' enjoyment somewhat depends on whether students find instructed learning appealing (Jin & Zhang, 2018). Researchers have found that cognitive learning processes do have something to do with learning enjoyment and eventually learning achievements as well (Putwain et al., 2018).

Taken together, the teacher in the English course had successfully built agreeable and congenial relationship with students in class and had made English learning enjoyable and delightful for them. In fact, researchers have found that students' enjoyment of learning is crucial and teacher should acknowledge students' emotional expectation and find ways to meet them (Jin & Zhang, 2018). Teachers should endeavor to make learners interested in courses, to satisfy their curiosity about the areas unknown and ultimately make them enjoy learning process in a positive social connection with both teachers and their learning peers as well (Ross & Stracke, 2016). In many cases, language knowledge and skills are instead the essential target of English teaching and learning whereas learners' emotional experiences are taken just as a peripheral consideration (Jin & Zhang, 2018). However, more often than not, students do have emotional appeals and the emotional experiences should be treated more actively in relation to developing knowledge and skills. Researchers note that learners' affect would be influenced by different instructional focuses and activity types (Eline et al., 2019) and teachers have a role to play by way of designing and implementing multiple learning activities and exercises in class. This thus makes necessary the examination of the relationship between teacher roles and classroom activities in the present study.

5.2 Classroom activities

Prior to inspecting the relationship between teacher roles and classroom activities, it is necessary to look into the characteristics of classroom activities that featured the English class under study. Findings of descriptive statistical analyses disclosed that the teacher had employed at least 23 different kinds of activities in the English class to facilitate English learning. Among the 23 activities, some emphasize language forms and knowledge and others prioritize interaction and delivering meaning (Eline, 2019; Heift & Rimrott, 2012). More complicated and time-consuming tasks that simulate real-life activities were also utilized in the English class (Jackson & Burch, 2017). It turned out that meaning-focused interactive activities such as role-play, discussion and dialogue "*often*" dominated the English class, which was "*sometimes*" balanced with many one-way language exercises like T/F, MC questions, blank-fillings & matching, and was also

"*occasionally*" complemented with real-life tasks like research, seminar and debate. Consequently, the findings of the present study led to a presumption that a combination of multiple activities as well as an appropriate proportion of miscellaneous learning activities in classroom would bring forth more desirable teaching and learning. It is necessary not only to balance meaning-based and form-focused instruction in class (Pyun, 2013) but probably more importantly, to integrate assorted activities to better serve the learning goals. The criteria and paradigm of instructional design should align more with teaching objective and learning goal in practices rather than solely with their theoretical fitness. This is true with the findings of the present study. If analyzed under theoretical principles like TBLT or communicated language teaching (CLT), the English class under study was unable to fit in any one particular approach as it incorporates diverse activities, tasks, exercises and even mechanical drills. In other words, it is not easy to strictly confine the English class in question by one single approach. Indeed, to cater for learner needs in all rounds ranging from cognitive learning process, affective aspects of any possible emotional expectations to proper classroom management and many other more not just for one or two periods of classes but throughout one or two academic years surely poses a challenge not only to classroom teachers but also to theorist and experts (Branden, 2009). The researcher notes that a class should be well-planned and well-structured but not rigid or fixed. Furthermore, no single theory or principle should govern a class in the long run as depth demands diversity (Jackson & Burch, 2017) and successful teaching requires diversity too. As there is a gap between theory and practice, pedagogic space then always exists where teachers tend to have a role to play in conducting classroom practices of designing and implementing various teaching and learning activities in class (Branden, 2009).

5.3 The relationship between teacher roles and classroom activities

Results of the present study disclosed that teacher roles were positively correlated with classroom activities. This finding quantitatively verifies in a way the theoretical discussion in the relevant literature. Branden (2009) holds that pedagogical space results from the gap between principles and practices. It is this pedagogical space where teachers come to light and come to design and conduct teaching and learning activities in classroom practices. Heift & Rimrott (2012) note that task types reflect learning goals and classroom activities should be designed and adapted to serve learning goals. In authentic classroom instructions, activities may contain various factors beyond the current level of students' competence or simply lack motivational power. Teachers then would have to synthesize and modify activities in their own ways. For example, Branden (2009) stated that teachers do adapt learning activities to bridge the pedagogical gap between classroom teacher and syllabus developers. The adaptation may be attributed to various motives of teachers to realize teaching objectives, to match task performance with the preferred teaching style and teaching cognitions, to narrow the gap between learning conditions and students' competences and to avoid tensions in terms of time limit and classroom management. According to Ellis (2009), teachers in TBLT need to make

decisions as to which type of tasks to include, what content the tasks should deal with and how to sequence the tasks as well as whether the tasks should be placed in a whole-class context, in pairs, in groups or just by individual. As a result, to better facilitate learning, teachers do have a lot to work with in classroom reality either within or beyond the framework and constraint of theoretical principles and approaches. This expounds very well the significant positive correlations between teacher roles and classroom activities specified by the present research.

Furthermore, the teacher of the English class had incorporated up to 23 different kinds of learning activities and had utilized them alternatively at different rates. Results showed that students "*often*" performed meaning-focused interactive activities, "*sometimes*" practiced one-way language exercises and "occasionally" employed real-life tasks in class. Obviously, the teacher did not seem to strictly follow one single principle or approach as indicated by the diversity and assortment of activities practiced in class. Divergent learning activities were utilized by the teacher and they took different share of the class in order to serve various learning goals. In particular, meaning-focused activities have long been recognized for their fluency advantages over form-focused tasks and in recent years even for their accuracy gains over form-focused task types as well. Moreover, they were also believed to instigate a significant increase in learners' self-confidence (Eline et al., 2019). While language form exercises do not seem to generate significant development of self-confidence, exercises like fill-in-the-blank and sentence building have their own strengths and can provide with little efforts fairly specific and accurate feedback on a variety of language form mistakes (Heift & Rimrott, 2012). Real-life tasks provide opportunities to introduce background information and life experiences, to access authentic learning materials and to contextualize language knowledge and use (Yang & Tao, 2018). By synthesizing and integrating the miscellaneous activities and exercises in the English class, the teacher had managed to achieve a higher level of students' recognition and appreciation of teaching across all the three main domains of cognitive role, affective role and managerial role. The teaching in the English class proved to be favorable with students in spite that it might not embody a close coupling between theoretical principles and teaching practices.

6. Conclusion and implication

In conclusion, the present research, with two quantitative scales, investigated teacher roles and classroom activities as well as their relationship in an activity-dominated English course. The major findings revealed that the teacher role as a whole was fairly favorable with the students particularly in terms of cognitive role and affective role. While the teacher had exerted the most significant impact of cognitive role, the affective role was enhanced in comparison to previous studies (Huang, 2019, 2020). Correlational analyses also indicated a significantly high and positive correlation between cognitive and affective roles in this study. Further analyses showed that miscellaneous activities had been practiced at different rates in the English class. The significant and positive

correlation between teacher roles and classroom activities manifested that the teacher did play an important role in integrating divergent classroom activities to facilitate learning and bring forth more desirable teaching in classroom reality.

The present research has unveiled some particular qualities featuring the activity-dominated English class and the findings contribute some practical significance to classroom teaching. Teachers, in their attempts to optimize classroom teaching, may play significant roles in the pedagogical spaces. They may construct appropriate settings to better serve learning by integrating and adapting diverse activities and exercises in class. For example, to modify activity format, to shift the main focus, to simplify the input, modify output demands, increase challenge or lower difficulty and to differentiate between individual students regarding different learner variables so on and so forth (Branden, 2009). In this light, the criteria and paradigm of instructional design should align more with teaching objective and learning goal in practices rather than solely with their theoretical fitness. The actual ongoing and complex processes of classroom teaching may be supported by multiple principles rather than being strictly governed by one single theory (Jackson & Burch, 2017). Therefore, classroom practices should be teacher-constructed and goal-oriented if not teacher-centered or theory-dominated.

7. Limitation and future study

As expected, the study has its limitations. Due to the constraints of quantitative research, the present study was unable to locate the underlying factors for the significant and positive correlations between cognitive role and affective role, between the three main domains of the teacher and the three main groups of classroom activities. Further studies are needed to probe into more specific relationship between teacher roles and classroom activities better through mixed quantitative and qualitative research methods. For example, what roles teachers perform better in chosen activity or what kinds of learning activities in class would be better platforms for different teacher roles. Then the small sample of the students and only one teacher under study make it possible that the findings are specific to this one particular case. Future study may enlarge the sample of the participants and take into account teachers' perceptions as well. Overall, classroom practices are dynamic (Jackson & Burch 2017) and multifaceted. The interplay between classroom teachers and classroom teaching that incorporate a number of variables such as classroom activities are believed to be complex, which generates ample space for further research.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The author declares that there is no conflict of interests.

About the Author
The author, an associate professor, has been teaching English as foreign language at university for over twenty years. After years of English language teaching, she has come

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Appendix

Scale I: The Scale of Teacher Role Inventory (the STRI)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. The teacher uses videos to help students to learn English.					
2. The teacher uses audios to help students to learn English.					
3. The teacher recommends English websites etc to students for learning.					
4. The teacher explains the learning materials and clarify the focuses.					
5. The teacher helps students to overcome misunderstandings.					
6. The teacher helps students to analyze the learning content.					
7. The teacher makes comment on students' performance.					
8. The teacher gives advice on doing exercises.					
9. The teacher helps students to correct mistakes.					
10. The teacher shows students the right direction of doing activities.					
11. The teacher leads students to play games to learn English.					
12. The teacher encourages students to express their feelings in English.					
13. The teacher encourages students to exchange ideas in English.					
14. The teacher brings students closer to each other.					
15. The teacher helps students to stay focused.					
16. The teacher encourages students to explore answers on their own.					
17. The teacher makes me more confident of learning English.					
18. The teacher makes English learning interesting to me.					
19. The teacher makes English learning stressful to me.					
20. The teacher brings up different issues for discussion.					
21. The teacher makes learning plan for students.					
22. The teacher decides teaching schedule in class.					
23. The teacher controls learning pace.					
24. The teacher disciplines the class.					
25. The teacher sets up rules and regulations for doing activities.					
26. The teacher keeps a record of students' exercises.					
27. The teacher adapts the exercises to meet students' needs.					

Note: 1, strongly disagree; 2, disagree; 3, neither disagree nor agree; 4, agree; 5, strongly agree

Scale II: Classroom Activities Inventory (CAI)

		1	2	3	4	4
1	Dictation					
2	T/F questions					
3	Blank-filling exercises					
4	Multiple choice questions					
5	Open-ended questions					
6	Matching					
7	Note-taking					
8	Brainstorming					
9	Retelling					
10	Summarizing					
11	Exchanging information					
12	Dialogue					
13	Group discussion					
14	Role-play					
15	Interview					

16	Oral presentation					
17	Competition					
18	Debate					
19	Research					
20	Microteaching					
21	Case study					
22	Seminar					
23	Dubbing					

Note: 1. Never; 2. Occasionally; 3. Sometimes; 4. Often; 5. Always